

HAWAII STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CAMPAIGN RESTRICTIONS FOR  
STATE OFFICIALS AND STATE EMPLOYEES  
(Chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes)

**INTRODUCTION:** The following restrictions on campaign activities are based on section 84-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), entitled the "Fair Treatment" section of the State Ethics Code. In general, section 84-13 prohibits the preferential use of state resources or incidents of state office. Examples of campaign activities, described below, that violate or may violate the ethics code are for illustration only and are not meant to be all-inclusive.

**STATE OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES WHO MUST COMPLY WITH THE RESTRICTIONS:**  
All state officials, state employees, state legislators, and state board and commission members. State justices and judges are not subject to the jurisdiction of the State Ethics Commission, but are subject to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

**CAMPAIGN RESTRICTIONS**

**THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES BY STATE OFFICIALS AND STATE EMPLOYEES VIOLATE THE STATE ETHICS CODE:**

1. **Using state time, equipment, supplies, or state premises for campaign activities or campaign purposes.**

**State time** means the actual time during which a state official or employee, etc., is supposed to be performing his or her state duties. State time thus excludes lunch time, break time, vacation time, and so forth.

**State equipment** includes, for example, copy machines, fax machines, telephones, typewriters, computers, and vehicles such as trucks and cars.

**State supplies** include stationery, paper, stamps, and other office supplies.

**State premises** include state offices, conference rooms, working areas, and so forth. State premises or facilities that are available to the public for use (e.g., for holding meetings or conducting business) may also be used for campaign activities on the same basis as the facilities are available to the public.

**Campaign activities or campaign purposes** include: (a) selling, purchasing, or distributing campaign fundraiser tickets, including complimentary tickets; (b) conducting campaign meetings; (c) distributing campaign literature or materials; (d) soliciting campaign assistance or support; or (e) producing campaign literature or materials or storing such materials.

2. **Using state personnel during state time for the purpose of performing campaign tasks or activities.**
3. **Using the state mail or messenger service for campaign purposes.**
4. **Using state computers or e-mail accounts for campaign purposes.**
5. **Soliciting campaign contributions or campaign assistance by sending letters addressed to state officials or employees at their state offices.**
6. **Using one's state position to give unwarranted advantages or preferential treatment to campaigns.** The State Ethics Code prohibits state officials, employees, legislators, and board and commission members from using their official positions to coerce campaign contributions or campaign assistance from anyone. State officials, employees, legislators, and board and commission members should also avoid combining official business with campaign solicitations.
7. **Selling fundraiser tickets to, or soliciting the purchase of fundraiser tickets from, subordinates or businesses or persons supervised or inspected.**
8. **Candidates walking through state agencies to meet with state employees for campaign purposes.** The State Ethics Commission believes that the State Ethics Code prohibits candidates from being allowed to walk through state agencies to meet with state employees for campaign purposes.

**STATE SEAL:** The state seal may not be used by a state official or employee in conjunction with campaigning if such use gives the state official or employee or another any unwarranted advantage or preferential treatment in violation of section 84-13, HRS. State officials and employees are advised to contact the State Ethics Commission for advice before using the state seal on campaign materials. Anyone using the state seal in conjunction with a campaign may also wish to contact the Office of the Attorney General regarding the application of section 5-6, HRS.

**MISDEMEANOR FOR FUNDRAISING IN GOVERNMENT FACILITIES:** In addition to the State Ethics Code, HRS section 11-354 makes it a misdemeanor for any person to solicit a campaign contribution in a government facility used for official duties by a state or county employee. This law does not apply to certain government facilities that are permitted to be used for political activities. HRS section 11-354 is part of the campaign spending law. Questions concerning this law should be directed to the State Campaign Spending Commission.

**PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE STATE ETHICS CODE:** An administrative fine of up to \$500 for each violation. Disciplinary action such as reprimand, probation, demotion, suspension, or discharge. Any favorable state action is voidable, and the Attorney General may pursue all legal and equitable remedies.

**FURTHER INFORMATION/COMPLAINTS:** Anyone in need of further information or who wishes to report an apparent violation of the State Ethics Code may call the State Ethics Commission at (808) 587-0460.

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Visit our website at <http://www.hawaii.gov/ethics>



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## **PROHIBITED USE OF STATE E-MAIL FOR CAMPAIGN PURPOSES**

Hawaii is well into its election season and campaign activities by political candidates are under way. The Hawaii State Ethics Commission would like to remind all state officials and state employees about the restrictions that the State Ethics Code, Chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes, places on the use of State e-mail.

Hawaii Revised Statutes section 84-13, the "Fair Treatment" section of the State Ethics Code, prohibits the use of state resources for political campaign purposes. State resources include, among other things, state computers, state telephones, state copy machines, state fax machines, and state e-mail accounts. State e-mail cannot be used by state officials and employees for campaign purposes.

The State Ethics Code prohibits state personnel from using state e-mail to generate campaign material. It also prohibits the use of state e-mail to send, forward, or reply to campaign material. Campaign material may include political campaign endorsements, fundraiser material, notifications of campaign events, political party material, or other material.

On occasion, state personnel have received, from outside sources, unsolicited campaign material through their state e-mail accounts. The Hawaii State Ethics Commission realizes that state personnel may not have any control over incoming e-mail. The receipt of unsolicited campaign material may place state personnel in an awkward situation.

The State Ethics Code prohibits state officials and employees from using their state e-mail accounts to send or forward campaign material to others, or to reply to such e-mails, other than to request that the sender not send campaign e-mail to state e-mail accounts. State personnel should not otherwise use state e-mail to reply to incoming campaign material.

More information about campaign restrictions may be found in the Hawaii State Ethics Commission's flyer, "CAMPAIGN RESTRICTIONS FOR STATE OFFICIALS AND STATE EMPLOYEES." This publication is available at the Commission's website, [www.hawaii.gov/ethics](http://www.hawaii.gov/ethics). If there are any questions about the use of state e-mail, or about whether a particular communication constitutes campaign material, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission's office at (808) 587-0460 or at [ethics@hawaiiethics.org](mailto:ethics@hawaiiethics.org).

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