



## THE HATCH ACT

### Permitted and Prohibited Activities For Employees Subject to Additional Restrictions\*

Further restricted federal employees are prohibited from taking an active part in partisan political management or partisan political campaigns. Specifically, these employees may not campaign for or against candidates or otherwise engage in political activity in concert with a political party, a candidate for partisan political office, or a partisan political group. Such employees:

- **May not** be a candidate for nomination or election to public office in a partisan election.
- **May not** take an active part in partisan political campaigns. For example:
  - **May not** campaign for or against a candidate or slate of candidates.
  - **May not** make campaign speeches or engage in other campaign activities to elect partisan candidates.
  - **May not** distribute campaign material in partisan elections.
  - **May not** circulate nominating petitions.
- **May not** take an active part in partisan political management. For example:
  - **May not** hold office in political clubs or parties.
  - **May not** organize or manage political rallies or meetings.
  - **May not** assist in partisan voter registration drives.
- **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** 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** 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** register and vote as they choose.
- **May** assist in nonpartisan voter registration drives.
- **May** participate in campaigns where none of the candidates represent a political party.
- **May** contribute money to political campaigns, political parties, or partisan political groups.
- **May** attend political fundraising functions.
- **May** attend political rallies and meetings.
- **May** join political clubs or parties.
- **May** sign nominating petitions.
- **May** campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, or municipal ordinances.
- **May** be a candidate for public office in a nonpartisan election.
- **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.

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

Tel: (800) 85-HATCH or (800) 854-2824  
(202) 254-3650

Fax: (202) 254-3700

Hatch Act advisory opinion requests: [hatchact@osc.gov](mailto:hatchact@osc.gov)

\* Employees subject to additional restrictions under the Hatch Act include employees from the following agencies or agency components, or in the following 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