



## ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

SUBJECT: Employee Political Activities

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: District Attorney's Office NUMBER: C-5

APPROVED: *David H. Nichols*  
County Manager

DATE: February 1, 1984

Federal, state, and local laws restrict political activities of county officers and employees. The applicability of these restrictions varies according to circumstance. Therefore, this memorandum serves only as a general guideline for employee conduct. Specific questions should be directed to the District Attorney's Office.

1. Solicitation of political contributions from county officers or employees. A county officer or employee may not knowingly solicit political funds or contributions from county officers or employees. However, a county officer or employee may solicit political funds or contributions from the general public even if this general solicitation effort includes county officers or employees. (Government Code Section 3205).
2. Soliciting or receiving political contributions related to a ballot measure on working conditions. County officers or employees may solicit or receive political funds or contributions to promote the passage or defeat of a ballot measure that would affect the working conditions of the officers or employees. (Government Code Section 3209).
3. Participation in political activity while in uniform. A county officer or employee shall not participate in political activities of any kind while in uniform. (Government Code Section 3206).
4. Use of candidacy, office, authority or influence others. A person holding or seeking election or appointment to a state or local agency may not promise, threaten or attempt to use their authority, or influence, to secure special consideration for an employee or potential employee. (Government Code Section 3204).
5. \$500 limit on campaign contributions to candidates in county elections. No person or committee may contribute more than \$500 to a candidate seeking election to a county office. (San Mateo County Ordinance Code Section 2970).

6. Additional limitations on county officers or employees whose principal employment is in connection with an activity financed by federal funds. In addition to the limitations discussed above, a county officer or employee who is employed in an activity financed in whole or in part by loans or grants made by a federal agency, is subject to federal laws and regulations concerning political activities. (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508). Such an individual may not:
- A. Use their official authority or influence to interfere with, or affect, the result of an election or nomination for office;
  - B. Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or advise a state or local officer or employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes; or
  - C. Be a candidate for an elective partisan office. (5 U.S.C. 1502(a)).
  - D. A county officer or employee may be a candidate for nonpartisan office or a candidate for a partisan central committee. (5 U.S.C. 1503).