



Ethics Reminder

A REMINDER FROM THE NEW YORK STATE JOINT COMMISSION ON PUBLIC ETHICS

As campaign season approaches, please take note you are subject to Civil Service Law § 107 and Public Officers Law § 74

As a State employee, you can volunteer to work for a political campaign. Just remember to follow a few important rules.

Under Civil Service Law § 107:

- State offices may not be used for soliciting or collecting any political contributions.
- State Officers and Employees may not be questioned, directly or indirectly, about their political affiliation as a condition of employment.
- Prospective employees cannot be asked about their political party affiliation, whether that applicant made any political contributions, or how that applicant voted.
- No person can use his or her official State position to coerce, intimidate or influence other State Officers or Employees for any political purpose, action or contribution, or interfere with any election.
- State Officers or Employees must not corruptly use or promise to use any official authority or influence in exchange for political action on another's part.

In addition, the following political activities would violate the Code of Ethics in Public Officers Law § 74:

- Circulating a candidate's nominating or designating petition within your office;
- Using your work computer (laptop or office) to produce a brochure in support of or in opposition to a candidate or a ballot question; and
- Using State internet connections or accounts to forward e-mail messages received from an electoral campaign or someone supporting or opposing a candidate or ballot initiative.

REMEMBER:

Violating Public Officers Law § 74 can result in a maximum fine of \$10,000.

The Joint Commission on Public Ethics periodically releases Ethics Reminders. Each Reminder is a brief and easy to understand synopsis of the laws and rules under the Commission's jurisdiction. Ethics Reminders are issued to assist those subject to the Commission's jurisdiction in understanding and complying with their obligations under the law.