

# Political Activities and Local Agencies



## Campaign Season

Local agencies must provide voters a fair election process free from excessive persuasion from their public servants, while respecting the rights of their employees to engage in political discussions and activities on their own time and at their own expense. California law helps even the playing field. Below we provide a planning guide to help avoid issues this campaign season.

## What Local Agencies May Do:

- > Prohibit or restrict officers and employees from engaging in political activity during working hours, in uniform, or using their official title.
- > Prohibit or restrict political activities on the agency's premises.
- > Provide accurate, fair, and impartial information to the public about the possible effects of a ballot measure on the activities, operations, or policies of the agency.

## What Local Agencies Cannot Do:

- > Use public funds or resources to advocate for or against a ballot measure or candidate.
- > Restrict employees from participating in political activities while not on duty.
- > Use agency email accounts and mailboxes to distribute campaign materials.

## Rules for Individual Employees:

Employees **may**:

- > Participate in political activities in their individual capacities while off-duty, including before/after the workday, on lunch break, and during vacation/leave.

Employees **shall not**:

- > Use agency funds or resources to promote a political position or support personal political activities.
- > Solicit political contributions from employees within the agency.
- > Request or obtain a list of employees' names and addresses to be used for personal political purposes.
- > Participate in political activities while in uniform or using their official title, or engage in campaign activities during work hours.
- > Use their authority or influence of their position to persuade or induce employees to take or refrain from taking any type of political action, including volunteer services associated with political activities.

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