

Putting the Duke in Inducement



By Roy Koshy

Dear Fellow City Employee,

My name is Roy Koshy, and like you I am a citizen in the employ of the City of New York. Recently, I learned that I am also a descendant of the Duke of York, who was granted the colony of New York in 1644. What this stunning discovery means is that I stand to inherit a very large sum of money, perhaps in the billions of dollars. As a fellow public servant, I want to be able to share this wealth with you. However, in order to access the money owed to me, I need to provide certified documentation that backs up this true and accurate claim. Let me be clear: I am not asking you for any money. My request is quite simple. I contacted your agency and was told that I need to wait 60 to 90 days for my documents to be reviewed

and certified. I do not wish to wait that long, as the royal summer social season is nearly over. I would like you to use your City influence on behalf of me, a fellow City employee, to help ensure that my paperwork immediately finds its way to the top of the pile and is certified as correct. Once you have allowed me to expeditiously prove my lineage, I am prepared to offer you a substantial percentage of my inheritance as a reward for your help. Kindly let me know as soon as possible that you have helped speed my paperwork to a satisfactory conclusion, so that there will be no delay in sharing my wealth with you.

*Sincerely,
Roy Koshy, future Duke of York*

Dear Fellow City Employee,

I did not hear back from you regarding my generous offer. Well, it turns out that my quest to acquire my rightful inheritance has run afoul of the conflicts of interest law that applies to all City employees. In fact, since I hadn't heard from you, I was planning to extend my generous offer to yet another City employee, but I first called the Conflicts of Interest Board (212-437-0707, if you were wondering) to gain advice on how to ethically maintain my City employment while upholding my future Dukedom. And they let me know that my letters were a form of inducement, which is expressly prohibited by this law. Specifically, I asked you to subvert the appropriate procedures for document requests in exchange for financial compensation. It turns out that this would be a misuse of position by you, not to mention a prohibited gratuity, both of which are frowned upon.

I will not make that mistake again! Instead, I have decided to share an entirely different and fully ethical opportunity with you while I wait for my paperwork to make its way through your agency by normal channels. You see, I'm not only the heir to a Duke (proof pending), but I am also an aspiring entrepreneur. I am currently developing an app that helps people discover if they, like me, are descendants of royalty. I want to offer this app to my fellow City employees first. Just to be clear: I am not asking you for money. All I am asking is for you to recommend this app to your fellow agency employees, especially your agency's IT department and administrative staff in

charge of purchasing. Let them know about the opportunity to help their fellow public servants discover their true heritages. If you can do this for me, I am prepared to share in the profits from my app with you! Please take action ASAP, I don't want you to miss out!

*With Gratitude,
Roy Koshy, CEO/Duke*

Dear Fellow City Employee,

It seems that my attempts in establishing contact with you remain unsuccessful. It also appears that the opportunity that I presented to you in my previous letter was once again deemed to be inducement. Even though I was not asking you to take action directly on my behalf, the Conflicts of Interest Board has determined that I was nevertheless again attempting to involve you in a "scheme" that "entangled" your own "financial interests" with your "City duties." As a result, the Board has now imposed a "monetary fine" against me.

While I do not agree with this particular decision, I choose to see this moment as another opportunity! I may be royalty, but I fully embrace the vibrant democracy that is our system. I am therefore running for Mayor, so that I can change the conflicts of interest law. This is where you come in! Let me be clear: I am not asking you for money. I just need you to send an email to your co-workers with a link to my campaign website and kindly ask them to contribute to my campaign. If there are City employees who you supervise, I especially encourage you to reach out to them because this will be a

surefire source of funds. The results will be best if you send this official email when everyone is at work. If you are able to do this for me, I will look for any opportunities for you that may arise when I become Mayor, and then eventually reclaim my title as the Duke of New York. Please respond to this request as soon as possible.

*Towards a Brighter Future,
Roy Koshy (#Koshy2025/#RoyalMayoral)*

Dear Fellow City Employee,

I see that you have not taken me up on my latest offer. I suppose that is the best course of action, because apparently it is a violation for City employees to engage in political campaigning by using their City email accounts or work hours to fundraise for a mayoral candidate. It is also a violation, I am told, for City supervisors to make any campaign solicitations of their subordinates. So, for me to promise you future favors for taking these actions is yet again an example of inducement. I have to pay another monetary fine to the Conflicts of interest Board, and a very severe one at that due to the previous enforcement action taken against me.

I do not intend to induce you to do anything else illegal, but rather I am humbly requesting your help. The fines that I have accrued are hefty, and I currently cannot pay them all by myself. In order to fulfill my financial obligations, I have set up a charitable fund to assist with these costs. Once again, I am not asking you for money, but rather to make a donation in recognition of my City service

teaching you through my example about the dangers of inducement. If you have appreciated my efforts in bringing to light this important part of the conflicts of interest law, please feel free to say "thank you" by making a contribution to the fund. When all of these difficulties resolve, I will repay your kindness during my reign/mayoral term, perhaps through an earldom and/or assistant commissioner position. Please visit my fund's website ASAP as I am being asked by Security to clear out my belongings and relinquish my City email account as of end of business today.

*Yours in Success,
Roy Koshy,
Duke/CEO/Mayoral Candidate/
Philanthropist*

Ed note: *it should come as no surprise that soliciting a gratuity would once again be a violation of the law. Before sending these letters, Roy should have contacted COIB's Attorney of the Day, who can confidentially advise public servants on the City's Conflicts of Interest Law. The Attorney of the Day can be reached by phone at (212) 437-0707 during business hours or by emailing us anytime at aod@coib.nyc.gov.*



Roy Koshy is an Education & Engagement Specialist at the New York City Conflicts of Interest Board.



nyc.gov/ethics
Phone: (212) 442-1400
Fax: (212) 437-0705