



TITLE

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

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INITIAL APPROVAL DATE
March 28, 2012

APPROVAL LEVEL
Alberta Health Services Executive Committee

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SPONSOR
Chief Operating Officer, Chief Medical Officer, People & Partners

REVISION EFFECTIVE DATE
N/A

CATEGORY
Corporate Accountability

NEXT REVIEW
March 28, 2015

NOTE: Terms that appear in bold in the body of this document are defined terms – See Definitions.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the information in this policy, please contact the Corporate Policy Department at corporatpolicy@albertahealthservices.ca. The Corporate Policy website is the official source of current approved corporate policies, procedures, and directives.

PURPOSE

- To outline Alberta Health Services' ("AHS") expectations surrounding **political activity**.

POLICY STATEMENT

AHS is a politically neutral organization and does not support or endorse any **political party** or candidate at any level of government.

AHS recognizes the personal right of **AHS representatives** to participate in political activities. AHS representatives may publicly support or oppose any political activity, political party, candidate, or cause in a personal capacity provided they do not use AHS work time or resources (including, but not limited to electronic and IT communications, stationery, or any resource provided or supported by AHS), or do so while representing AHS, and any action is done in compliance with AHS' Code of Conduct, the Conflict of Interest Bylaw (COI Bylaw) and other relevant governance documents.

AHS is prohibited from donating to any provincial political party or candidate under the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (Alberta). AHS recognizes its duty as a public entity to ensure the sound stewardship of public funds and resources, therefore, does not donate or contribute funds or resources to any political activity, political party, or candidate at any level of government.

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this policy is required by all AHS employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of AHS (including contracted services providers as necessary). This policy is subject to all applicable laws.

Applicable legislation, employment contracts, or collective agreements shall take precedence in the event of a conflict with this policy.

POLICY ELEMENTS

1. Political Donations

- 1.1 AHS representatives may make **political donations** using their personal funds and/or attend political events, including fundraising events, in a personal capacity.
- 1.2 AHS funds or resources shall not be donated or otherwise used to support any political activity, political party, or candidate including attendance at or donations to fundraising events. Personal funds or resources shall not be donated to a political activity, political party, or candidate on behalf of AHS.

2. Political Activity at AHS Facilities

- 2.1 AHS facilities shall not be used for any political activity, including, but not limited to use for the purposes of canvassing, campaigning, making political announcements, touring and other activities. During an election campaign, political parties are not permitted to use AHS facilities as a backdrop or host location for any campaign event or activity.
- 2.2 Elected officials may access AHS facilities for the purpose of carrying out their duties to the elected office provided they do not engage in any political activity and comply with applicable AHS policies and all standard access requirements in place at the facility.
- 2.3 In accordance with the *Election Act (Alberta)*, *Canada Elections Act (Alberta)*, and *Local Authorities Election Act (Alberta)*, AHS facilities may be used for polling stations and for special/mobile polling provided the polling does not interfere with health care delivery and AHS business.
- 2.4 Any other political activity is not permitted in AHS facilities.

3. Candidates for Election

- 3.1 In accordance with the COI Bylaw, AHS **senior officers** must not be a candidate in a provincial election while serving in their position with AHS. All other AHS representatives must disclose their candidacy in accordance with the COI Bylaw in order to manage any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise from being a candidate in an election or serving in an elected office. Upon

disclosure, the candidate's **manager**, in consultation with the Ethics and Compliance Officer determines whether a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest exists and if so, the appropriate steps to mitigate or remove the conflict position.

3.2 AHS representatives who are:

- a) elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, the Parliament of Canada, or a municipal office (including school trustee) are required to disclose the elected position in accordance with the COI Bylaw and comply with the decision of the Ethics and Compliance Officer to remove or mitigate a real, potential, or perceived conflict position; or
- b) not elected, and are on an approved leave of absence from AHS, may return to their position or similar position with AHS effective the first day after the election.

3.3 AHS representatives requesting time off to assist in another individual's campaign are required to follow the standard processes for processing and approving paid or unpaid time off (e.g. vacation request, leave of absence).

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

AHS representatives means AHS employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, and others who may act on behalf of AHS.

Manager means the person who is responsible for directing or overseeing an AHS representative, or the person to whom that AHS representative reports.

Political activity means an action that supports or opposes a political party, candidate, or cause at any level of government, including but not limited to:

- a) seeking nomination as, or being a candidate for election;
- b) volunteering for a political party or candidate;
- c) campaign visits, tours, or events from candidates and/or their representatives;
- d) posting political party, candidate, or campaign signs or posters;
- e) distributing political party, candidate or campaign literature;
- f) wearing or distributing political party, candidate, or campaign attire including buttons;
- g) soliciting political donations or fundraising; and
- h) soliciting petition/nomination signatures.

Political donations ("donations") means the contribution of funds (including, but not limited to, cash, cheques, purchase orders, p-cards/credit card purchases, and funding requests made to accounts payable), time, gifts (including door prizes and silent auction gifts), or resources to a political activity, political party, or candidate.

Political party means an organization, including associated constituency associations, established under the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (Alberta) or *Canada Elections Act* (Canada) and registered with Elections Alberta or Elections Canada to nominate candidates in an election.

Senior officer means the President and Chief Executive Officer, any other executive that reports directly to the President and Chief Executive Officer, and any other person so designated by the President and Chief Executive Officer or the AHS Board.

REFERENCES

- Conflict of Interest Bylaw
- Medical Staff Bylaws and Rules
- AHS Policies & Directives
 - Leave of Absence (#1110)
 - Vacation (#1114)
 - Use of AHS Facilities by Non-AHS Representatives Corporate Directive (#CM-11-01)
- *Election Act* (Alberta)
- *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (Alberta)
- *Canada Elections Act* (Canada)
- *Local Authorities Election Act* (Alberta)

REVISIONS

None