



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

FEB 15 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Political Activities

As the 2024 primary elections commence, I want to remind all DoD personnel about the rules pertaining to participation in political activities. The Secretary and I have stressed the importance of complying with Federal law and DoD policy that address participation in the political process by DoD military and civilian personnel. As citizens, we exercise our right to vote and participate in government. As public servants, we uphold DoD's longstanding tradition of remaining apolitical as we carry out our official responsibilities. This is why DoD imposes additional rules for some personnel beyond what other Federal agencies may require. Maintaining the hard-earned trust and confidence of the American people requires us to avoid any action that could imply endorsement of a political party, political candidate or campaign by any element of the Department.

Attached is a quick guide containing the rules that apply to DoD personnel. Do not hesitate to consult with your leaders and your legal counsel if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen H. Hicks", is centered on the page.

Attachment:
As stated



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Political Activity Quick Guide

Am I...

A Less Restricted DoD Employee

All DoD civilian employees and Schedule C appointments not covered under "Further restricted"

A Further Restricted DoD Employee or Active Duty Service Member

Presidential Appointees confirmed by the Senate (PAS), Non-career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), Career members of the SES, Contract appeals board members, or employees of the NSA, DIA, or National Geo-Spatial-Intelligence Agency

Yes
 No

May I...



Volunteer to work on a campaign of a candidate running for partisan political office



Engage in non-partisan political activity, including issue oriented campaigns, i.e., Healthcare, tax reform, and gun control



Engage in political activity in a Federal building



Park my personal vehicle with a (one) political bumper sticker in a government parking lot



Place a campaign sign in your yard (not on a military installation)



Write a letter to an editor, in my personal capacity, that endorses a candidate running for partisan political office



Serve as an election judge for a city or county



Work or stand at the polls, for a partisan candidate, on Election Day



Make a monetary contribution to a political party or candidate



Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions



Use official equipment while engaging in political activity



Please note that this Quick Guide is not comprehensive. For complete guidance, see <https://dodsoco.osd.mil/ETHICS-TOPICS/Political-Activities/>
If you have questions, contact your local SJA/GC office or SOCO at osd.soco@mail.mil