

# NYC CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BOARD OCTOBER PUBLIC SERVICE PUZZLER

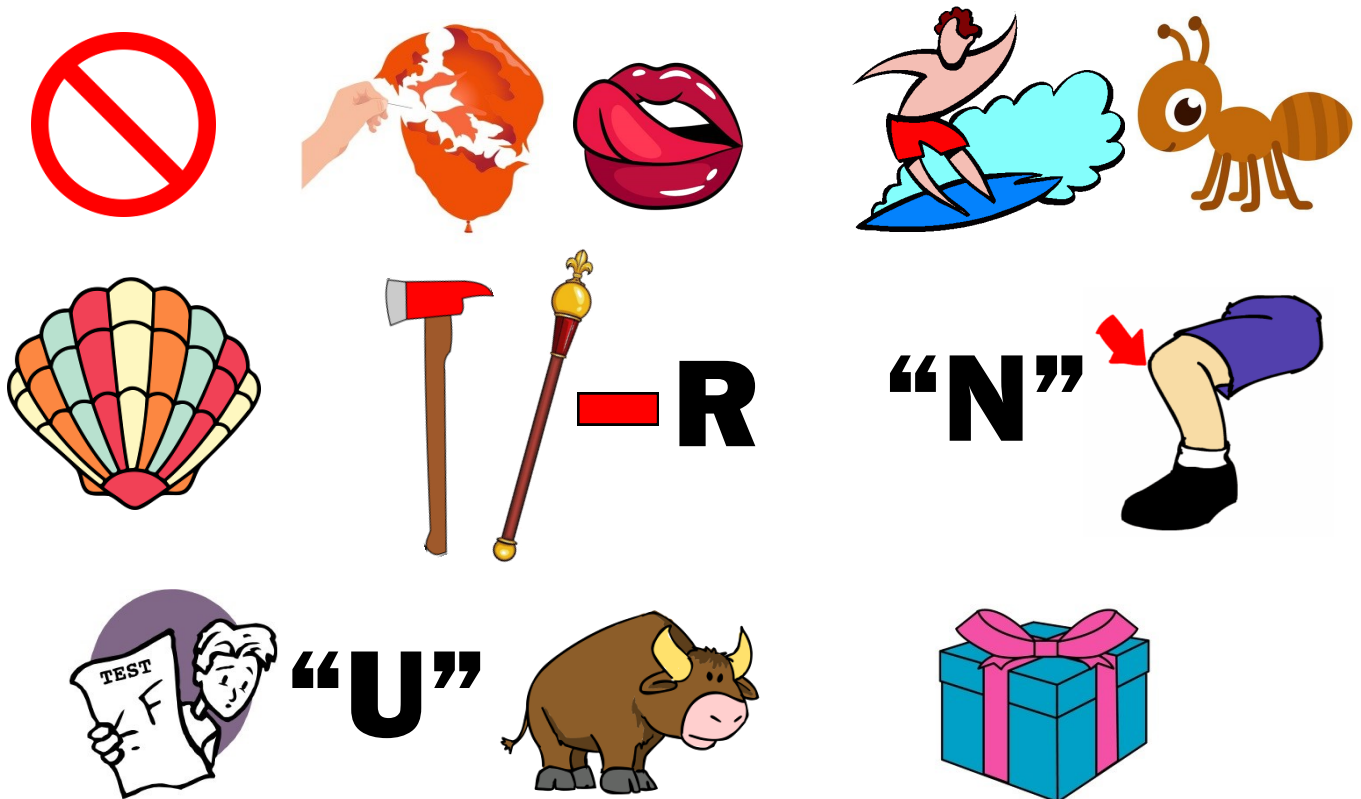
## REBUS MADNESS

A rebus is a kind of puzzle where words are formed out of pictures. For example:



This translates to JACK BE NIMBLE (“Jackhammer” minus “hammer;” “bee;” “N” plus “thimble” minus “TH”).

Here’s a rebus we’ve made from a provision of the conflicts of interest law:



Translate the rebus and identify the section of [Chapter 68](#) it references, and you could be a winner! Submit your answer to [contest@coib.nyc.gov](mailto:contest@coib.nyc.gov) by 5 pm on Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. We’ll randomly select one of the correct entrants to be this month’s winner!

# NYC CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BOARD OCTOBER PUZZLER WINNER

## RIDDLE ME THIS

*A tisket, a tasket, a fancy fruit-filled basket  
was left by a client for me to claim.*

*It's clear my work earned it, but I cannot return it  
for stuck to the basket's a note: "Thanks!" but no name.*

*A tisket, a tasket, I'd like to take this basket  
home as a well-deserved, long-overdue prize.*

*Is that the right choice? Please lift up your voice  
and let me know what you, ethics hero, advise.*

Although we evaluated our entries solely based on their facts, our winner wrote his response in rhyme:

*Call your inspector general on the double  
Or you may find yourself in trouble;  
If there is a common area to share,  
Your fruit may very well end up there.*

Explanation:

Thank you to everyone who wrote in with answers and advice! Nearly all of you recognized that the fruit basket is a **gratuity**: an extra payment beyond one's City salary just for doing one's job. City workers are prohibited from accepting gratuities **in any amount**.

Most of you advised that in cases where a gratuity cannot be returned (as in this example), it could be placed in a break room, or otherwise communally shared. This allows the improper gratuity be accepted as a **gift to the City**.

This is good, but not sufficient — **instructions must first be sought, in writing, from the agency's Inspector General, General Counsel, or equivalent**. That decision-maker might instead advise that the fruit basket be thrown out, donated to an appropriate charity, or otherwise disposed of, so as not to create the appearance that such gratuities are a regular and accepted part of doing business with the City.



## MEET LAST MONTH'S WINNER, TORREY FISHMAN

**What is your City/office title?** Special Counsel and Senior Policy Advisor in the Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

**What do you do in your job?** I am an attorney, and I am assisting with both the 2018 and 2019 Charter Revision Commissions.

**How long have you been working for the City?** Since 2013.

**Name a special interest or hobby.** My rescue dog, Crispus, who is a must-follow on Instagram ([@CrispusAF](#)).