CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

RESTRICTIONS ON SENATE STAFF – CAMPAIGN WORK

• Officers and employees may perform paid or unpaid campaign work as follows:
  • Must be voluntary, not a condition of your Senate employment
  • Must obtain approval of your supervising Senator
  • Must be done on your own time
    • No using any official Senate resources
    • Senate may not subsidize campaign by keeping you on payroll
  • Campaign income counts toward the outside earned income limit

RESTRICTIONS ON SENATE STAFF – CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

• Federal law prohibits making a contribution to your employing Senator (18 U.S.C. § 603)
  • The prohibition includes:
    • An “outlay,” other than for personal travel expenses
    • Contributions made by your relatives from a joint account or jointly owned asset (e.g., your spouse writing a check from a jointly owned bank account)
  • The prohibition does not include:
    • Volunteering for the campaign
    • Contributing to a multi-candidate committee or PAC (e.g., DSCC or NRSC), even though some of the proceeds may eventually go to your employing Senator
    • But you may not specifically earmark any contribution for your employing Senator
RESTRICTIONS ON SENATE STAFF – HANDLING CAMPAIGN FUNDS

- Officers and most employees **may not handle** (solicit, receive, be the custodian of, or distribute) **any federal campaign funds** (Senate Rule 41)
  - Unique to the Senate
- Officers and employees **may**, however, assist with and attend federal campaign fundraisers, provided their role does not involve handling campaign funds
  - Hosting a fundraiser is deemed to involve handling campaign funds and is therefore prohibited
- This prohibition does not apply to state and local campaign funds

RESTRICTIONS ON SENATE STAFF – EXCEPTION FOR PFDs

- Each Senator may designate up to 3 Political Fund Designees (PFDs) on his or her personal office staff
  - PFDs must have a salary of at least $10,000
  - At least 1 PFD must be in the DC office
  - PFDs must file certain Financial Disclosure Reports, regardless of salary
- With the permission of their supervising Senator, PFDs **may** handle campaign funds from the following:
  - Campaign committee of employing Senator
  - Campaign committee established and controlled by a Senator or group of Senators (e.g., DSCC and NRSC)
  - State or local committee of a national party

RESTRICTIONS ON THE SENATE OFFICE – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Senate resources may not be used for campaign activity (31 U.S.C. § 1301)
- Senate resources include:
  - Senate space (e.g., Dirksen cafeteria)
  - Senate equipment (e.g., Senate mobile device)
  - Senate staff time
  - Senate title (e.g., “Legislative Assistant, Senator X”)
  - Senate work product

This presentation provides only an overview of the applicable Senate Rules, laws and ethics standards related to campaign activity, and does not represent or address all applicable authority. Please consult the Committee’s website at [www.ethics.senate.gov](http://www.ethics.senate.gov) or contact the Committee at (202) 224-2981 for additional information and guidance.
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**Restrictions on the Senate Office – Moratoria**

- 60 days prior to a primary or general election the following activities are prohibited:
  - Using official funds for certain travel expenses
  - Using Senate television or recording studios
  - Using official funds to maintain a mobile office
  - Sending mass mailings
  - Sending unsolicited mass email
  - Certain use of official social media and internet
- No moratorium for primary election if it is uncontested and there is no legal possibility for a write-in candidate
- Contact Rules Committee for additional guidance

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**Contact the Committee**

If you have any questions, please contact the Committee

(202) 224-2981 (main)  (202) 224-7416 (fax)

mailbox_office@ethics.senate.gov (email)

Committee guidance is confidential