

# Charter Amendment Alert

June 2020

Based on preliminary returns, Philadelphians voted to amend the Home Rule Charter's restrictions on political activity by City appointed officers & employees. The change becomes effective when the City Commissioners certify the results.

## What's new in the Charter?

### Certain City employees can volunteer for non-local campaigns

Appointed officers & employees in most City departments can now volunteer in a non-managerial role in support of candidates for non-local public office. Non-local includes federal office, state office outside of Pennsylvania, municipal or judicial office outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania statewide office, and Pennsylvania state offices with districts that do not include any part of the City.

### Higher penalties

The maximum penalty per violation increased from \$300 to \$2,000.

## Some things haven't changed...

### Participation in campaigns for local office still prohibited

Appointed officers & employees may not have any role in a campaign for the following offices:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| ▶ Mayor                                | ▶ District Attorney  | ▶ City Commissioner   |
| ▶ City Council                         | ▶ City Controller  | ▶ Register of Wills   |
| ▶ Sheriff                              | ▶ Judge of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas or Municipal Court | ▶ State Senator or Representative any district including part of the City |
| ▶ Elected poll officer in Philadelphia |  |   |

### Campaign activity still prohibited for certain City workers

Appointed officers or employees of the Board of Ethics, City Commissioners, District Attorney, Police Department, and Sheriff may not volunteer in support of a candidate regardless of the office sought.

### Political management still prohibited

Appointed officers & employees may not be involved in the management of any campaign, political party, or partisan political group. This includes being a ward leader, committee person, delegate, or an officer of a campaign, party, or group.

### Political fundraising still prohibited

Appointed officers & employees may never be involved in any way in soliciting, receiving, or collecting political contributions. This means that if you volunteer for a campaign under the new rules, you are responsible for making sure you are not involved in any political fundraising activity.



**Board of Ethics**  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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## Frequently Asked Questions

Below is an overview of how the Charter change impacts some activities that are common subjects of requests for advice. Additional guidance aides, including updated FAQs, will be available soon.

Can I...	Old	New
...volunteer for a campaign for non-local office in a non-managerial role?	No	Yes (for some City workers)
...ask for campaign contributions?	No	No
...sign a nominating petition?	Yes (but not at work)	Yes (but not at work)
...serve as a ward leader?	No	No
...be a campaign manager?	No	No
...register as a member of a political party?	Yes	Yes
...wear campaign buttons while on duty?	No	No
...send emails in support of a candidate from my City computer?	No	No
...retweet a candidate's post on Twitter?	Yes (but not with your City title)	Yes (but not with your City title)
...attend a political rally while off duty?	Yes	Yes

## Stay tuned for more details...

### Updates to Board Regulation 8 (Political Activity)

Board Regulation 8 remains in effect until a new regulation is approved by the Board except to the extent it is specifically contradicted by the new Charter language. For the latest information on proposed changes to Regulation 8, please visit us on the web or follow us on Twitter.

### Information sessions available

Board Staff will be conducting brief information sessions on the Charter changes. Check our website for dates and registration instructions.

### We are (virtually) here for you.

**Advice** BOEGCStaff@phila.gov

**Training** BOE.Training@phila.gov

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**Twitter** @PhillyEthicsBd

@EthicsSeal



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