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GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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NGGA-TAG

16 July 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR Georgia National Guard Servicemembers and Civilian Employees

SUBJECT: Political Activities Policy

1. References.

a. Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum (Political Activities), dated 15 February 2024

b. Vice Chief of National Guard Bureau Memorandum (2024 National Guard Political Activities Guidance), dated 1 July 2024

c. Department of Defense Standards of Conduct Office (Guidance on Political Activity and DoD Support 2020)

d. Code of Federal Regulations Title 5, Part 734 (Political Activities of Federal Employees), current through 1 January 2024

e. DoDD 1344.10 (Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces)

f. DoDI 1334.01 (Wearing of the Uniform)

g. Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C. § 7321 et. seq. (2008)

h. Georgia Code of Military Justice, O.C.G.A. § 38-2-1000 et. seq. (2015)

2. The purpose of this memorandum is to explain the prohibitions against certain political activities, including online conduct and social media use, by Soldiers, Airmen, and Federal Civilian employees of the Georgia National Guard. This policy is punitive.

3. **Soldiers and Airmen (FTNGD, M-day, and Title 32 technicians in a military status).** Servicemembers of the Georgia National Guard are prohibited from engaging in the following activities, whether on or off duty:

a. Wearing their military uniform—

(1) While attending (even as a spectator) a political activity, meeting, rally, debate, convention, or fund raising event;

(2) In connection with furthering a political activity;

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(3) When doing so may reasonably imply sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political activity, candidate, or issue by the Georgia National Guard, US military, Federal government, or the State of Georgia; or

(4) While making public speeches (official or unofficial), engaging in political debate in public, or giving unauthorized interviews related to a political activity.

b. Using an official government social media account or website to a conduct political activity.

c. Using a personal social media account, website, electronic communication, or other means of publication in a private capacity to conduct a political activity without a prominently displayed disclaimer that clearly states that the views expressed are those of the individual and are in no way endorsed by the Georgia National Guard, US military, Federal government, or the State of Georgia when—

(1) The Servicemember is pictured in uniform;

(2) Pictures associated with the social media account, website, communication, or publication show the Servicemember in uniform; or

(3) The content of the social media account, website, communication, or publication otherwise identify the Servicemember as a member of the US military or Georgia National Guard.

d. Using government equipment (e.g., government computer) while engaging in a political activity.

e. Engaging in a political activity in a Federal building or facility (e.g., wearing buttons, shirts, hats, etc. that support or oppose political parties or candidates running for partisan political office).

f. Using their status as a Servicemember to—

(1) Affect, interfere with, or influence the course or the outcome of an election;

(2) Solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue, which includes posting, reposting, or forwarding articles or links to articles or websites by email or social media; or

(3) Soliciting political contributions or fundraising, which includes posting, reposting, “liking,” or forwarding articles or links to articles or donation sites by email or social media.

g. Engaging in any activity that that may reasonably imply sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political activity, candidate, or issue by the Georgia National Guard, US military, Federal government, or the State of Georgia.

h. Servicemembers who have social media or online websites containing pictures of themselves in uniform or their military information should include a prominently displayed disclaimer that clearly states that the views expressed are those of the individual and are in no way endorsed by the Georgia National Guard, US military, Federal government, or the State of Georgia.

i. Servicemembers who are not fulltime members of the Georgia National Guard, and are not Title 5 Civilian employees, may run for elected office as provided in paragraph 4.3. of DoDD 1344.10. However, Servicemembers who run for elected office are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the Office of the State Judge Advocate so they can avoid violating Federal law.

4. Federal Civilian employees (Title 5 and Title 32 technicians not in a military status). Federal Civilian employees are prohibited from engaging in the following activities:

a. Engaging in a political activity while on duty, including while teleworking. This includes, but is not limited to, email or social media use, even when using a personal email or social media account on a personal device.

b. Engaging in a political activity, whether on or off duty, while using government resources or equipment (e.g., government computer, printer, copier).

c. Engaging in a political activity, whether on or off duty, in a Federal building or facility. Examples include wearing buttons, shirts, or hats or displaying posters, coffee mugs, screen savers, etc. in the workplace that support or oppose political parties or candidates running for partisan political office.

d. Using their official position, title, authority, or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election. This includes, but is not limited to—

(1) Using their official title while engaging in a political activity;

(2) Using non-public information for political purposes;

(3) Inviting or encouraging subordinates to attend a campaign event or other political activity;

(4) Using social media in an official capacity to engage in a political activity; or

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(5) Using a personal social media account, website, electronic communication, or other publication in a private capacity in a manner that may reasonably imply sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political activity, candidate, or issue by the Georgia National Guard, US military, Federal government, or the State of Georgia.

e. Soliciting, accepting, or receiving a political contributions while on duty, or whether on or off duty, from other employees or Servicemembers, which includes posting, reposting, "liking," or forwarding articles or links to articles or donation sites by email or social media.

f. Running for nomination or as a candidate for election to a partisan political office.

g. Encouraging or discouraging participation in a political activity by a person who—

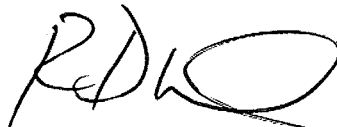
(1) Has an application for any compensation, employment, contract, or certificate pending before the Georgia National Guard; or

(2) Is the subject of or a participant in an ongoing audit, investigation, or enforcement action in the Georgia National Guard.

h. Employees who have social media or online websites containing pictures of themselves in the Federal workplace, their official insignia, or information about their official position or title should include a prominently displayed disclaimer that clearly states that the views expressed are those of the individual and are in no way endorsed by the Georgia National Guard, US military, Federal government, or the State of Georgia.

5. Other political activities not expressly prohibited. Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilian employees are reminded that a political activity, online conduct, or social media use that is not expressly prohibited above or in references a-h may still lead to punitive or adverse action if the activity or conduct may be reasonably viewed as directly or indirectly associating the US military, Federal government, Georgia National Guard, or the State of Georgia with a political activity or is otherwise prejudicial to good order and discipline, of a nature to bring discredit upon the Georgia National Guard, or in violation of a lawful order, regulation, policy.

6. The point of contact for this memorandum is the Office of the State Judge Advocate at 678-569-5644.



RICHARD D. WILSON
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The Adjutant General