



FACT SHEET: POLITICAL ACTIVITY FOR MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND OFFICIALS

What is Allowed?

A municipal employee may:

- Lobby for or against the introduction or enactment of *legislation or policy by legislators or other public agencies or officials*.
- Solicit support for or opposition to a *political committee or a political candidate*:
 - Using their own time, with their own private facilities, equipment, supplies, or funds.
 - Using their employment title, so long as public resources are not being used.
 - On public time or resources, when incidental to their normal course of duties.
- Solicit support for or opposition to a *ballot issue*:
 - Using their own time, with their own private facilities, equipment supplies, or funds.
 - Using their employment title, so long as public resources are not being used.
 - On public time or resources, when determining the impact of passage or failure of the ballot issue on local government operations.

An elected municipal officer may:

- Lobby for or against the introduction or enactment of *legislation or policy by legislators or other public agencies or officials*.
- Solicit support for or opposition to a *political committee or a political candidate*:
 - Using their own private facilities, equipment, supplies, or funds (since the officer is elected, whether or not they are on public time is not a consideration)
 - Using their employment title, so long as public resources are not being used.
 - Using public resources, when incidental to their normal course of duties.
- Solicit support for or opposition to a *ballot issue*:
 - Using their own time, with their own private facilities, equipment supplies, or funds.
 - Using their employment title, so long as public resources are not being used.
 - Using public resources, when determining the impact of passage or failure of the ballot issue on local government operations.

What is NOT Allowed?

- A public employee may not conduct any activities in support or opposition of a candidate or ballot issue: during those hours for which the employee receives compensation from his or her public employer; using public email or computers; or using the employee's work address, email, letterhead, or any other public supplies.
- A police officer or member of the police department may not participate in political activity while on duty or in uniform or if the activity interferes with the performance of duties.

Violations of these ethics laws carry a fine of \$50 to \$1,000, and can be prosecuted by the local ethics panel or county attorney. If those entities decline to act, a person may sue the alleged violator in court.

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