

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES-MILITARY PERSONNEL

A military member on active duty may:

- a. Register, vote, and express personal opinions.
- b. Encourage other military members to exercise voting rights.
- c. Join a political club (even if partisan), and attend political meetings and rallies as a spectator when not in uniform.
- d. Make monetary contributions to a political organization, party, or committee.
- e. Sign petitions for specific legislative action or to place a candidate's name on the ballot.
- f. Write letters to the editor expressing personal views (so long as not part of organized letter writing campaign or solicitation of votes for or against a political party or partisan political cause or candidate). Requires a disclaimer that the views are those of the individual.
- g. Place normal-sized bumper stickers on one's private vehicles.
- h. Attend a partisan or nonpartisan political fundraising activity, meeting, rally, debate, convention, or activity when not in uniform and when no appearance of sponsorship or endorsement can reasonably be drawn.

A military member on active duty may not:

- a. Participate in partisan political fundraising activities, rallies, conventions, management of campaigns, or debates. The prohibition is broad and does not depend on whether a member is in uniform or even whether an inference of official endorsement can be drawn.
- b. Use official authority to influence or interfere with an election or to solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue.
- c. Publish partisan political articles or letters that solicit votes for or against a partisan political party, candidate, or cause. Letters to the editor may be allowed as noted above.
- d. Participate in any radio, television, or other program or group discussion as an advocate for or against a partisan political party, candidate, or cause.
- e. Serve in official capacity/sponsor a partisan political club.
- f. Conduct a political opinion survey or distribute political literature.
- g. Speak before a partisan political gathering.
- h. Work for a partisan political committee or candidate during and while closing out a campaign.
- i. Engage in fundraising activity for any political candidate or cause in Federal offices, facilities, or on military reservations.
- j. March or ride in partisan parades.
- k. Participate in organized efforts to provide voters transportation to polling places if the effort is associated with a partisan political party. l. Sell tickets for or actively promote partisan political dinners and similar fundraising events.
- l. Make a campaign contribution to or receive or solicit a campaign contribution from any other member of the Armed Forces on active duty.
- m. Display a partisan political sign visible to the public.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT A PARTICULAR ACTIVITY CONTACT OUR OFFICE.

ETHICAL FAILURES: A Service reserve officer was counseled for using pictures of himself in full uniform on campaign posters, while running for a congressional seat in Virginia. The officer was educated on the impropriety of using his military service affiliation to imply endorsement by a branch of the service. The posters were removed.