PURPOSE

To state the Pennington Biomedical Research Center’s commitment to the provisions of Section 2-12 of the LSU Board of Supervisors Bylaws and Regulations, to Article X, Section 9 of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana and the State Department of Civil Service Rule 14.1(e), relating to participating or engaging in political activities by a full-time employee and prohibited political activity by a classified employee.

POLICY

(A) Holding of a Political Office

A full-time employee of the LSU System may not accept an appointive political office nor seek or hold an elective remunerative political office without the consent of the LSU System president.

(B) Prohibited Political Activity

All classified employees will adhere to the following guidelines, as defined in the rules and regulations named in the above-stated purpose.

1) Party Membership and Elections

No member of the State Civil Service Commission and no officer or employee in the classified service designation will:

a) Participate or engage in political activities;

b) Be a candidate for nomination or election to public office except to seek election as the classified state employee serving on the State Civil Service Commission;

c) Be a member of any national, state, or local committee of a political party or faction;

d) Make or solicit contributions for any political party, faction, or candidate, or take an active part in the management of the affairs of a political party, faction, candidate, or any political campaign.
Exceptions: Classified employee may exercise his/her right as a citizen to express his/her opinion privately, to serve as a commissioner or watcher at the voting polls, and to cast his vote as he/she desires.

2) Contributions

"Political activity" means an effort to support or oppose the election of a candidate for political office or to support a particular political party in an election. The support of issues involving borrowed indebtedness, tax referenda, or constitutional amendments is prohibited.

(C) General Information

Questions and Answers Relating to Situations Involving Political Activities

(Source: The State Department of Civil Service has provided the following examples of questions and answers citing situations which a classified employee may encounter.)

1) My spouse is not a classified employee and is a candidate for an elective political office:
   a) May I accompany my spouse as he or she goes door to door in our neighborhood soliciting voter support?
      Answer: No. You cannot support a candidate for elected political office.
   b) My spouse wants to place our family photograph in the newspaper. Is it permissible for me to be in the picture?
      Answer: No. You cannot support a candidate for elected political office, even though the candidate may be your spouse.
   c) May I remain at home when my spouse is having a party at our home, when the purpose of the party is to obtain support for my spouse's campaign?
      Answer: Yes, but you may not take an active part in soliciting campaign contributions or similar political activities.

2.) May I attend a social function in honor of a political candidate if someone gives me a free ticket to the event?
   Answer: No. You may attend only those meetings (includes election night parties) that are open to the general public and at which all activities, food and beverages, if any, are free of charge.

3.) Would my membership in an association which occasionally lobbies to get certain legislation approved be prohibited political activity?
   Answer: No. Provided the legislation is not legislation that would support or endorse a candidate.

4.) Is it prohibited political activity for me to sign a petition to have a person's name added to a ballot for an elected public office?
   Answer: Yes, it is prohibited.
5.) Is it prohibited political activity for me to participate as a member of a band hired to perform at a political rally?
Answer: No, provided the band's fees for these services are not reduced or waived for political reasons.

6.) Is it prohibited political activity for me to be a member of a professional organization which has a policy of endorsing under certain circumstances candidates for public office?
Answer: No, provided that the primary purpose of the organization is other than for the endorsement of candidates or for providing support to political parties or factions. And provided that at the time any party or candidate is endorsed, you are not taking an active part in the management of the affairs of the organization. Management of affairs would include the act of voting for an endorsement or making an effort to cause the organization to take a particular endorsement. Furthermore, dues, contributions, or assessments other than those used for non-political purposes are prohibited.

7.) Does it constitute prohibited political activity for me to designate $1.00 on my United States Internal Revenue Income Tax Return to a presidential campaign?
Answer: No, it does not.

8.) Is it prohibited political activity for me to introduce the political candidates at a function at which all candidates will speak?
Answer: No, it is not.

9.) My spouse is not a classified state employee and we own two automobiles. Is it prohibited political activity for me to drive my spouse's automobile occasionally even though it has political bumper stickers on it?
Answer: No, but if you drive your spouse's automobile, or use it in such a fashion as to cause the general public to reasonably conclude that you are actively supporting a particular candidate or party, it would be a violation.

10.) My spouse is not a classified state employee. Am I guilty of prohibited political activity if my spouse places a political sign in our yard?
Answer: No, you are not.

(D) Additional Clarification and Information

Employees who require additional information pertaining to prohibited political activity may contact the State Department of Civil Service:

1.) General Counsel (342-8544), or

2.) Personnel Management Division (342-8274)