

RULE XXIII
Political Activity

Section A. General political activity

1 Political speeches and campaigning

No person holding a position in the merit system shall use or promise to use directly or indirectly their official authority or influence to coerce the political action of any person or body, or to interfere with any partisan election, take part in the management of any political party or of any partisan political campaign; seek or accept nomination, election, or appointment as an officer of a political club or organization; serve as a member of a committee of any such club or organization; circulate, seek or secure signatures to any partisan petition provided for any primary, general or special election; or distribute literature, badges, labels, or insignia favoring or opposing a candidate for nomination or election, whether federal, state, county or municipal.

2 Political rights of employees

No provision in these rules shall be construed to prohibit or prevent any employee in the merit system from becoming or continuing to be a member of a political club or organization or from attendance at political meetings, from enjoying entire freedom from all interference in casting their vote, from expressing privately their opinions on all political questions, or from seeking or accepting appointment or election to public office, provided that no campaign for nomination or election shall be conducted by an employee unless the employee shall first resign or obtain a leave of absence without pay as provided in these rules.

3 Nonpartisan election or appointment

- a The provisions in these rules relating to political activity of employees shall not be construed to prohibit an employee in the merit system from becoming a candidate for and holding public office subject to nonpartisan election or from participation in such activities as membership on a charter revision commission, delegate to a state or national constitutional convention, or as a member of a local school board.
- b A leave of absence or resignation shall not be required for candidacy or selection in nonpartisan elections or appointments unless the nonpartisan elective/appointive office is in conflict with their duties.

4 Participation in elections

Employees in the merit system may participate in elections under the following conditions:

- a participation means the employee may serve as an election judge; assist with setting up and shutting down equipment at the office of the Board of Elections or inside any polling location; assist in the maintenance of equipment and delivering supplies for election judges in the week preceding an election, on election day and in the week following an election; and, answer phone calls on behalf of the board of election in connection with an election.
- b participation is a voluntary act on the part of the employee, without coercion from supervisors or Appointing Authority;
- c employee performs any activity in this regard on the employee's own time, and if the employee is otherwise scheduled to work, time off may be granted, subject to Appointing Authority approval; and,

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43 d the employee shall not wear any designation of County employment, including but not limited to a
44 County uniform or identification badge, nor shall the employee's conduct reflect to the public the
45 employee's primary County employment.

46 e Notwithstanding the provisions contained in Section A. 4 a-d, employees in the merit system may
47 participate in elections upon approval by the Commission of a County-wide program shown to be
48 necessary because of unusual circumstances.

49 5 Resignation or leave of absence required for public office

50 a No employee in the merit system shall become a partisan candidate for any elective office without
51 first resigning or obtaining a leave of absence without pay, prior to making a formal announcement
52 that the employee is seeking nomination or election, beginning the solicitation of votes, or filing or
53 otherwise qualifying as a candidate for nomination or election, whichever is earlier.

54 b Such leave of absence without pay shall extend through the campaign period and until it has been
55 officially declared that the candidate has been nominated, or defeated for such political or public
56 office, at which time the employee may request reinstatement to their merit system position if the
57 employee was not successful in attaining nomination or office, providing a vacancy exists.

58 Section B. Assessments and contributions prohibited

59 1 No employee in the merit system shall be required, directly or indirectly to pay or promise to pay any
60 assessment, subscription, or contribution for any candidate for elective office, elective office holder, or
61 political organization or purpose, or solicit or take part in soliciting any such assessment, subscription
62 or contribution from any other employee in the merit system.

63 2 As used in these rules, the terms, "assessment", "subscription", and "contribution" are defined to
64 include money and/or property.

65 Section C. Authority for opinions on political activity

66 Employees in doubt as to whether a proposed activity is barred as political activity should seek an
67 opinion from the Commission before engaging in such activity. Employees may also consult the
68 Commission's Guidelines on Political Activities.