



ETHICS BULLETIN: CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

TO: Officeholders and City Staff
FROM: Public Ethics Commission
DATE: July 31, 2026

With the election season ahead, public servants must stay aware of the laws that apply to City employees and officials who engage in campaign or ballot measure-related work! The Public Ethics Commission is providing this reminder so that you don't inadvertently violate the law.

Key Rules to Keep in Mind

- ***Do not engage in political activities while on duty, in uniform, or in a City-owned building.***

City officials and employees may participate in political activities or campaigns while off duty and on their own personal time.

- ***Do not use City resources for any campaign-related activity.***

City resources cannot be used to campaign for or against a candidate or a ballot measure once the measure qualifies for the ballot. City resources include employees' work time, City-owned equipment, such as computers and software, City email and contact lists, printers and copiers, and City property like vehicles and office space. Observing this rule ***always*** applies, even when an employee is taking their break and during after work hours.

- ***Do not ask City officials or employees for campaign contributions, either directly or indirectly.***

Campaigns may send funding requests to City employees only if they are included incidentally as part of a communication sent to a significant segment of the general public—not because they are City employees. As a best practice, remove City email addresses from campaign lists to avoid inadvertently soliciting employees. Campaign contributions may not be solicited while on employee worktime or in City buildings.

- ***Mandatory Reporting by City Officials and Staff Who Solicit Political Contributions from Contractors.***

If you are a City official or employee who files Form 700, and you ask for—and it results in—a political donation of \$5,000 or more from any person or entity that contracts or is trying to contract with your department, you ***must*** report it to the Public Ethics Commission within 30 days using the online [OCRA Form 303](#).

Public Ethics Commission staff are available to answer your questions at (510) 238-3593 or ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov. Our [Campaign-Related Activities FAQ](#), prepared with the City Attorney's Office, offers more detailed information.