

CHANCELLOR SONNY PERDUE
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BOARD OF REGENTS OF
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

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October 13, 2022

Presidents
University System of Georgia
sent via email

Dear Presidents:

The Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia (USG) met on October 11 – 12, 2022 at Dalton State College. During this meeting, the following BOR policy was revised:

Personnel

➤ **Board Policy 8.2.18.3 Political Activities**

Attached as an Exhibit is a document that provides background information on the policy revision, the effective date of the policy revision, and also shows the language added / removed from the policy section. Questions regarding revisions to this policy should be directed to Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs, Chris McGraw at chris.mcgraw@usg.edu or (404) 962-3255.

Please share widely with the appropriate offices at your institution to include Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Human Resources, Business and Finance, Legal Affairs, Audit, and Compliance.

Sincerely,

Sonny Perdue
Chancellor

Enclosure

cc: Tracey Cook, Chief Fiscal Officer
Teresa MacCartney, Chief Operation Officer
Dr. Ashwani Monga, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ashley Jones May, Chief of Staff and Vice Chancellor for External Affairs
Jeff Davis, Vice Chancellor for Fiscal Affairs
Dr. Juanita Hicks, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
Dr. Scot Lingrell, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Chris McGraw, Vice Chancellor of Legal Affairs and Secretary to the Board
Sandra Neuse, Vice Chancellor for Real Estate and Facilities
Dr. Dana Nichols, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Dr. Stuart Rayfield, Vice Chancellor for Leadership & Institutional Development
Jenna Wiese, Vice Chancellor for Internal Audit, Chief Audit Officer
Karin Elliott, Associate Vice Chancellor of Total Rewards
Josiah Heidt, Senior Legal Counsel
Wesley Horne, AVC Compliance, Chief Ethics Officer
Institutional Chief Business Officers
Institutional Provosts
Institutional Human Resource Directors
Institutional Legal Officers
Institutional Audit Directors

Exhibit
BOARD OF REGENTS POLICY MANUAL
Revised Policy with Markup
Meeting of October 11-12, 2022

Board Policy Revision – Section 8.2.18.3, Political Activities

Background:

The former Board policy encourages USG employees to engage in the political process but also makes clear that employees must not do so in a way that interferes with their job duties. The revised policy further clarifies that employees must not hold themselves out as speaking on behalf of the USG or an institution or create the appearance that they are participating in the political process on behalf of the USG or an institution. Finally, the revision makes clear that employees must not use USG resources when engaging in personal political activities.

Effective Date:

The effective date of this policy revision is October 12, 2022.

Former Policy Language:

8.2.18.3 Political Activities

USG employees are encouraged to fulfill their civic obligations and engage in the normal political processes of society. Nevertheless, it is inappropriate for USG employees to manage or enter political campaigns while on duty to perform services for the USG or to hold elective political office at the state or federal level while employed by the USG.

The following policies governing political activities apply to all USG employees:

1. A USG employee may not manage or take an active part in a political campaign that interferes with the performance of duties or services for which he or she receives compensation from the USG.
2. A USG employee may not hold elective political office at the state or federal level.
3. A USG employee seeking elective political office at the state or federal level must first request a leave of absence without pay beginning prior to qualification as a candidate in a primary or general election and ending after the general or final election. If elected to state or federal office, a USG employee must resign prior to assuming office.
4. Employees may seek and hold elective office at other than the state or federal level, or appointive office, when it does not conflict or interfere with the employee's duties and responsibilities to the employee's USG institution or the USG.

Policy Language in Change Tracker

8.2.18.3 Prohibition on Certain Political Activities; No Official Endorsement or Affiliation and Avoidance of the Appearance Thereof

USG employees are encouraged to fulfill their civic obligations and engage in the normal political processes of society, including the right to express their personal opinions on matters of public concern, and nothing in this policy is intended to infringe or restrict free expression rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution or the Georgia Constitution. Nevertheless, it is inappropriate for USG employees to manage or enter political campaigns while on duty to perform services for the USG or to hold elective political office at the state or federal level while employed

by the USG. Likewise, USG employees must not hold themselves out as speaking or acting on behalf of the USG or its institutions when participating in political activities and must take reasonable measures to avoid any appearance that such participation is in an official capacity as an employee of the USG or its institutions.

