



**NEWS FROM:
THE JOINT COMMISSION ON PUBLIC ETHICS**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JCOPE SETTLES GIFT, NEPOTISM INVESTIGATION WITH EX-MTA
OFFICIAL**

**Accepted Golf, Meals from Vendors; Attempted to Intervene in
Employment Decisions Regarding Son**

ALBANY – (February 24, 2016) – The New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics (“Commission”) today announced that it has reached a settlement agreement with a former employee of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (“MTA”) for accepting gifts from companies with business before the MTA and for attempting to intervene in employment decisions about his son, who was a Metro-North Railroad trainee at the time.

Stedroy Fergus agreed to pay a \$2,500 fine and admitted to multiple violations of the Public Officers Law between August 2013 and April 2015. Fergus admitted accepting gifts of rounds of golf and meals from vendors he dealt with as part of his official duties. He also admitted contacting employees of Metro-North Railroad in an attempt to influence employment decisions involving his son.

“The law clearly prohibits employees from accepting gifts from agency vendors or from having any role in employment decisions involving relatives. While the majority of state employees hold true to that law, the actions of Mr. Fergus are, unfortunately, another example of what a state employee should not do,” said Commission spokesperson Walter McClure.

Fergus was a Facilities Manager for the MTA’s Real Estate Division from 2008 through September 2015, when he was terminated following an investigation by the MTA Inspector General. The MTA Inspector General referred the matter to the Commission for its consideration.

Under the terms of the settlement agreement, Fergus admitted violating Public Officers Law § 73(5)(a), which provides that a state employee shall not solicit, accept, or receive a gift having more than nominal value in a situation where it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence or could be expected to influence him in performing his official duties or as a reward for an official action; in this case, contracts to do business with the MTA.

Fergus also admitted violating Public Officers Law § 73(14)(a), which provides that no state employee can be part of any decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge a relative for any paid job at, for, or within any state agency.

A copy of the settlement agreement can be found [here](#).