THE HATCH ACT
Permitted and Prohibited Activities
For Employees Who May Engage in Partisan Political Management and Campaigns*

• **May not** use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the result of an election. For example:
  - **May not** use their official titles or positions while engaged in political activity.
  - **May not** invite subordinate employees to political events or otherwise suggest to subordinates that they attend political events or undertake any partisan political activity.

• **May not** solicit, accept or receive a donation or contribution for a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group. For example:
  - **May not** host a political fundraiser.
  - **May not** invite others to a political fundraiser.
  - **May not** collect contributions or sell tickets to political fundraising functions.*

• **May not** be candidates for public office in partisan political elections.

• **May not** knowingly solicit or encourage the participation in any political activity of anyone who has business pending before their employing office.

• **May not** engage in political activity – i.e., activity directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group – while the employee is on duty, in any federal room or building, while wearing a uniform or official insignia, or using any federally owned or leased vehicle. For example:
  - **May not** distribute campaign materials or items.
  - **May not** display campaign materials or items.
  - **May not** perform campaign related chores.
  - **May not** wear or display partisan political buttons, T-shirts, signs, or other items.
  - **May not** make political contributions to a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.
  - **May not** post a comment to a blog or a social media site that advocates for or against a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.
  - **May not** use any e-mail account or social media to distribute, send, or forward content that advocates for or against a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.

• **May be** candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections.

• **May** register and vote as they choose.

• **May** assist in voter registration drives.

• **May** contribute money to political campaigns, political parties, or partisan political groups.

• **May** attend political fundraising functions.

• **May** attend and be active at political rallies and meetings.

• **May** join and be an active member of political clubs or parties.

• **May** hold office in public clubs or parties.

• **May** sign and circulate nominating petitions.

• **May** campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, or municipal ordinances.

• **May** campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections.

• **May** make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections.

• **May** distribute campaign literature in partisan elections.

• **May** volunteer to work on a partisan political campaign.

• **May** express opinions about candidates and issues. If the expression is political activity, however – i.e., activity directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group – then the expression is not permitted while the employee is on duty, in any federal room or building, while wearing a uniform or official insignia, or using any federally owned or leased vehicle.

*This list of permitted and prohibited activities does not apply to federal employees in the following agencies, divisions, or positions:
  - Election Assistance Commission
  - Federal Election Commission
  - Office of the Director of National Intelligence
  - Central Intelligence Agency
  - Defense Intelligence Agency
  - National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
  - National Security Agency
  - National Security Council
  - National Security Division (Department of Justice)
  - Criminal Division (Department of Justice)
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation
  - Secret Service
  - Office of Criminal Investigation (Internal Revenue Service)
  - Office of Investigative Programs (Customs Service)
  - Office of Law Enforcement (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms)
  - Merit Systems Protection Board
  - U.S. Office of Special Counsel
  - Career members of the Senior Executive Service
  - Administrative law judges, administrative appeals judges, and contract appeals board members

For further information, contact the U.S. Office of Special Counsel’s Hatch Act Unit
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