



ADVOCACY FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS: FACT SHEET

WHAT Is Advocacy?

- ⇒ Advocacy **FOR OUR PATIENTS**
 - Including empowering patients to advocate for themselves
- ⇒ Advocacy **FOR THE PROFESSION**
 - Raising the value of psychology for the public and other stakeholders
- ⇒ **INSTITUTIONAL** advocacy
 - Fighting for systems change
 - Being a champion/social justice advocate in your institution

TYPES of advocacy¹:

- ⇒ **INFORMAL** advocacy
 - Anywhere, anytime
 - At work, for a client, on behalf of trainees, with an insurer
- ⇒ **FORMAL** advocacy
 - Officially supporting a cause on behalf of yourself, community, or institution

TO WHOM to advocate²:

- ⇒ Within **PSYCHOLOGY**
 - Coworkers and colleagues
 - Professional groups, state psychological associations, APA
- ⇒ **PUBLIC** advocacy
 - Public education campaigns
 - Be a public voice in media or social media
 - Do scholarly work or writing in an area
- ⇒ **GOVERNMENT** advocacy
 - Influence policy/laws; oppose or support policy/laws

LIMITATIONS to advocacy:

- ⇒ Federal employees face certain limits as defined by the HATCH Act (summarized below)
- ⇒ State laws may also impact local advocacy; check with your state licensing board and state psychological association for more information.

WHAT Is the Hatch Act³?

- ⇒ A federal law passed in 1939 limiting certain political activities of federal employees
- ⇒ Different levels of restrictions:
 - Less Restricted (most psychologists): federal employees, contractors
 - Further Restricted: military members, Presidential appointees, career senior executive service members

¹ Kaslow, Pickover, & Kelly (2018)

² APA Division 42 Advocacy Training for Early Career Psychologists and Graduate Students (2010)

³ 5 U.S. Code § 7323



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HOW is Political Activity Defined?

- ⇒ **POLITICAL ACTIVITY:** “an activity directed towards the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office or political group.”

What Activity does the Hatch Act RESTRICT⁴?

- ⇒ Activities restricted **DURING WORK HOURS** or while on federal property
- Partisan political activity
- ⇒ EXAMPLES of restricted activities **DURING WORK HOURS** or while on federal property
- Making a campaign contribution
 - Engaging in fundraising activities
 - Speaking at a partisan gathering
 - Posting *partisan* political messages or emails
 - *Restricted:* “The Democrats are wrong about their bill on immigration!”

What does the Hatch Act ALLOW?

- ⇒ Activities allowed **DURING WORK HOURS** or while on federal property
- Non-partisan advocacy
 - Non-partisan advising or consulting
- ⇒ Examples of allowed activities **DURING WORK HOURS** or while on federal property
- Using one’s expertise to advocate for a specific issue or policy
 - *Allowed:* “In my expertise, policies that broaden immigration requirements may improve mental health among this population of interest”
 - Using one’s expertise to discuss or investigate potential impact of a proposed policy
 - *Allowed:* “In my expertise, if passed this House bill may improve mental health outcomes for this population of interest”
 - Advocating within one’s expertise via social media or email in a non-partisan manner
- ⇒ Activities allowed **OUTSIDE WORK HOURS** and outside federal property
- Partisan political activity, including those listed above

⁴ For employees defined as “less restricted”