

## **Clean Ocean Action Gift Acceptance Policy**

**Background:** *Clean Ocean Action (COA) is a broad-based coalition of organizations, individuals, and businesses with a mission to clean up and protect the waters off the NJ/NY coasts.*

*COA, a 501(c)3 organization, is an advocate for public policy changes for the ocean. COA works with other organizations and it is not a citizen membership-based group. COA seeks financial support equally from two basic sources: private foundations and public support. Public support is raised through a variety of means and includes donations, gifts, bequests, fundraising events, sponsorships, corporate matching programs, and in-kind donations from businesses and citizens.*

*To help guide these development activities, COA has adopted a COA Gift Acceptance Policy.*

**Purpose:** *Adopting a gift acceptance policy is done to provide general direction to staff and supporters. Thus, this policy is a guidance document and, with a few exceptions noted below, is not a policy of absolutes.*

**Gift Acceptance Policy** (based, in part upon the principle that COA works to inform, educate, and motivate all supporters to reduce and eliminate sources of pollution, and in this work partnerships are essential):

- COA welcomes support from those who accept, embrace, and support its goals and mission.
- In all events, contributions may be accepted at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and/or the Executive Director, and COA is not required to accept any charitable gifts or contributions particularly: (1) from those who pollute waterways by violating water protection laws (past violators must have an unblemished record during at least the 5 years preceding acceptance of any such gift); (2) designated with restrictions that fall significantly outside the organization's mission and program priorities; (3) that may cost the organization money or provide a liability or potential penalty of any kind; and (4) that have conditions that are not in the best interests of COA or those that fall outside ethical boundaries.
- Contributions to COA are accepted and deemed an affirmation of COA's mission, policies, and actions. Donations do not influence the mission, policies, and actions of COA.
- Contributions must be a "good fit," meaning gifts toward special projects or events must be complementary. Due diligence to research and investigate the compatibility of contributions may be performed by COA staff at any time.

This policy is available on the COA website and included in appropriate correspondence.