

An employee **MAY NOT**:

1. Use official authority or influence to interfere or affect the result of an election.
2. Take an active part in political management or in a political campaign.
3. Serve as an officer of a political party; a member of a national, state, or local committee of a political party; or an officer or a member of a committee of a partisan political club; or be a candidate for any of these positions.
4. Organize or reorganize a political party organization or political club.
5. Directly or indirectly solicit, receive, collect, handle, disburse, or account for assessments, contributions, or other funds for a partisan political purpose.
6. Organize, sell tickets to, promote or actively participate in a fund-raising activity of a candidate in a partisan election, political party, or political club.
7. Take an active part in managing the political campaign of a candidate for public office in a partisan election or a candidate for political party office.
8. Become a candidate or campaign for an elective public office in a partisan election.
9. Solicit votes in support of or in opposition to a candidate for public office in a partisan election or a candidate for a political party office.
10. Act as recorder, watcher, challenger, or similar officer at the polls on behalf of a political party or candidate in a partisan election.
11. Drive voters to the polls on behalf of a political party or candidate in a partisan election.
12. Endorse or oppose a candidate for public office in a partisan election or a candidate for political party office in a political advertisement, a broadcast, campaign literature, or similar material.
13. Serve as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention.

14. Address a convention, caucus, rally, or similar gathering of a political party in support of or in opposition to a partisan candidate for public office or political party.
15. Initiate or circulate a partisan nomination petition.
16. Solicit, pay, collect, or receive a contribution at or in the workplace from any employee for any political party, political fund, or partisan recipient.
17. Pay a contribution at or in the workplace to any employee who is the employer or employing authority of the person making the contribution for any political party, political fund, or other partisan recipient.

#### **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

*Any person having knowledge of or suspecting a violation of the Civil Service Act should submit the facts in writing to the State Civil Service Commission, Bureau of Technical and Information Services at the address listed below.*

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**Questions concerning the political activity provisions of the Civil Service Act should be directed to:**

State Civil Service Commission  
Bureau of Technical  
and Information Services  
320 Market Street, P.O. Box 569  
Harrisburg, PA 17108-0569  
(717) 787-4516  
Text Telephone: (717) 783-8896  
E-mail: [ra-cs-politicalactivity@state.pa.us](mailto:ra-cs-politicalactivity@state.pa.us)

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# **Political Activity Guidelines for Civil Service Employees**



The political activity of state employees is regulated by:

- **The Civil Service Act, Section 905.2 Political Activity**
- **The Governor's Office Executive Order 1980-18 Amended, Code of Conduct, Part 1, Item 8**
- **The Hatch Act (United States Code, Title 5, Chapter 15 – Political Activity of Certain State and Local Employees)**

**The Civil Service Act** defines the permitted and prohibited political activities and penalties for **ALL** civil service positions and employees.

These provisions also apply to employees of those local political subdivisions which have contracts with the State Civil Service Commission for merit system services.

These provisions **DO NOT** apply to furloughs and persons currently on leave without pay. Upon returning to any civil service position, including employment of a temporary nature, the employee must immediately cease all partisan political activities.

Exception: An employee may complete a term of public office if the employee was appointed or elected before beginning civil service employment or before returning from furlough or leave.

This is permitted as long as the duties, while in office, neither conflict with civil service employment nor include any prohibited activity described in this pamphlet.

## **PENALTIES**

**A civil service employee who knowingly or unknowingly violates the political activity provisions of the Civil Service Act is subject to a range of**

**discipline. Based on the nature of the violation, the Commission may impose a penalty of suspension without pay of up to 120 working days, or if warranted, direct the employee's removal.**

**The Governor's Office Executive Order** also restricts certain political activities of **ALL** Commonwealth officials and employees of the Executive Branch under the Governor's jurisdiction.

Questions regarding political activity under the Governor's Code of Conduct should be directed to the Office of Administration, Human Resources and Management, Room 517 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; telephone (voice) (717) 787-8191.

**The Hatch Act** contains language regarding permitted and prohibited political activities which differs from the **Civil Service Act** and applies to civil service **AND** non-civil service employees who are principally employed in connection with programs financed in whole or in part by loans or grants made by a federal agency.

Questions should be directed to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, 1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 201, Washington, DC 20036-4505; telephone (voice) (800) 854-2824; text telephone (800) 877-8339.

An employee **MAY**:

1. Register and vote in any election.
2. Express opinions privately and publicly on political subjects and candidates.
3. Display political materials (badge, button, etc.) while **not** on duty and at locations other than the workplace.
4. Participate in non-partisan activities of a civic, community, social, labor, professional, or similar organization.
5. Be a member of a political party, organization, or club and participate in its activities to the extent consistent with the

Civil Service Act.

6. Attend a political convention, rally, fund-raising function, or other political gathering.
7. Sign a political petition.
8. Make a financial contribution to a political party or organization.
9. Be politically active in connection with a question, which is not specifically identified with a political party, such as a constitutional amendment, referendum, approval of a municipal ordinance, or any other question or issue of a similar character.
10. Participate fully in public affairs, except as prohibited by law, in a manner that does not materially compromise efficiency or integrity as an employee or the neutrality, efficiency, or integrity of a Commonwealth agency.

Employees are **NOT** to engage in the above activities while on duty or in uniform.

An agency may prohibit or further limit the above listed activities of an employee or class of employees if participation in the activities would interfere with the efficient performance of official duties, or create a conflict or apparent conflict of interest.

Also, employees covered by the Civil Service Act are allowed to run for the office of School Board Director; however, they may **NOT** campaign for, endorse, or otherwise participate in a campaign on behalf of other candidates running for this position or any other public office.

**Employees in federally funded positions should be advised** that the Hatch Act provisions continue to apply and may prohibit them from running for the office of School Board Director.