



## Administrative Policy No. 18.68

**Subject:** Employee Participation in Political Activities

**Information Contact:** Human Resources Division

**Authorizing Sources:** [Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C. & 1505-1508](#)  
[RCW 41.06.250](#) – Political Activities  
[RCW 42.17.130](#) – Use of Public Office or Facilities  
[RCW 42.52.180](#) - Use of Public Resources for Political Campaigns

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2005

**Revised:** June 15, 2013 <sup>i</sup>Housekeeping 8/7/14 <sup>ii</sup> Housekeeping 6/25/15

**Approved By:** original signed by Glen G. Christopherson  
Senior Director, DSHS Human Resources

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### Purpose:

This policy establishes guidelines for all Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) employees' participation in political activities.

### Scope:

This policy applies to all DSHS employees and includes coverage under the Federal Hatch Act.

### Definition:

*Hatch Act:* Federal law restricting political activities of certain federal, state, and local employees whose duties involve programs financed in whole or in part by a federal loan or grant.

*Non-partisan:* Not influenced by, being in support of, or associated with the policies or interests of a specific political party.

*Partisan:* To be influenced by, in support of, or associated with the policies or interests of a specific political party.

### Policy:

**A. DSHS employees may:**

1. Express their opinions on political subjects and candidates.
2. Take an active part in political campaigns.
3. Wear political campaign badges and buttons when not serving in an official capacity or meeting the public as a representative of DSHS.
4. Be a candidate for a nonpartisan elective office.
5. Be a candidate for a partisan elective office under the guidelines of Section C of this policy.

**B. DSHS employees must not:**

1. Use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination for office.
2. Coerce, command, or advise another state employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes.
3. Use state equipment time, supplies, or facilities for any political purposes, or to assist a candidate for a partisan or nonpartisan office.
4. Hold a public office in a political subdivision of the state when holding such an office is incompatible or substantially interferes with performing official state duties.
5. Engage in campaign activities on work time.
6. Lobby on work time for or against legislation for personal or professional interest, unless appropriate under [Administrative Policy 1.01](#).
7. Display campaign materials of any kind, including signs, brochures, petitions, etc. in their office or work area.

**C. All DSHS employees are subject to Federal Hatch Act restrictions**

1. Prior to filing as a candidate with the Secretary of State or county elections department, an employee wishing to be a partisan candidate, must:
  - a. Notify the Appointing Authority of candidacy or intent to run for a partisan election.
  - b. Ensure that their salary is not completely funded by federal loans or grants.

- c. Be aware of DSHS policies regarding standards of ethical conduct and use of state resources.
  - d. Understand Hatch Act restrictions from engaging in political misconduct.
2. If a supervisor or appointing authority becomes aware that an employee has filed for a partisan office and has failed to notify DSHS of his or her candidacy:
- a. The appointing authority must notify DSHS Human Resources.
  - b. DSHS Human Resources will notify the Federal Office of Special Counsel (OSC) if employee's position is 100% federally funded.
    - i. If OSC determines there has been a violation of the Federal Hatch Act, OSC may prosecute the employee before the Federal Merit System Protection Board (MSPB).
    - ii. Prosecution may occur even if the employee withdraws from candidacy.
  - c. If the MSPB finds the employee's violation warrants dismissal from employment, DSHS will separate the employee. Failure to do so will result in DSHS forfeiting a portion of the federal assistance equal to two years of the employee's salary.

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<sup>i</sup> Added provisions of Hatch Act & allows partisan offices

<sup>ii</sup> Changed to 4 year sunset cycle

Official DSHS