

§ 73.735-507

employed by another agency of the Government, the offer or acceptance of a gift shall be treated under the regulations of that agency.

(f) For purposes of this section “foreign government” means:

(1) Any unit of foreign government authority including any foreign national, state, local and municipal government;

(2) Any international or multinational organization whose membership is composed of any unit of foreign government described in paragraph (f) (1) of this section; or

(3) Any agent or representative of any such unit or organization when acting as such agent or representative. (5 U.S.C. 7342)

§ 73.735-507 Acceptance of travel and subsistence.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, employees may accept accommodations, subsistence, and travel in cash or in kind in connection with official travel for attendance at meetings, conferences, training in non-Governmental facilities or for performing advisory services, if approved in accordance with the provisions of the HHS Travel Manual. (5 U.S.C. 4111; 42 U.S.C. 3506)

(b) Employees may not accept accommodations, subsistence, or travel in cash or in kind in connection with official travel from a non-Governmental source with which they have official dealings unless Government or commercial travel and/or accommodations are not available. If travel and/or subsistence is accepted for official travel under these circumstances, such acceptance and the basis for it must be reported in writing to the Head of the Principal Operating Component or Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget for the Office of the Secretary.

§ 73.735-508 Other prohibitions.

Employees shall avoid any action whether or not specifically prohibited by this part, which might result in or create the appearance of:

(a) Using public office for private gain;

(b) Giving preferential treatment to any person;

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(c) Impeding Government efficiency or economy;

(d) Losing complete independence or impartiality in the performance of their Government duties;

(e) Making a Government decision outside official channels; or

(f) Affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of the Government.

Subpart F—Political Activity

§ 73.735-601 Applicability.

(a) All employees in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government, including non-career employees, are subject to basic political activity restrictions in subchapter III of chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code (the former Hatch Act) and Civil Service Rule IV. Employees are individually responsible for refraining from prohibited political activity. Ignorance of a prohibition does not excuse a violation. This subpart summarizes provisions of law and regulation concerning political activity of employees. The Federal Personnel Manual and other publications of the Office of Personnel Management contain more detailed information on this subject. These may be reviewed in Department personnel offices, or will be made available by the Ethics Counselor, or the deputy counselor for the employee’s organizational component.

(b) The Secretary and Under Secretary are exempt from the prohibitions concerning active participation in political management and political campaigns. Also exempt are other officials of the Department, except the Inspector General and Deputy Inspector General, who are appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and who determine policies to be pursued by the United States in the nationwide administration of Federal laws.

(c) Intermittent employees are subject to the restrictions when in active duty status only and for the entire 24 hours of any day of actual employment.

(d) Employees on leave, on leave without pay, or on furlough even though an employee’s resignation has been accepted, are subject to the restrictions. Separated employees who

have received a lump-sum payment for annual leave are not subject to the restriction during the period covered by the lump-sum payment or thereafter, provided they do not return to Federal employment during that period. Employees are not permitted to take a leave of absence to work with a political candidate, committee, or organization or to become a candidate for office with the understanding that they will resign their position if nominated or elected.

(e) Employees are accountable for political activity by another person acting as their agent or under the employee's direction or control, if they are thus accomplishing indirectly what they may not lawfully do directly and openly.

(f) Though officers in the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps are not subject to the restrictions in Subchapter III of Chapter 73 of Title 5, United States Code, the provisions of this subpart apply to them.

§ 73.735-602 Permissible activities.

(a) Section 7324 of Title 5, United States Code, provides that employees have the right to vote as they please and to express their opinions on political subjects and candidates. Generally, however, employees are prohibited from taking an active part in political management or political campaigns or using official authority or influence to interfere with an election or affect its results. There are some exemptions from the restrictions of the statute:

(1) Employees may engage in political activity in connection with any question not specifically identified with a national or State political party. They also may engage in political activity in connection with an election, if none of the candidates represents a party any of whose candidates for presidential elector received votes at the last preceding election at which presidential electors were selected.

(2) An exception relates to political campaigns within, or in communities adjacent to, the District of Columbia, or in communities the majority of whose voters are employees of the Federal government. Communities to which the exception applies are specifi-

cally designated by the Office of Personnel Management. Information regarding the localities and the conditions under which the exceptions are granted may be obtained from personnel offices or the Department Counselor or deputy counselors.

(b) A covered employee is permitted to:

(1) Register and vote in any election;
 (2) Express his or her opinion as an individual citizen privately and publicly on political subjects and candidates;

(3) Display a political picture, sticker, badge or button;

(4) Participate in the nonpartisan activities of a civic, community, social, labor, or professional organization, or of a similar organization;

(5) Be a member of a political party or other political organization and participate in its activities to the extent consistent with law;

(6) Attend a political convention, rally, fund raising function; or other political gathering;

(7) Sign a political petition as an individual citizen;

(8) Make a financial contribution to a political party organization;

(9) Take an active part, as an independent candidate, or support of an independent candidate, in a partisan election in localities identified as permissible for such activities by the Office of Personnel Management;

(10) Take an active part, as a candidate or in support of a candidate, in a nonpartisan election;

(11) Be politically active in connection with a question which is not specifically identified with a political party, such as a constitutional amendment, referendum, approval of a municipal ordinance or any other question or issue of a similar character;

(12) Serve as an election judge or clerk, or in a similar position to perform nonpartisan duties as prescribed by State or local law; and

(13) Otherwise participate fully in public affairs, except as prohibited by law, in a manner which does not materially compromise his or her efficiency or integrity as an employee or the neutrality, efficiency, or integrity of his or her agency.