

**POLITICAL ACTIVITIES-CIVILIAN PERSONNEL****DoD Civilian personnel may:**

- a. Participate in political organization activities such as joining a political party, serving as an officer in a political party, attending and participating in conventions, or serving as delegates to a convention.
- b. Take an active part in a political campaign including displaying a political sign (but not while on duty, while in a government building, or while using a government vehicle), distributing campaign literature, endorsing a candidate in a political advertisement, or canvassing for votes.
- c. Participate in election-related activities such as voting, serving as election judges, driving voters to a polling place, and running for non-partisan office.
- d. Participate in certain fundraising activities such as making financial contributions, attending fundraisers, and organizing fundraisers hosted by others.

**DoD Civilian personnel may NOT:**

- a. Use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the result of an election, including using official titles while participating in permitted political activity, soliciting or discouraging the participation in political activity of anyone with official matters before DoD, or soliciting or receiving uncompensated volunteer services from a subordinate.
- b. Participate in certain fundraising activities such as soliciting or receiving political contributions (even anonymously over the phone), hosting or sponsoring a fundraiser, or allowing the use of their official titles in relation with political fundraising.

**IF YOU HAVE PARTICULAR QUESTIONS ABOUT POLITICAL ACTIVITIES CONTACT OUR OFFICE.**

**ETHICAL FAILURES:** (Case #1) In his fervor to help elect a candidate for President, a Veterans Affairs employee ignored federal laws prohibiting federal employees from engaging in political activity on federal property—in this case, a VA clinic in Ohio. There the employee passed out campaign stickers promoting his candidate. The employee later acknowledged that this seemingly innocuous act was in fact a violation of federal law (the Hatch Act). As a result, the employee agreed to retire from the VA. The penalty could have been termination. (Case #2) An attorney in the Civil Division of the Department of Justice experienced the other side of the judicial process after being charged by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) with a violation of the Hatch Act. The attorney self-reported that he had co-hosted a political fundraiser for seven invitees, presumably unaware that this was a violation of the Hatch Act. The attorney reached a voluntary settlement with the OSC in which he served a 30-day suspension. The attorney violated 5 U.S.C. 7323(a)(2), which prohibits federal employees from knowingly soliciting, accepting or receiving political contributions. The Hatch Act prohibits most District of Columbia and federal employees from seeking nomination or election to a partisan political office; soliciting, accepting or receiving political contributions; using their official authority to interfere with the results of an election; and engaging in political activity while on duty, among other things.