



Subject: Political Activities
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To All City Employees:

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I. Purpose

To establish guidelines regarding Political Activities for City of Durham employees.

II. Policy

The City of Durham encourages all of its employees to vote for the candidates and issues of his/her choice.

III. Definitions

Hatch Act – Federal law limiting political activities of Federal, state and some local employees; 5 U.S.C. 7321 and following.

IV. Procedure

A. A City Employee may:

1. Join political and civic organizations and associations.
2. Attend political meetings.
3. Advocate and support political principles and policies In accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina and the United States.
4. Affiliate with civic organizations of a non-partisan or political nature.
5. Participate or be a candidate for non-partisan elective office, such as school boards, as long as the participation or candidacy does not interfere with performance on the City job or violate Section C8 below.

6. Write a letter to a newspaper on a political or partisan subject provided his/her public title is not used.
7. Be a poll worker providing employee requests and is granted annual (vacation) leave, leave without pay, or compensatory leave in advance. Leave requests for activities of this nature will be made in accordance with leave policies.
8. Sign petitions except during working hours.
9. Contribute to political or partisan campaigns (but not to another City employee) except during working hours.
10. Wear badges except during working hours.

These provisions in the following section apply to contract employees and City volunteers except #8 below.

B. A City Employee shall not:

1. Engage in any partisan or political activity while on duty.
2. Neglect the assigned City duties and responsibilities because of permitted political activity.
3. Solicit, receive, or act as custodian of funds or other items of value for political or partisan purposes.
4. Use City owned supplies, equipment, or facilities to display political or partisan slogans, poster or stickers for any political or partisan purpose.
5. Be required as a duty of employment or as condition of employment, promotion or tenure in office to contribute funds for political or partisan purposes.
6. Coerce or compel contributions for political or partisan purposes by another City employee.
7. Use official authority or influence for the purpose of influencing or affecting the outcome of an election or nomination for partisan or political office.

8. Be a candidate for elective office to a governmental position in a partisan election inside of Durham County. Be a candidate for nomination, election, or appointment in Durham City Municipal Elections.

NOTE: Candidacy in any of these situations results in immediate forfeiture of City employment. If the employee is unaware of his/her candidacy or of the employment forfeiture provision of this policy, he/she will be given the opportunity to withdraw his/her candidacy prior to the election.

9. Engage in any political or partisan activity which would represent a conflict of interest or which would compromise the employee's role of impartiality in his/her position.

Employees are encouraged to vote and may be granted accrued annual (vacation) leave, compensatory leave, or leave without pay for this purpose with prior approval of their supervisor consistent with leave policies.

If there is a question regarding political or partisan activity; the Human Resources Director should be consulted for interpretation of this policy. The City Manager and/or the City Attorney may be consulted in order to resolve any question concerning this policy.

Violation of any of the Items set forth in this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

V. Other

Employees should consider the impact of political activity on their job and should evaluate the time required by the contemplated political activity versus the time required by the job prior to engaging in political activity.

For purposes of this policy, City volunteer workers and City contractual employees are subject to procedures where their status is designated only. Other City contractors are exempt from this policy.

Employees whose funding is in whole or in part, federal (such as Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) employees) may be subject to the Hatch Act in addition to policies and procedures outlined herein.

See also Ethic Policies HRM 805 Political activities

VI. Attachments

[Policy Attachments]