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.

Attachment:
As stated
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

May I...

- Volunteer to work on a campaign of a candidate running for partisan political office
  - Yes
  - No

- Engage in non-partisan political activity, including issue oriented campaigns, i.e., Healthcare, tax reform, and gun control
  - Yes
  - No

- Engage in political activity in a Federal building
  - No

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

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

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

- Serve as an election judge for a city or county
  - Yes

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

- Make a monetary contribution to a political party or candidate
  - Yes

- Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions
  - No

- Use official equipment while engaging in political activity
  - No

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