



Political Participation

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ORS 260.432(2)

- No public employee shall solicit any money, influence, service or other thing of value or otherwise promote or oppose any political committee or promote or oppose the nomination or election of a candidate, the gathering of signatures on an initiative, referendum or recall petition, the adoption of a measure or the recall of a public office holder while on the job during working hours. However, this section does not restrict the right of a public employee to express personal political views.

Who Is Subject to ORS 260.432?

- Subject:
 - Staff (ranging from City Manager to interns)
 - Members of boards and commissions
 - Neighborhood association members and officers when acting in an advisory manner to the City
- Not Subject:
 - Mayor and Council Members

What Can Public Employees Do?

- Carry out their official duties (e.g. take minutes of meetings at which Council takes a position)
- Provide factual, neutral and balanced information
 - All materials published by the City relating to a ballot measure should be reviewed by the City Attorney
 - If a Citizen Advisory Group published materials, they should be reviewed by the City Manager
- Advocate as individuals on their own time
- Wear political buttons/ribbons, if City dress code permits

What Must Public Employees Refrain from Doing?

- Take a position on a measure or candidate while on the job - employees may not use any work time
- Use City resources to advocate for or against a measure or candidate
 - Examples include:
 - Making outgoing calls to schedule or organize campaign events
 - Grant unequal access to public facilities to candidates or political committees
 - Use of NA stipend for any political activity

Elected Officials

- Elected officials may advocate for or against measures or candidates
- With limited exceptions, they may not use City resources to do so
 - Council may adopt a resolution or pass a motion taking a position on an election issue, but Council cannot use City staff to prepare a motion or resolution or use City resources to publicize the motion or resolution

State Literature

- The Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office has prepared two items to assist public employees in complying with elections law - "Quick Card" and "Restrictions on Political Campaigning by Public Employees, ORS 260.432" - 2008
- All City employees dealing with elections issues should have access to a copy of each and should consult these documents before taking action. If any uncertainty remains, contact the City Attorney's office