



**Cayman Islands Government**  
**Political Activities of Civil Servants and Employees of Statutory Authorities**  
**and Government-Owned Companies**  
**PERSONNEL CIRCULAR 8 of 2024**

<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Political Activities of Civil Servants and Employees of Statutory Authorities and Government-Owned Companies</b>		
<b>Circular Number</b>	<b>8 of 2024</b>	<b>Version Number</b>	<b>1.0</b>
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<b>Authorising Post</b>	<b>Chief Officer - PoCS</b>	<b>Policy Folder</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Sub-folder:</b>	<b>Portfolio of the Civil Service (PoCS)</b>		
<b>Relevant Laws:</b>	<b>Public Service Management Act (PSMA) (2018 Revision) as amended</b> <b>Personnel Regulations (2022 Revision) as amended</b> <b>Elections Act (2022 Revision) as amended</b> <b>The Cayman Islands Constitutional Order 2009 Part I - Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities, and Part VI - The Public Service</b>		
<b>Related Policies:</b>	<b>Periods of Election Sensitivity (Administrative Circular 3 of 2022)</b>		
<b>Key Topics</b>	<b>The purpose of this Circular is to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure that all employees are aware of the requirements under the Public Service Management Act (2018 Revision) ("PSMA"), specifically the requirements under the Code of Conduct to be politically neutral and to serve the government of the day in a way that ensures that confidence in public servants/the Public Service can be maintained;</b></li> <li>• <b>Ensure that employees know how they can exercise their right to be politically informed without compromising their political neutrality;</b></li> <li>• <b>Explain the extent to which employees may take part in political activities;</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide practical examples of appropriate and inappropriate involvement in political activities; and</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide guidance to those public servants who wish to declare and run for political office.</b></li> </ul>		
<b>Key Amendments</b>	<b>This Circular <u>replaces</u> Personnel Circular 1 of 2021 – Political Activities of Civil Servants and Employees of Statutory Authorities and Government-Owned Companies – as issued on 24 February 2021.</b>		



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## **1. Introduction**

As the Cayman Islands approaches the 2025 General Elections, it is important that all public servants be reminded of the need to conduct themselves in a manner which is politically neutral, ensuring that they may maintain the confidence of any future Government.

Political neutrality is the bedrock of our Public Service Values and is strictly required in keeping with the Public Servant's Code of Conduct ("Code of Conduct"). Under the Cayman Islands Constitution, public officers enjoy the freedom to express their opinions as well as freedom of assembly and association. However, the Constitution also recognises that those individual rights and freedoms may be subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of, among other things, ensuring the proper performance by public officers of their functions.

Accordingly, while public servants, like other citizens, are entitled to participate in the lead up to Election Day by being informed about political matters and ultimately by voting, there may be limitations on the activities that they can undertake or participate in.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all employees are aware of the requirements under the Public Service Management Act (2018 Revision) ("PSMA"), specifically the requirements under the Code of Conduct to be politically neutral and to serve the government of the day in a way that ensures that confidence in public servants/the Public Service can be maintained;
- Ensure that employees know how they can exercise their right to be politically informed without compromising their political neutrality;
- Explain the extent to which employees may take part in political activities;
- To provide practical examples of appropriate and inappropriate involvement in political activities, including providing guidelines around political activities that occur on social media; and
- To provide guidance to those public servants who wish to declare and run for political office.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Public Service Values ("Values") and the Code of Conduct in the PSMA and the Bill of Rights in the Cayman Islands Constitution.



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### **3. Legal authority**

The PSMA provides guidance for public servants on their participation in political activities.

The values which govern the management and operation of the Public Service, in particular, the Public Service Values, prescribe in subsections 4(a) and (b) the requirement:

- (a) To serve diligently the government of the day, the Parliament and the public in an apolitical, impartial and courteous manner and to deliver high quality policy advice and services; and
- (b) To uphold the proper administration of justice and the principles of natural justice, and to support public participation in the democratic process.

The Code of Conduct in section 5(2)(d) of the PSMA provides that public servants, as members of the public, have the right to be politically informed but must ensure that their participation does not conflict with their obligation as a public servant to be politically neutral.

Further, section 5(2)(c) of the PSMA requires public servants to be politically neutral in their work and serve the government of the day in a way that ensures that they maintain the confidence of the government, while also ensuring that they are able to establish the same professional and impartial relationship with future governments.

### **4. What does this mean?**

The referenced sections in the Code of Conduct seek to appropriately balance a public servant's right to be politically informed with their duty to remain politically neutral and maintain the government's confidence in the Public Service. Neutrality is a required attribute of public servants to ensure that the Public Service can be trusted to carry out the mandates of successive governments.

The Cayman Islands Government (CIG) does not seek to prevent public servants from participating in political activities and fully respects the right of public servants to be politically informed. Notwithstanding, the CIG also seeks to ensure that any participation in political activities by public servants does not cause, or **be reasonably perceived as causing**, public servants to be seen as politically biased and consequently unable to serve the government of the day.

All public servants should ensure that they know and understand what is permitted under the Code of Conduct, and this policy, to ensure that any participation in political activities is appropriate to their role.



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**5. Scope**

This policy, which is underpinned by the Public Servant's Code of Conduct within the PSMA, applies to **all public servants**.

