



United States Fish & Wildlife Service

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Memorandum

03/09/2004

From Director
Title Political Activity

As the presidential election nears, employees are reminded of the legislative restrictions that govern their political activity. The Constitution provides us all with certain rights, including the right to vote, but unlike other citizens, Federal employees have an additional responsibility: we must always be aware of our role as public servants, and we must ensure that the public has the utmost confidence in their government at all times. Toward that end, the Hatch Act restricts political activities of government employees in certain ways. Generally, all employees:

- May register and vote as they choose
- May be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections
- May assist in voter registration drives
- May express opinions about candidates and issues
- May contribute money to political organizations
- May attend political fund-raising functions
- May join and be an active member of a political party or club

Under the Hatch Act, most employees:

- MAY NOT use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election
- MAY NOT solicit, accept or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same Federal labor organization or employee organization and the one solicited is not a subordinate employee
- MAY NOT knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency
- MAY NOT engage in political activity while on duty
- MAY NOT engage in political activity in any government facility
- MAY NOT engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform
- MAY NOT engage in political activity while using a government vehicle
- MAY NOT run for office as a candidate in a partisan election
- MAY NOT wear political buttons on duty

Employees who hold career positions in the Senior Executive Service are subject to additional restrictions. If you are unsure about the appropriateness of participating in a particular political activity, you should seek the advice of your [servicing ethics counselor](#).

Finally, additional resources on this subject are available on the [U.S. Office of Special Counsel website](#) (which is the lead office for addressing questions on Hatch Act related matters).

Our mission is, working with others, to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.