



THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH

COUNCIL POLICY

Effective Date Click here to enter a date. Amendment Date(s):	POLICY NO. 24.ADMN
SUBJECT: Employee Election and Political Conduct Policy	
Category: Administration	

PURPOSE

The District of Central Saanich (District) recognizes that employees, as citizens, have the right to participate in the democratic process, including voting, expressing political views, and engaging in political activities on their own time.

At the same time, the District has a duty to ensure that municipal services, programs, and advice are delivered in a manner that is, and is perceived to be, politically impartial.

The right of District employees to participate in political activities must be balanced with the requirement for an impartial and effective public service.

This policy establishes clear expectations and limits regarding employee participation in political and election-related activities to protect public confidence in the neutrality, integrity, and professionalism of the District’s public service.

Officers of the Organization, including the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Corporate Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Approving Officer, may have a higher standard due to the higher risk of potential conflicts of interest.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all District of Central Saanich employees, including permanent, temporary, and casual employees including auxiliary firefighters. Contractors and volunteers are subject to the political neutrality and resource-use provisions of this policy where applicable.

DEFINITIONS

Employee: Any person employed by the District.

Political Activity includes:

- Publicly supporting or opposing a political party or candidate (i.e. through social media posts, lawn signs, campaigning emails);
- Seeking nomination or being a candidate in an election;
- Canvassing or campaigning on a District referendum question; and,

- Seeking appointment or election to a municipal, regional, or school board.

POLICY

1. Public Service Impartiality
 - a. Employees must conduct themselves in a politically neutral manner.
 - b. Participation in private political activity must not impair, or be perceived to impair, the employee's ability to perform their duties impartially.

2. Prohibited Activities
 - a. Employees must not:
 - i. Use District resources (including facilities, equipment or supplies) for political purposes;
 - ii. Engage in political activity at the workplace or during work hours including on call hours (except voting);
 - iii. Engage in political activity while wearing District-branded clothing;
 - iv. Wear clothing or buttons that advertise/promote any candidate, political party or referendum issue while at work; and,
 - v. Use their title or position within the District in a way that would lead a member of the public to infer that the District is endorsing or not endorsing a candidate, political party or a particular response to a referendum question.

3. Running For Election
 - a. Employees seeking election to Central Saanich Council must take an unpaid leave of absence beginning on the date nomination papers are filed and ending on voting day.
 - b. Requests for leave must be made in writing and submitted to the Department Director and copied to the Corporate Officer.
 - c. Access to District resources, systems and facilities will be suspended during the leave.

4. Holding Elected Office
 - a. Employees elected to Central Saanich Council or the CRD (regional government) must resign.
 - b. Employees elected to other public bodies (i.e. Islands Trust, Provincial or Federal, School Board, and other municipalities) may be granted leave or duty modifications subject to operational requirements and conflict-of-interest provisions. Requests would be reviewed and subject to the Chief Administrators approval.
 - c. The duties of elected office must not affect the employee's normal working hours and there must not be a conflict of interest between the employee's duties as an elected official and their duties as a District of Central Saanich employee.

5. Enforcement

- a. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- b. Complaints brought forward under this policy will be reviewed and adjudicated by the Corporate Officer.
- c. Where the complaint involves the Corporate Officer, the CAO will be the adjudicator.
- d. Where a District employee is uncertain of whether political activity may impair or be perceived to impair their ability to perform their duties in a politically impartial manner, they are required to disclose such political activity and seek guidance from the District's Corporate Officer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Council

Council is responsible for adopting this policy and any amendments, and for maintaining the separation between governance and administration by referring matters of employee conduct to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

The CAO is responsible for the overall administration and enforcement of this policy, including addressing significant or systemic breaches and ensuring political neutrality is maintained.

Corporate Officer

The Corporate Officer is responsible for providing interpretation and guidance on political activity, and reviewing leave requests related to candidacy in consultation with the Department Director.

Department Directors

Department Directors are responsible for ensuring employee awareness of and compliance with this policy, monitoring conduct within their departments, and addressing or escalating potential breaches as appropriate.

Human Resources

Human Resources is responsible for supporting consistent application of this policy, advising on employment implications, and supporting disciplinary processes where required.

Employees

Employees are responsible for complying with this policy, including maintaining political neutrality, refraining from the use of District resources for political purposes, and seeking guidance where uncertainty exists.

Related Documents:

- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)