

**PEACE OFFICER MERIT COMMISSION POLICY & PROCEDURE****POLITICAL ACTIVITIES****POLICY**

Employees covered by the Merit Commission are encouraged to be involved in political activities so long as those activities conform to state and federal law and the provisions of this policy.

**PURPOSE**

To define the conditions under which employees covered by the Merit Commission can participate in political activities.

**PROCEDURE****1.0 PROVISIONS GOVERNING POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

- 1.1 No person shall be denied the opportunity to become an applicant for a position under the merit system by virtue of political opinion or affiliation.
- 1.2 No person employed by the County or UPD under the merit system may be dismissed from service as a result of political affiliation, casting their vote or expressing an opinion on political subjects and candidates.
- 1.3 An employee may voluntarily contribute funds to political groups.
- 1.4 A County employee may become a candidate for public office provided that the employee's salary is not completely funded by federal loans or grants.
- 1.5 Any employee or member of a governing body, or police inter-local entity, whether elected or appointed, may not directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command, or advise a state or local officer or employee to pay, lend, or contribute any part of the officer's salary or compensation or anything else of value to a party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes nor shall any merit employee or member of a governing body make or attempt to make a merit system officer's personnel status, rank or continued employment dependent upon the officer's support or lack of support for a political party, committee, organization, agency or person engaged in a political activity. This section shall not be deemed to apply to political speeches or use of mass communications media for political purposes by persons not merit system officers even though merit system officers may be present or within the reach of such media unless the purpose and intent thereof is to violate this section with direct respect to such officers.
- 1.6 No merit system officer or employee may engage in any political activity during the hours of employment, nor shall any person solicit political contributions from merit system officers during hours of employment for political purposes; but nothing in this section shall preclude voluntary contributions by a merit system officer to the party or candidate of the officer's choice.

1.7 No merit system officer or employee may use their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office.

2.0 HATCH ACT

2.1 The Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1502) prohibits certain Merit Commission covered employees, whose salary or other benefits are funded in whole with federal contract, loan or grant monies, from running for any political office.

2.2 Nothing contained in this Merit Commission Policy and Procedure shall be construed to permit political activity of any County employee who is prevented or restricted from engaging in such political activity by the provisions of the Hatch Act.

3.0 PROVISIONS RELATED TO EMPLOYEES RUNNING FOR ELECTIVE OFFICE

3.1 Merit Commission covered employees who run for elective office are required, upon filing, to notify the Sheriff of their candidacy.

4.0 VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPHS 1.4 AND 1.5

4.1 Under State law, any person who violates any provision of paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 of this Merit Commission Policy and Procedure may also be subject to prosecution in addition to any other discipline.

APPROVED AND PASSED THIS 26 DAY OF May 2016.

SALT LAKE COUNTY  
PEACE OFFICER MERIT COMMISSION

By:   
KENNETH WALLENTINE, Chair