



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

1.10 PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that political activity by employees of the City of Providence remains separate from their professional responsibilities and that no overlap exists between an employee's political activities and the work they perform or the resources to which they have access during their employment with the City of Providence.

Scope

This policy applies to all full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract employees of the City of Providence.

Policy

The City of Providence encourages employees to participate in lawful political expression, including political activity on behalf of any political party, candidate, or cause. Employees may choose to involve themselves in political activities to whatever degree they wish, provided that all such activities take place outside of work hours and use only the employee's personal resources exclusively. Participation in political activities must not imply that the employee is acting in an official City capacity, nor that the employee's activity represents the opinions or support of the City of Providence or its representatives.

1. Prohibited Political Activities

The following political activities are prohibited while employees are on duty or during any time spent in a City of Providence facility:

- A. Demonstrating or protesting.
- B. Counting or recounting votes.
- C. Circulating petitions.
- D. Soliciting votes or political contributions in any work area or facility.
- E. Conducting or participating in opinion polls.
- F. Fundraising or organizing political events.
- G. Any other political activities that are not part of the employee's job duties.

2. Use of City Resources

Employees are prohibited from using City of Providence equipment, communication channels, constituent contact information, or any other City resources for the purpose of making, copying, or distributing political materials or messages.

3. Political Displays and Harassment

- A. Employees are not permitted to display political messaging, such as clothing, signs, or symbols, in work areas or on City property that may be inappropriate, inflammatory, or offensive to co-workers.
- B. Harassment of co-workers, customers, or vendors regarding political preferences will not be tolerated. This includes any form of intimidation or pressure related to political beliefs.

4. Time Off for Political Activity

Employees may request vacation, floating holiday, or accrued compensatory time to engage in political activities, consistent with the City of Providence's time-off policies.

5. For Employees Subject to the Hatch Act



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- A. Employees of the City of Providence who work in roles associated with federally funded programs are subject to additional limitations on political activity under the federal Hatch Act.
- B. **The Hatch Act prohibits employees (who are subject to its provisions) from:**
 - 1. Using their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the outcome of an election.
 - 2. Coercing, attempting to coerce, or advising any state or local employee to contribute to a political party, candidate, or cause.
 - 3. Running as a candidate for public office in a partisan election.
- C. **The Hatch Act does not prohibit municipal employees from:**
 - 1. Running for office in nonpartisan elections.
 - 2. Holding elective offices in political organizations or clubs.
 - 3. Campaigning for candidates in both partisan and nonpartisan elections.
 - 4. Contributing to political organizations.
 - 5. Attending or speaking at political fundraisers or rallies.
- D. **Important Notes:**
 - 1. Employees should evaluate whether they are subject to the Hatch Act based on their role in federally funded programs. Factors that do **not** impact Hatch Act eligibility include whether the employee is paid from non-federal funds, does not have discretion over federal program funds, or works in a program that is only partially federally funded.
 - 2. Violations of the Hatch Act may lead to investigation and prosecution by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). Employees who are unsure about whether they are subject to the Hatch Act should seek guidance from the Department of People and Culture.

6. **Compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in progressive disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

Related Policies:

Ethics Guide
Gift Policy
Additional Employment Disclosure Policy
HR Hotline
Discipline Policy
Code of Conduct
Open Door Policy

Other Related Information:

Local 1033 [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)
Rhode Island Code of Ethics
Providence Code of Ethics