



## ***Ethics in Brief: The Ethics Rules and Gambling Pools***

***A timely reminder of the rules against gambling for money in Federal offices***

**Question: *What is the Federal policy concerning gambling?***

**Answer:** All persons entering onto Federal property are prohibited from:

- Participating in games for money or
- Conducting a lottery or gambling pool.

*Source: GSA regulation 41 C.F.R. § 102-74.395*

**Question: *What is considered to be “gambling”?***

**Answer:** Gambling is defined as a game of chance where the participant risks something of value for the chance to gain money or win a prize.

**Question: *Why do NCAA pools violate government regulations?***

**Answer:** Two reasons: First, the GSA regulation above bars anyone from participating in conducting a pool for money, while on Federal property. This applies not only to Federal employees, but also to visiting members of the public.

Second, Standards of Conduct rules (at 5 C.F.R. § 735.201) specifically prohibit employees from conducting or participating “in any gambling activity including . . . conducting a lottery or pool” while on Government property or while on Government duty.

**For additional questions, please contact the USDA Office of Ethics – Science Ethics Branch at [Science-Ethics@oe.usda.gov](mailto:Science-Ethics@oe.usda.gov)**