* Endorse or oppose a candidate for partisan political office, political office, or for political party office in a political advertisement, broadcast, or in campaign literature.
* Initiate or circulate a partisan nominating petition
* Act as a recorder, watcher, challenger, etc. at polling places
* Drive voters to polling places

Additional Restrictions for Presidential Appointees and All Non-Career SES

In addition to all previous restrictions, these individuals may not engage in any other activities that could be interpreted as associating the department with any partisan political cause or issue.

Such employees *may not*:

* Participate as organizers, speakers, hosts, or special guests at political activities such as fudraisers. (SES may attend solely as spectators.)

However these employees *may*:

* Brief partisan groups on issues of national defense policy, but not at fundraising events
* Be at a political fundraiser merely as an attendee

References:

J.E.R. 6-200-6-203; DOD 5500.7-R;
5 C.F.R. § 734

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If you need advice on a particular situation, please contact SAF/GCA to set up an appointment with one of the attorneys.

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FEDERAL CIVILIAN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

"Integrity First"

FEDERAL CIVILIAN POLITICAL ACTIVITES

This pamphlet provides a brief overview of regulations for participating in political activities as a civilian federal government employee. The separation between political activities and the federal government is even more crucial when involving the Armed Forces because of the need for public confidence in civilian control over the military.

Political activity is an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or a partisan political group.

Partisan vs. Nonpartisan

Partisan activities relate to candidates or issues representing national or state political parties. Candidacy for national or state office is partisan, even if the candidate is not affiliated with a national or state political party. Partisan activities are more restricted than nonpartisan activities.

Nonpartisan activities are not associated with a national or state political party but involve "stand alone" political issues, such as constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances, etc. Employees have more leeway with these activities as long as they:

* Refrain from using government facilities and/ or resources
* Avoid any implication that the Air Force endorses or supports their participation in the activity

Guidelines for Civilian Federal Employees

Following are guidelines for civilian federal employees covered under the Hatch Act. Employees may:

* Be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections
* Register and vote as they choose
* Assist in voter registration drives, drive voters to a polling place, and act as a recorder, watcher, or challenger at a polling place
* Serve as an election judge or clerk
* Express opinions about candidates and issues
* Display a political sign, sticker, button, etc., but not while on duty, in a government office, or using a government vehicle
* Contribute money to political organizations and candidates
* Attend political fundraising functions
* Join and be an active member of a political party or club, or even manage a political campaign or circulate nominating petitions
* Campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, and municipal ordinances
* Campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections
* Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections
* Distribute campaign literature in partisan elections
* Hold office in political clubs or parties, including serving as a delegate to a convention

Employees may not:

* Use their official authority to interfere with an election
* Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same federal labor organization or employee organization, and the one solicited is not a subordinate
* Use an official title while participating in political activities
* Knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency
* Engage in political activity while on duty
* Engage in political activity in any government office
* Engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform
* Engage in political activity while using a government vehicle
* Become a candidate for public office in partisan elections
* Wear political buttons while on duty
* Host or sponsor a political fundraiser (although you may attend it)

Additional Prohibitions for Certain Federal Employees

Certain federal employees are subject to more extensive restrictions than the previous rules listed in this pamphlet. Employees in the following agencies, divisions, and categories must abide by additional prohibitions:

* Career members of the Senior Executive Service
* Defense Intelligence Agency
* National Security Council
* National Security Agency

In addition to the previous restrictions, these employees *may not*:

* Take an active role in managing the political campaign of a candidate for partisan political office, or a candidate for political party office
* Campaign for partisan political office
* Distribute fliers printed by a candidate's campaign committee, a political party, or a partisan political group
* Serve as an officer of a political party, a member of a national, state, or local committee political party, an officer or a member of a committee of a partisan political group, or be a candidate for any of these positions
* Organize or reorganize a political party organization or partisan political group
* Serve as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention
* Address a convention, caucus, rally or similar gathering of a political party or partisan political group in support of or in opposition to a candidate for partisan political office or political party office
* Organize, sell tickets for, promote, or actively participate in a fundraising activity of a candidate for partisan political office or of a political party or partisan political group
* Canvas for votes in support of, or in opposition to, a candidate for partisan political office or a candidate for political party office