

To: SPCR_ALL
From: John Keck
Date: 4/4/02 8:40AM
Subject: Political Campaigning

As the election year is beginning, I want to remind all staff of the legal and ethical consideration by which state employees must abide in the area of partisan politics.

First it is important to recognize that the federal Hatch Act applies to the political activity of certain state and local government employees. Covered employees under the act are persons principally employed by state or local executive agencies in connection with programs financed in whole or in part by federal loans or grants. The act does not apply to the political activity of persons employed by educational or research institutions or agencies supported in whole or part by (a) states or their political subdivisions, or (b) religious, philanthropic or cultural organizations.

Under the Hatch Act, persons may:

- *run for public office in nonpartisan elections
- *campaign for and hold office in political clubs and organizations
- *actively campaign for candidates for public office in partisan and nonpartisan elections
- *contribute money to political organizations and attend political fund-raising functions

Under the Hatch Act, persons may not:

- *be candidates for public office in a partisan election
- *use official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination
- *directly or indirectly coerce contributions from subordinates in support of a political party or candidate

While the Hatch Act applies to federal employees and programs funded in part or in whole by federal grants or dollars, many points in the Hatch Act are good practices for general funded employees as well. Also, it's best to refrain from displaying political memorabilia such as campaign stickers, posters, pins etc. in office or work space. Campaigning for political candidates should be conducted on personal time and should exclude the use of state equipment and/or supplies.

Candidates for public office can call me and I will in turn either offer them a tour of their department to meet and greet department employees or set up a conference room/break room for employees to meet the candidate. Candidates will begin touring our offices in the near future. You are welcome to ask them question about their positions and learn more about their vision for the state either as they tour the building or by meeting with them in the area set up for this purpose.