

## What Health Center Staff Can Do

Health Center staff members often have questions about their personal involvement in political campaigns or work with candidates. There is no prohibition on political activities for health center employees during their free time. However, staff members cannot be seen as representing the organization on a campaign nor may they use organizational resources for a candidate. Here are some frequently asked questions about the political participation of health center staff and keeping health center voter engagement nonpartisan.

**Q: When is it personal time?**

A: Health center staff may engage in partisan activities, such as supporting a candidate, outside of normal work hours. A staff member may also take vacation or personal time for the purpose of engaging in political activity.

**Q: Can staff be identified with their health center organization when supporting a candidate?**

A: Health center staff members may identify their place of employment at a political event. Health center staff members, who are spokespeople for their organization or visibly associated with it, should make it clear that they are in attendance at the event or activity as a private citizen and not on behalf of the organization they work for.

**Q. Can staff be listed as a supporter of a candidate with the name of the organization?**

A: As a rule, it is safer to leave the name of the organization off of any partisan political materials. However, it is permissible to list the organization along with the staff member's name if it is clearly stated that the organization is listed "for identification purposes only."

**Q: What about board members and volunteers?**

A: Board members and volunteers should follow the same protocol outlined for staff members described above while representing their health center organization.

**Q: What if a candidate lists the name of the Executive Director or a health center staff member without their permission?**

A: If a candidate lists the Executive Director or any health center staff member with the health center's name on a campaign brochure without the appropriate disclaimer "for identification purposes only" the organization is not at fault. Ask the campaign to remove your organization's name from the list. Save a copy of your email or written request to the candidate in your files.

**Separating Your Personal Political Participation from Your Health center Work**

- Provide political campaigns or candidates a personal phone number and e-mail and times to call you outside of your work hours.
- Don't use any of your organizational resources to support or oppose a candidate (e.g. organizational vehicles, copy machines, paper, etc.) Health center organizations, themselves, may offer certain resources to candidates such as event space or phones – but only if publicly available to all candidates in a race at their fair market value (rental).

**Resources**

Alliance for Justice, "Election Activities of Individuals Associated with Health centers,"  
[www.afj.org](http://www.afj.org)

