

ETHICS REMINDERS

Have questions about political activities?

Make sure you know who to call!

A State officer or employee may not engage in any outside employment or a professional activity that “interferes or is in conflict with” their State job, a rule that extends to campaigning for and holding appointive or elective public office. As the 2022 campaign season gets underway, you may find yourself wondering how the State ethics laws apply to you—whether you are the candidate or volunteering on a campaign.

For instance, you may need to know:

- Whether you need approval from your agency to run for office. Whether you also need approval from JCOPE.
- Whether you have to leave your State job if you win your race for public office.
- What the ethics rules are regarding political fundraising.
- Whether you are restricted from volunteering on a campaign for local office.

If you have questions about being politically active on your own time, there are several resources available to you for advice and guidance:

Your Agency’s Ethics Officer: Your first step should be to contact your agency’s Ethics Officer to confirm your agency’s outside activity policies. For instance, while JCOPE regulations do not require approval to campaign for public office, your agency can and may impose such a requirement.

JCOPE: Through its Attorney of the Day program, JCOPE staff can answer questions and provide guidance regarding the ethics laws and regulations. For instance, JCOPE regulations require individuals designated by their agency as a “Policymaker” to seek the approval of both their agency and JCOPE to hold public office. Further, Public Officers Law § 74 and Civil Service Law § 107 prohibit State officers and employees from using State offices and other State resources to solicit or collect any political contributions.

Remember: before you volunteer on a local campaign, or run for public office yourself, seek guidance.

Call: 1-800-87-ETHICS (800-873-8442)

Press “2” for Attorney of the Day

OR

Email: legal@jcope.ny.gov



The Joint Commission on Public Ethics periodically releases Ethics Reminders. Each reminder is a synopsis of the laws and rules under the Commission’s jurisdiction. Ethics Reminders are issued to assist those who are subject to the Commission’s jurisdiction in understanding and complying with their obligations under the law.

**Have Questions? Contact us by calling 1-800-87-ETHICS (3-8442) or by email at legal@jcope.ny.gov.
All communications with JCOPE are confidential.**