Employees of Statutory Authorities and Government-Owned Companies (SAGCs) are subject to the Public Servant's Code of Conduct pursuant to Section 46 (1) of the Public Authorities Act which states that *"An employee of a public authority is part of the Public Service and, during the course of that person's employment by a public authority, shall comply with any Public Servant's Code of Conduct as detailed in the Public Service Management Act (2018 Revision)."*

For the avoidance of doubt, public servants on secondment to outside organisations (or who are on any form of paid or unpaid leave) remain public servants and the rules relating to political activities continue to apply to them. Departments should seek to contact such individuals to remind them of this. Individuals seconded into the Public Service are also covered by this policy for the duration of their appointment.

**6. Exercising Democratic Rights**

Where eligible, public servants are urged to exercise their democratic right by casting their vote in the 2025 General Elections, keeping the provisions of the Code of Conduct and this policy in mind as they gather the information required to make an informed decision. There are **no restrictions** on the democratic right individuals have on Election Day in terms of who they vote for, and public servants should vote for the candidate of their choice.

**7. Examples of Appropriate and Inappropriate Political Activity**

Public servants have the right to be politically informed and are entitled to gather information, ask questions and take other reasonable actions to enable them to make an informed decision on Election Day. **However, they should not engage in any activities that cause them to violate or can reasonably be perceived as a violation of the Code of Conduct.**

Specifically, employees should avoid any political activities which may reasonably be regarded as having the potential to impair their ability to perform their duties and serve the government of the day in a neutral manner.

Similarly, public servants should not allow their political views to constitute or be seen as constituting so strong a commitment to a political party or individual as to inhibit (or appear to inhibit) loyal and impartial service to government.



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It is important that employees understand that participation in political activities is no longer limited to physical attendance/participation at events, but also includes online attendance/participation in political activities hosted on various social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and X (formerly known as Twitter), as examples.

The following are examples of appropriate and inappropriate participation in political activities, which have been provided to make it clear what actions/activities are acceptable and which are not. Note that this is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but aims to give some indicative examples to provide guidance.

**Examples of Appropriate Participation in Political Activities:**

- ✓ Attending political meetings as a general member of the crowd or as an online viewer on a social media platform, provided that you:
  - × Do not use an official CIG social media account;
  - × Do not "like" or "comment" on the live stream or post;
- ✓ Receiving and reviewing campaign literature or materials, provided you:
  - × Avoid posting online or otherwise publicly displaying (i.e. in CIG offices, on personal or company vehicles, on personal property etc.) campaign literature/materials;
- ✓ Listening to radio talk shows, podcasts or similar where political candidates or parties are featured;
- ✓ Meeting with candidates at your private residence to discuss their manifestos/plans;
- ✓ Privately asking political candidates initial or follow-up questions to clarify your understanding of political matters;
- ✓ Discussing political considerations and choices in a private capacity and in a confidential forum, such as with a spouse or partner in a private dwelling.

**Examples of Inappropriate Participation in Political Activities:**

- × Being actively involved in political meetings by speaking, being on the platform/stage, distributing literature (including through social media), or other activity that promotes a particular candidate, political party or group of candidates;
- × Actively participating in online political campaigning, including posting comments, "sharing" or publicly forwarding political messages/campaign literature, or "liking" the campaign materials/messages of particular candidates, groups of candidates or political parties;



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- × Expressing views/giving interviews on political matters, candidates or political parties in letters to the press, or in books, articles, leaflets or on social media;
- × Advocating for or against candidates, groups of candidates, political parties or campaigns;
- × Canvassing or collecting funds in support, or on behalf of, a political party or candidate(s);
- × Holding office in or taking part in the management of any political party or organisation;
- × Providing information to political candidates (including incumbent Ministers), parties or the general public regarding the operation of the government, policy initiatives, internal communications or management decisions made by the government of the day, other than as authorised through official CIG methods;
- × Authorising campaign signage to be erected on personal property, such as a residence or business owned or occupied by the public servant;
- × Placing bumper stickers, flags or similar political paraphernalia on personal or government property (such as a company or personal vehicle or CIG office), or wearing such items in a public setting;
- × Supporting candidates via radio broadcasts, including phoning in to radio talk shows to respond to discussions about particular candidates or parties, or doing the same through live broadcasts on social media;
- × Providing personal views on a candidate(s) or political party to the media;
- × Publically sharing, via social media or in print, politically themed or inspired memes;
- × Taking part in any political activity when on duty, or in uniform (including CIG branded polo shirts or gear), or on official premises, unless being undertaken as part of your official public duty as sanctioned by your organisation (e.g. Officer assigned by RCIPS to undertake crowd control at an event).
- × Attending politically convened or sponsored functions or events in your official capacity as a public servant.

## **8. Declaring and Running for Political Office**

Where a public servant intends to declare and run for political office, the public servant must:

- Vacate their post within the Public Service (by retirement, resignation, etc.); and
- Not undertake any political activities, such as canvassing, to promote themselves or their campaign, until after their employment with the Public Service has ended.



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**9. Failure to Comply**

The provisions of this policy are intended to ensure compliance with the Public Servant's Code of Conduct during election cycles. Failure to comply with the Public Servant's Code of Conduct is a serious matter which may provide grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal.

**10. Further Advice on this Circular**

Questions on this circular should be directed to your HR Manager or the dedicated mailbox for HR queries at [CIGHRConnect@gov.ky](mailto:CIGHRConnect@gov.ky).

**Issued By:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L Knight".

**Lauren Knight**  
**Chief Officer (Acting)**  
**Portfolio of the Civil Service**