

# Sample Municipal Entity Political Activity Policies

(Compiled by CIRSA General Counsel Office, Sept 2024)

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

Employees are encouraged to participate in the electoral process and support the political candidates and ballot measures of their choice. Employees are free to engage in political activity associated with city, county, state and federal campaigns, but need to do so on personal time, with personal resources, off of City premises and without giving the impression that their activity is being endorsed by the City. This is because it's important that the City's operations and deliberations are impartial and that efforts are made to eliminate improper influence.

Except as authorized by law, while on work time an employee may not publicly support any candidate for office or ballot measure, circulate any petitions for such office or ballot measure, distribute campaign literature or display campaign buttons, placards and so on. In addition, employees are expected to refrain from efforts to convert others to a political cause during working hours.

Employees who are principally employed in departments or in connection with programs financed in whole or in part by loans or grants made by the United States or a federal agency may not continue to be employed while running for political office in a partisan election. Employees who are not covered by the preceding sentence and who choose to run for political office must do so on their own time and the City's premises cannot be used for political campaigning unless said premises are determined to be a public forum. If an employee wishes to be a candidate for City Council, the employee must submit a request for a leave of absence commencing on the date of the filing and ending on the day following the election. If elected to City Council, it will be deemed a resignation from the employee's current position.

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITY - POLICY**

All employees are entitled to exercise their rights as citizens to express their opinions on all political subjects and candidates, to vote as they choose, to hold membership in and support a political party, to maintain political neutrality, to attend political meetings, and be a candidate for political party office. Employees may not:

- Be both an employee and a member of the City Council. Any employee intending to become a candidate for elective City office shall first take leave of absence without pay or resign.
- Participate in the management, affairs or political campaign for elected office of any candidate, including for their own candidacy, during work hours.
- Solicit any endorsements, contributions or services for any political party, interest group, campaign, or other private cause during work hours.
- Use official authority or influence of an employment position for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office.
- Wear campaign buttons or other campaign paraphernalia or attire while on duty.
- Display campaign paraphernalia upon City property.

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

No employee or applicant for employment for the City shall be required to divulge personal information concerning political affiliations, activities or beliefs as a condition of present or future employment in the City. No employee or official of the City shall attempt to direct or coerce any City employee to contribute to or participate in any political campaign, political activity, candidate, cause or organization. No employee's pay, personnel status or promotion shall be made dependent on any such activity. No covert or overt political campaigning or other political activity by any City employee intended to influence the vote of any other person for or against any elective officer or issue before the electorate, as provided by the applicable Colorado statute dealing with school, general, special and municipal elections, shall take place in the City Hall or in any other City building or property or during the performance of any job related duty. No supplies, equipment or property belonging to the City may be used in conducting a political campaign or other political activity.

### **RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY - STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

The City recognizes that employees have rights and responsibilities as citizens to participate in the political process. However, because City employees hold positions of public trust and confidence, certain restrictions on political activities of employees both on and off the job are necessary to avoid actual or apparent conflicts of interest and to promote the integrity of City government.

Definition: For purposes of this policy "political activity" means any act or statement supporting or opposing any candidate, legislation, constitutional amendment, amendment to the City's Municipal Code or City Charter, or any petition addressed to any government agency, or official or the circulation of any such petition or placement of political media/signs on City property.

### **Prohibitions:**

- No employee may engage in political activity while: on duty; in a uniform that identifies the employee as a City employee; in a City office or building (except when in such place as a citizen and not as an employee); or using a City vehicle or equipment.
- No employee may represent his or her position concerning a political topic as the position of the City when engaging in off-duty political activity.
- No employee may receive additional compensation, according to Section 1-6-115, C.R.S., for serving as an election judge, election clerk, or designated election official in a municipal election.

### **Political activities do not include:**

- Registering to vote or voting in any election;
- Statements supporting or opposing any legislation, constitutional amendment, amendment to the City's Municipal Code or Charter, or any petition addressed to any government agency or official, when made by an employee authorized by the City Manager to express the City's official position;
- Statements made by an employee in the course of the employee's job duties to aide City management in formulating an official City position; or
- Assisting a designated election official to help conduct an election as an official election judge under Section 1-6-101, C.R.S., *et seq.*, and has taken the judges oath under Section 1-6-114, C.R.S.