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DATE: September 14, 2012
TO: Heads of State Agencies and Human Resources Directors
SUBJECT: Prohibited Political Activity

On November 6, 2012 citizens of the United States and citizens of State of Louisiana will go to the polls to elect national officials and some state officials. Therefore, I would like to remind classified state employees of the prohibited political activities as it relates to elections set out in Chapter 14 of the State Civil Service Rules.

Employees in the classified service are prohibited from engaging in political activity. Political Activity means an effort to support or oppose the election of a candidate for political office or to support or oppose a particular party in an election. Therefore, you cannot display political signs in your yard, bumper stickers on your vehicle, or wear a button or pin that could be perceived as supporting a person or party. Also, you cannot "like" a candidate or party on Facebook or follow on Twitter or any other social media.

Employees in the classified service are prohibited from being a candidate for nomination or election to a public office. This applies to national, state or local public offices. This means that an employee cannot be a candidate for their local police jury, school board, judge or parish council; nor can a classified employee be a candidate for the legislature, governor, BESE board, or Public Service Commission to name a few.

Employees in the classified service cannot be a member of any national, state, or local committee of a political party or faction. This means you cannot be a member of the republican national committee or the democratic national committee or a member of the Louisiana Democratic Party or Louisiana Republican Party, as well as any other party.

Employees in the classified service cannot take active part in the management of the affairs of a political party, faction, candidate, or any political campaign. This means you cannot volunteer in a person or party's campaign, make calls for a person or party, or go door to door campaigning for a person or party.

Employees in the classified service cannot take active part in the recall from office an elected official. This means you cannot file a petition for recall or solicit signatures for a recall petition.

So what can a classified employee do as it relates to elections?

You may vote, you may be a commissioner or poll watcher, you make express your opinions privately, and you may sign a recall petition.

You may support or oppose a cause. Examples of a cause would be a tax election, a bond issue and constitutional amendments.

Finally, if you are unsure if your activity is prohibited political activity, LSA R.S. 42:1382 provides that you may request an advisory opinion from the State Department of Civil Service requesting whether or not the proposed activity is prohibited or not. The State Department of Civil Service is required to respond within 20 days of the receipt of the request.

Sincerely,

s/Shannon S. Temple
Director