

# **POLICY MANUAL**

## **GENERAL**

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**Number 333**

**Subject: Political Activity**

**Covered Employees: University Employees**

**Date of Origin: January 24, 1997**

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### **333.1 POLICY**

The University encourages all employees to take an active role in public service by participating in local, state, and national political activities. The University will attempt to accommodate employees who run for public office, while ensuring that the employee's political activities do not adversely affect University operations.

The University assumes no responsibility for an employee's endorsement of a political candidate or cause. The name of the University is not to be connected with such an endorsement in any way except for the limited purpose of identifying the University as the employer of the employee making the political endorsement. No endorsement shall be made on the official stationery of the University nor on stationery having the University address or a University telephone number.

### **333.2 PROCEDURES**

#### **2.1 Political Activity**

Any employee who wishes to engage in direct political activity which will involve a substantial amount of time (i.e., holding or running for political office, managing a campaign, or directing group action on behalf of a political candidate or issue) is expected to work out a mutual agreement for released time with his or her supervisor and the appropriate dean/vice president before undertaking such activity.

#### **2.2 Public Office**

Any employee who files as a candidate for an elective public office must notify his or her department head or immediate supervisor in writing and forward copies to the appropriate dean/vice president and the University President. No further action is necessary if the candidacy and office require little or no time away from campus during working hours (for example, positions on school boards or town councils.)

If the candidacy and the responsibilities of the office will require substantial time away from campus, the employee must make special arrangements with the department head or supervisor. Generally, a benefit-eligible employee may arrange to take accrued annual leave or leave without pay to campaign for elective office and/or to meet off-campus obligations the office may require.

Any employee may become a candidate for the Utah State Legislature or for the United States Congress without resigning from the University, even though it may be necessary to take a leave of absence without pay or use accrued annual leave to campaign effectively for the U.S. Congress. Such leaves will be automatically granted for both campaigning time and the period of time between commencement and final adjournment of any regular or special session of the legislature. Accrued annual leave may be used to reduce the leave-without-pay period required to meet the responsibilities associated with the elected office.

### **2.3 University Responsibilities**

Employees have a binding obligation to fulfill their regular duties. Any private activity requiring a large portion of time away from campus may hurt the performance of those duties. Therefore, for the mutual protection of employees and the University, employees campaigning as political candidates for state or federal offices must do so on their own time. While campaigning and holding office, an employee must obtain a leave of absence or continue to work at the University on a part-time basis.

In such campaign activities, the individual's relationship to the University is not to be exploited, either directly or indirectly.

### **2.4 Voting**

Utah State University encourages employees to participate in the voting process. In situations where an employee's work schedule does not allow time to cast a ballot in a state or national election, the University will allow the employee to take off up to 2 hours during regular work hours to vote. A request for voting time off must be made to the employee's immediate supervisor before election day.

## **333.3 RESPONSIBILITY**

### **3.1 Employees**

Responsible to communicate to their supervisors any political activity that would interfere with their regular duties at the University. In addition, if time is needed to participate in the voting process, employees must inform their immediate supervisors before election day.