



Policy # 53032

PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Effective Date: August 11, 2009

Reviewed Date: March 25, 2021

Responsible Office: Human Resources

Division: Operations

I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

To ensure university employees comply with state regulations and Civil Service rules regarding participation in political activities included but not limited to holding public office, campaigning for candidates, and participating in political parties.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. UNCLASSIFIED AND FACULTY

Unclassified employees (including Faculty) have the constitutional right to seek and hold public office. In so doing, the employee must meet the following conditions:

1. Notify the President of his intent prior to the date of qualification
2. Continue normal workload, including teaching and all other duties and office hours required by the University
3. If the employee is unable to satisfy item #2 above, annual leave or leave without pay must be requested for the appropriate period of time, in accordance with the University's leave policy.
4. Such employees should be accurate in any statements given and make every effort to indicate that he is not a spokesperson for the institution.

B. CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

All persons in the classified service are prohibited by Article X, Section 9(a) of the Louisiana Constitution and by Rules of the Civil Service Commission, Rules 14.1(e), (f), and (g), from engaging in any partisan political activity. State employees must avoid the ACTUAL support of a candidate, party, or faction and avoid the APPEARANCE of giving such support. When a violation of political activity restrictions occurs, the Department of State Civil Service will take corrective action which may range from issuing a letter of admonishment to bringing the violator before the State Civil Service Commission for Investigation by Public Hearing.

1. Allowable political activities:

- a. Expressing one's opinion privately;
- b. Serving as a Commissioner or Watcher at polls; and
- c. Casting one's vote for whom he/she desires.
- d. Publicly support or oppose issues of public debate or election other than in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction;
- e. Sell services that you regularly offer or sell for fair market value to a candidate or political party or faction, even if doing so requires your presence at a fundraiser;
- f. Be a member of a private organization that may, under certain circumstances, endorse a candidate for public office, so long as the primary purpose of the organization is not the support or opposition of candidates, political parties, or factions. However, when the organization does not support or oppose a candidate, party, or faction, you may not take an active part in the management of the affairs of the organization—even in matters not related to that support or opposition.
- g. Attend a free function open to the public where any or all of the candidates may speak or present their views.
- h. Attend an election night party (even before the polls close) or a party after election night that is open to the public at large and is not a fundraiser.
- i. Attend an inaugural celebration or a victory party after election night that is not a fundraiser.

2. Prohibited Political Activities – State employees may not:

- a. Become a candidate for nomination or election to public office
- b. Become a member of any committee of a political party or faction
- c. Make or solicit contributions for any candidate or political party or faction
- d. Take an active part in the management of the affairs of a political party, faction, candidate, or campaign
- e. Attend any fund raising function of a candidate or political party or faction – even if someone gives you a free ticket. A function will be considered a fundraiser if it is advertised that anything—including food—will be sold at the function—even if you do not plan to buy anything
- f. Solicit votes for or against a candidate or political party or faction
- g. Publicly announce, in writing or otherwise, support or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction

-
- h. Prepare or distribute campaign material for or against a candidate or political party or faction
 - i. Contribute or volunteer time, effort, property, or any other thing of value in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction
 - j. Display a bumper sticker on the vehicle you drive in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction
 - k. Place a sign on your property supporting or opposing a candidate or political party or faction or allow anyone who is not your spouse to do so
 - l. Contribute or loan money in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction
 - m. Vote at the caucus or convention of a candidate or political party or faction
 - n. Wear, use, display, or distribute t-shirts, hats, stickers, pins, fans, water bottles, or any other material in support of or opposition to a candidate or political party or faction.

These restrictions apply to ALL elections—local, state and federal. No employee in the Classified Service and no member of the Commission shall, directly or indirectly, pay or promise to pay any assessment, subscription or contribution for any political party, faction, or candidate, or solicitor take any part in soliciting any such assessment, subscription, or contribution. No person shall solicit any such assessment, subscription, or contribution of any employee in the Classified Service.

No appointing authority, agent, or deputy thereof, or supervisor of any employee, shall directly or indirectly demote, suspend, discharge, or otherwise discipline any person in the Classified Service for the purpose of influencing his vote, support, or other political activity in any election or primary election. No appointing authority agent, or deputy thereof, or other person, shall use his official authority or influence, by threats, promises, or other means, directly or indirectly, to punish or coerce the political action of any employee in the Classified Service.

These political activity restrictions do not apply to the spouse of a classified state employee. For example, the spouse may place a sign supporting a candidate in the yard of the home shared with the classified employee so long as it is the true expression of the spouse. Similarly, the spouse may place a political bumper sticker on the vehicle usually operated by the spouse, even though the classified employee may sometimes appear in that vehicle. The goal of avoiding the appearance of support by the classified employee should be kept in mind.