

CIRCULAR



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Title
The Hatch Act (Permitted and Prohibited Political Activities)

Topic/Number
CIR-08-06

Effective Date
September 15, 2008

Related to:
General Order 303.7 (Police Arrangements for Election Day Voting Process), Effective Date June 11, 2003
Rescinds:
Circular 04-05 [The Hatch Act (Permitted and Prohibited Political Activities)], Effective Date July 7, 2004
Teletype 09-007-08 [Reminder of Requirements Under CIR-04-05 (The Hatch Act)] dated September 3, 2008

I. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Circular is to apprise members of the "Permitted and Prohibited Activities for Employees Subject to Additional Restrictions" as described in the Hatch Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Section 7321, *et seq.*). The provisions of the Hatch Act apply when a Metropolitan Police Department member is on duty as well as when a member is off duty.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel is responsible for enforcement of the Hatch Act and has issued guidelines which must be followed by District of Columbia government employees. These guidelines are summarized below. Members are encouraged to consult www.osc.gov for additional information on the Hatch Act and permitted and prohibited activities. The Office of Special Counsel may also be contacted on 1-85-HATCH or 202-254-3650.

II. PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

While off duty, and subject to the requirements in Part III below, members may:

- Register and vote as they choose;
- Contribute money to political organizations and candidates;
- Campaign (including making speeches and distributing literature) for or against candidates in partisan elections (where the candidates are running as representatives of a political party, such as the Democratic and Republican party);

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- Campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, and municipal ordinances;
- Be candidates for public office in non-partisan elections (where none of the candidates represent a political party);
- Hold office in political clubs or parties including serving as a delegate to a convention;
- Express opinions about candidates and issues;
- Assist in voter registration drives;
- Sign nominating petitions; and
- Attend political rallies, meetings, and fundraisers.

III. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

A. At all times, members shall not:

- Engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform;
- Display political buttons, bumper stickers, posters or other political material at work, including in a government office or common area of a government building, and on government vehicles;
- Engage in political activity while using aNY government vehicle;
- Engage in political activity in any government office;
- 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;
- Be a candidate for public office in partisan elections; and
- Use official authority or influence to interfere with an election.

B. While on duty, members shall not:

- Engage in any political activity; and/or
- Place political material on personal equipment (for example, clipboards) used while on duty.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisory and command personnel observing a violation shall take immediate action to terminate the activity. Violations may be subject to disciplinary action and/or referral to the Office of Special Counsel. Ignorance of the law is not a defense.



Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

CLL:PH:JGW:PS