

PJALS Policy for Election Season

Peace & Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) is a 501(c)(3) organization. By law, none of its staff time or resources can be used for partisan political purposes—that is, to support or oppose any candidate running for public office. This is a strict prohibition and any perceived violation could result in a costly investigation by the public, media and/or IRS, and possibly the loss of our tax-exempt status.



Examples of activities to avoid include:

- Making statements that favor or oppose candidates or political parties at any PJALS event or meeting or in any PJALS official publication, including the website.
- Posting comments that favor or oppose candidates or political parties on any PJALS social media, including our blogs, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts (including staff accounts that are associated with PJALS), etc.
- Allowing a candidate, political party, PAC or any group working in a partisan political way to use our office space without charge.
- Giving a candidate political party, PAC or any group working in a partisan political way any PJALS mailing list.
- Forwarding an email from a candidate, political party, PAC or any partisan political group that came to your PJALS email account. Do not use your PJALS email address to subscribe to candidate or political material. If you inadvertently get candidate or political emails at work, delete them and unsubscribe your PJALS email address from the email list.
- Viewing candidate, party or other political events or advertisements online on an PJALS computer.
- Making statements or handing out literature supportive or critical of a candidate, political party or PAC at a PJALS event.
- Using the copier or postage machine to make copies of campaign materials or to mail them.
- Making or receiving telephone calls in support or opposition of a candidate using PJALS phones. If you receive such calls at work, advise the caller to call you at home or on your cell phone in the evening or on the weekend.
- Wearing political buttons or t-shirts while representing PJALS at any event or meeting or in the office.
- Putting partisan political signs, bumper stickers or political buttons up in your office area or office window.
- Paying for or attending political events hosted by political parties, campaigns, or other entities.

Note: These organizational prohibitions do not inhibit your individual participation in election activities, provided you do not use any PJALS resources act or represent that you are acting as an employee, volunteer, officer or Board member of PJALS. Examples of the type of individual election activities you may participate in include voting, making financial contributions to candidates, volunteering for a candidate on your own time (weekends or evenings), or running for office.

*Many organizations with which you may be familiar, such as Human Rights Campaign and Planned Parenthood Action Fund, are 501(c)(4) organizations that can engage in partisan election activity. **Don't look to other groups to determine whether you can do something, since PJALS' tax-exempt status may be different than that of other nonprofits. If you have any questions about these policies, please contact your supervisor.***

Policy adopted by the PJALS Steering Committee on July 26, 2016.