

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Political Activity

NUMBER: 4.1.7

A. PURPOSE

To describe the parameters applicable to employees of the Board of Regents engaging in political activity.

B. DEFINITIONS

None

C. POLICY

1. Employees of the Board of Regents shall not be obligated, by reason of their employment, to contribute to any political funds or collections or render political service. Employees refusing to contribute such funds or to render political service may not be removed or otherwise disciplined or prejudiced for such refusal.
2. Employees of the Board of Regents shall not use their official authority or influence to coerce the political action of a person or group.
3. Provided the following activities do not (a) occur during work hours or (b) involve the use of Board information and communication technology systems, Board services or Board property in any manner that is not available to the public and paid for at the rate offered to the public, employees of the Board of Regents may:
 - 3.1. Take an active part in political management, political campaigns, or other activities with the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of a candidate, or for the petitioning of a ballot question or the adoption or defeat of any ballot questions or state law; and,
 - 3.2. Seek and hold compatible elective political office. Employees, both during any election campaign and during the term of any part-time office, to which the employee may be elected, are required to make specific arrangements with the president, superintendent and his/her designee to assure that the employee's regular duties are performed. Employees elected to a full-time public office are entitled to leave without pay consistent with policy 1.7.4 of the Board of Regents Policy Manual. Employees elected to compatible elective political office must comply with all applicable BOR and institutional policies, South Dakota laws and administrative rules, and judicial decisions.

4. Employees of the Board of Regents enjoy all rights of free expression accorded them under state and federal law. Nevertheless, employees, especially faculty and professional staff members, should remember that the public may judge their institution or the Board by their public statements. Accordingly, unless they have been authorized to make an official statement on behalf of their institution or the Board, employees should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking or writing as institutional or Board representatives. At a minimum, employees who identify their institutional affiliation should advise the public that the views that they express represent their own private or professional opinions, not those of their institution or of the Board, and that these opinions are given in their individual capacities or as private consultants.

Faculty members should, additionally, observe those standards set forth in the Board's policies on academic freedom, BOR Policy 1.6.1.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR Aug. 1979, p. 1126; SDCL §§ 3-6-26 through 3-6-27, 3-6A-14(6), 3-6A-15, 13-49-14 through 13-49-14.1; Revised BOR March 1992; BOR October 2010; BOR December 2018; BOR August 2024.