

Political Activity Policy

Applies only to Civil Service Employees

Effective Date: Adopted 3/88, Revised 4/90, 6/92

§-I. PURPOSE

To establish and publicize rules and regulations governing the political activity of county employees.

§-II. SCOPE

Civil Service Employees.

§-III. POLICY

Under the Civil Service System practice, political opinions of applicants for county positions are not weighed in making appointments to those positions covered by the Civil Service System. After individuals are appointed to such positions, the Civil Service System expects them to be politically neutral. The requirements of political neutrality for county employees who fill positions covered by the county Civil Service System is written into both the basic legislation establishing the Cobb County Civil Service System and the Rules and Regulations adopted by the County Governing Authority.

§-IV. PROCEDURES

A. Prohibition of Political Activity

1. No person shall be appointed to, or demoted or dismissed from, any position under the Civil Service System or in any way favored or discriminated against with respect to employment under the Civil Service System because of his political or religious opinions or affiliations.
2. No employee under the Civil Service System shall participate in political activity, except as follows:
 - a. An employee may exercise his right as a citizen privately to express his opinion, cast his vote, and run for political office, as set forth in the following paragraph.
 - b. An employee may run for political office where, if elected, he would not hold office within Cobb County, Georgia, either as a county commissioner, city mayor, city councilman, school board member or as any other elected official of the County government, a city government, or any other governmental body within Cobb County, Georgia. Service in the elective office must not

create a conflict of loyalty for the employee, as determined by the Department Head. In the event the Department Head determines that a conflict is created, the employee may appeal this decision to the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. Employees seeking elective office must obtain a written determination from the Department Head that service in the office would not create a conflict of loyalty. If at any time during the employee's service as an elected official the Department Head finds that a conflict of loyalty exists, the Department Head shall notify the employee in writing that he or she must relinquish either the elective office or the County employment within thirty (30) days. If the employee fails or refuses to relinquish elective office, the Department Head shall have "cause" to dismiss the employee.

c. An employee may actively support a candidate for political office, if for an elected office outside the boundaries of Cobb County, in accordance with the following provisions:

i. The employee may make a monetary contribution to the candidate's campaign.

ii. The employee may speak on behalf of the candidate at political rallies, may pass out campaign literature, and may display the candidate's political sign in the employee's yard.

iii. No employee, in the support of a candidate for political office, shall conduct such activity during working hours, nor shall any employee, while engaged in such activity, represent himself as an employee of Cobb County.

iv. At no time shall an employee, in support of a candidate for political office, engage in activity that would bring his employment with Cobb County into disrepute.

3. No person shall seek or attempt to use any political endorsement in connection with any appointment to a position under the Civil Service System, or to secure a promotion, an increase in pay, or any advantage in employment.

4. No person shall use or promise to use directly, or indirectly, any official authority or influence, whether possessed or anticipated, to secure for any person an appointment or advantage in appointment to a position under the Civil Service System, or an increase in pay, or any other advantage in employment in any such position for the purpose of influencing the vote or political action of any person, or for any consideration.

5. No employee under the Civil Service System shall pay or promise to pay any assessment, subscription, or contribution to any political party or for any partisan purpose, or directly or indirectly solicit, or take any part in soliciting any such assessment, subscription, or contribution.

6. No recommendation of any applicant or eligible, concerning his political or religious opinions shall be considered by the Board, or by any officer concerned in making appointments or promotions under the Civil Service System or for

examination, except as to character, and in the case of former employees as to ability.

7. Any employee under the Civil Service System who violates any of the foregoing provisions of this section shall forfeit his position.

8. It is the intention of the Board, in adopting these rules, to provide protection to employees from the political process, not to impede the rights of employees to exercise their right to free speech. In addressing the issue of prohibited political activity by an employee, the Board will consider the nature of the activity, the nature of the employee's responsibilities, whether the political activity is partisan or non-partisan, and whether there is realistic potential for conflict between the employee's position with Cobb County and the political activity involved.