


Office of the City Manager

May 8, 2012

To: Honorable Mayor Bates & Councilmembers  
Department Directors

From: Christine Daniel, Interim City Manager 

Subject: POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE 2012 ELECTIONS

Please remind all the employees in your department of the standards applicable to partisan political activity by public employees. As public employees, we serve all of the people of Berkeley, and it is extremely important to refrain from activities that may give an appearance of favoring or opposing any candidate or advocating the passage or defeat of measures. To promote and preserve the impartial character of City service, all City employees shall comply with the following standards:

1. Employees of the City of Berkeley shall not engage in any political activity of any sort during working hours.
2. Employees shall not solicit contributions from other employees or from persons on employment lists.
3. Employees shall not participate in political activities of any kind while in uniform.
4. Employees shall not wear any costume, button, notice, or any other device that communicates a position on any local measure or candidate during working hours or on City premises.
5. No employee shall be listed by official position on any campaign literature.
6. Employees shall not use any property, resource, or privilege provided by the City to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure.
7. City facilities, including telephones, computers, copiers, typewriters and other equipment, shall not be used for partisan political activity.

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Re: Political Activity in the 2012 Elections

In general, Article Seven (7) of the International City Management Association Code of Ethics provides an excellent guideline:

"Refrain from participating in the election of members of the employing legislative body and from all partisan political activity which would impair performance as a professional administrator."

All employees should be mindful of the fact that Berkeley is a politically active community and that City employees may be quickly characterized as "political". Under these circumstances, it is particularly important for all of us to avoid any appearance of political bias in our official duties.

Thank you for your cooperation in reaching this goal.

cc: Mary Kay Clunies-Ross, Public Information Officer