



**City of Seattle Equal Benefits Program
Contractor Compliance Guidelines
Confidentiality**

SAMPLE POLICY

By instituting policies that include domestic partners, employers may begin to learn more about their employees' sexual orientation, especially when employees enroll their same-sex domestic partners for employee benefits, thereby disclosing their lesbian, gay or bisexual orientation.

Because sexual orientation information can be misused in the workplace and lead to charges of discrimination, it is important that policies and procedures are put in place to maintain the confidentiality of this information.

The following is a sample policy addressing confidential employee information:

Information gathered in the course of the administration of benefits will be respected as confidential and will be disclosed only as necessary in the course of the administration of benefits.

Employers are encouraged to consider the following guidelines for employees with access to confidential information:

- **Information about an employee's sexual orientation should not be discussed except when required as part of the administration of benefits.**
- **If disclosure other than in the administration of benefits is necessary, the employee should be informed prior to disclosure.**
- **Information, memos, letters or reports that identify an employee's sexual orientation should not be left in open, public or uncontrolled areas.**

The information contained in this document is not intended as legal advice and should not be relied on as such.