



## Important Hatch Act Guidance for FAA Employees

**July 9, 2011** – In April, President Obama and Vice President Biden announced that they will run for reelection in 2012. This announcement triggers the need for a general reminder of the rules that apply to government employees under the Hatch Act, as amended, at 5 U.S.C. 7321, et seq. (Hatch Act). It also triggers the need for us to examine our workspaces and remove any unofficial photos and paraphernalia (e.g., political buttons, t-shirts, bags, coffee mugs, mouse pads, posters, screen savers etc.) depicting the President, Vice President or any other candidate of a partisan campaign that would be considered by the Office of Special Counsel to be in violation of the Hatch Act.

The Hatch Act governs the political activity of government employees (including bargaining unit employees) at the Federal, state, and local levels. It prohibits government employees from engaging in any partisan political activity while on duty and, in some cases, even while not on duty.\* The Office of Special Counsel is responsible for enforcing the Hatch Act provisions. It is the only agency authorized to prosecute violations of the Act, which are adjudicated by the Merit Systems Protection Board.

For more information about what is considered prohibited political activity under the Hatch Act, view the [Hatch Act Questions and Answers](#), a list of [Dos and Don'ts](#) on political activities by government employees, and [guidance memo](#) on government employees' display of unofficial photos of President Obama as well as other candidates in the federal workplace.

This information can also be found on the [Office of Special Counsel's web site](#). Employees wishing to report violations, or request oral or written opinions about activities that are permitted or prohibited under the Hatch Act may do so directly to the OSC Hatch Act Unit at 1730 M Street, NW, Suite 218, Washington, D.C. 20036-4505 or call 1-(800) 85-Hatch or (202) 254-3650. For general questions pertaining to this message, you may contact Headquarters Ethics Staff (AGC-90) or your local Regional or Center Counsel's Office.

As always, thank you for your attention to this very important message.

\*Note: Employees paid from an appropriation for the Executive Office of the President and employees appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate (e.g., AOA, ADA), whose position is located within the United States, and who determine policies to be pursued by the United States in relations with foreign powers or in the nationwide administration of Federal laws may engage in certain political activity while on duty, if the costs associated with the political activity are not paid for by money derived from the treasury of the United States. These employees are advised to consult with the Department prior to taking any action.