In light of the foregoing, the following policies rules govern all USG employees when engaging in governing political activities and associated political expression apply to all USG employees:

1. A USG employee may not manage or take an active part in a political campaign that interferes with the performance of duties or services for which he or she receives compensation from the USG.
2. A USG employee may not hold elective political office at the state or federal level.
3. A USG employee seeking elective political office at the state or federal level must first request a leave of absence without pay beginning prior to qualification as a candidate in a primary or general election and ending after the general or final election. If elected to state or federal office, a USG employee must resign prior to assuming office.
4. A USG employee may seek and hold elective office at other than the state or federal level, or seek and hold an appointive office, when it does not conflict or interfere with the employee's duties and responsibilities to the employee's USG institution or the USG or the employee's institution, as applicable.
5. A USG employee engaging in political activities and/or associated political expression must do so only in their personal capacity and shall not speak on behalf of the USG or its institutions or hold themselves out as representing the USG or its institutions, unless specifically authorized by the USG or the employee's institution, as applicable.
6. When a USG employee engages in political activities and/or associated political expression in their personal capacity, such employee must take reasonable steps to avoid any appearance that such political activities and/or associated political expression represents the views of, or is endorsed by, the USG or its institutions. For example, USG employees are not prohibited from noting in a biographical description their employment status, title, or affiliation with the USG or their institution, or their background and credentials, but if an employee does so, the employee must make clear that the employee is not speaking in the employee's capacity as an employee of the USG or the employee's institution.
7. USG employees are prohibited from using state property, resources, or materials (including work email) or work time to communicate personal political views or in conjunction with any political campaigning. In addition, employees are prohibited from using any USG registered trademarks when expressing personal opinions on political issues, unless they are expressly authorized to do so.

New Policy:

8.2.18.3 Prohibition on Certain Political Activities; No Official Endorsement or Affiliation and Avoidance of the Appearance Thereof

USG employees are encouraged to fulfill their civic obligations and engage in the normal political processes of society, including the right to express their personal opinions on matters of public concern, and nothing in this policy is intended to infringe or restrict free expression rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution or the Georgia Constitution. Nevertheless, it is inappropriate for USG employees to manage or enter political campaigns while on duty to perform services for the USG or to hold elective political office at the state or federal level while employed

by the USG. Likewise, USG employees must not hold themselves out as speaking or acting on behalf of the USG or its institutions when participating in political activities and must take reasonable measures to avoid any appearance that such participation is in an official capacity as an employee of the USG or its institutions.

In light of the foregoing, the following rules govern all USG employees when engaging in political activities and associated political expression:

1. A USG employee may not manage or take an active part in a political campaign that interferes with the performance of duties or services for which he or she receives compensation from the USG.
2. A USG employee may not hold elective political office at the state or federal level.
3. A USG employee seeking elective political office at the state or federal level must first request a leave of absence without pay beginning prior to qualification as a candidate in a primary or general election and ending after the general or final election. If elected to state or federal office, a USG employee must resign prior to assuming office.
4. A USG employee may seek and hold elective office at other than the state or federal level, or seek and hold an appointive office, when doing so does not conflict or interfere with the employee's duties and responsibilities to the USG or the employee's institution, as applicable.
5. A USG employee engaging in political activities and/or associated political expression must do so only in their personal capacity and shall not speak on behalf of the USG or its institutions or hold themselves out as representing the USG or its institutions, unless specifically authorized by the USG or the employee's institution, as applicable.
6. When a USG employee engages in political activities and/or associated political expression in their personal capacity, such employee must take reasonable steps to avoid any appearance that such political activities and/or associated political expression represents the views of, or is endorsed by, the USG or its institutions. For example, USG employees are not prohibited from noting in a biographical description their employment status, title, or affiliation with the USG or their institution, or their background and credentials, but if an employee does so, the employee must make clear that the employee is not speaking in the employee's capacity as an employee of the USG or the employee's institution.
7. USG employees are prohibited from using state property, resources, or materials (including work email) or work time to communicate personal political views or in conjunction with any political campaigning. In addition, employees are prohibited from using any USG registered trademarks when expressing personal opinions on political issues, unless they are expressly authorized to do so.