

## IHE Policy Surrounding Political Activity

### Purpose

To outline the expectation of the Institute of Health Economics (IHE) for staff surrounding political activity.

### Policy Statement

The IHE is a politically neutral organization and does not support or endorse any political party or candidate at any level of government.

The IHE recognizes the personal right of IHE staff to participate in political activities. IHE staff may publicly support or oppose any political activity, political party, candidate, or cause in a personal capacity provided they do not use IHE work time or resources (including but not limited to electronic and IT communications, stationery, or any resource provided or supported by the IHE), or do so while representing the IHE, and any action is done in compliance with the IHE Social Media Code of Conduct and other relevant governance and policy documents.

The IHE is prohibited from donating to any provincial political party or candidate. The IHE recognizes its duty as a non-profit, apolitical entity to ensure research and materials produced by IHE staff are protected from biases and political sway, and, therefore, does not donate or contribute funds or resources to any political activity, political party, or candidate at any level of government.

### Applicability

Compliance with this policy is required by all IHE employees and other persons acting on behalf of the IHE (including contracted service providers, as necessary).

### Policy Elements

1. Political donations:
  - a. IHE staff may make political donations using their personal funds and/or attend political events including fundraising events, in a personal capacity and at their own expense.
  - b. IHE funds or resources shall not be donated or otherwise used to support any political activity, political party, or candidate, including attendance at or donations to fundraising events. Personal funds or resources shall not be donated to a political activity, political party, or candidate on behalf of the IHE.

## 2. Political activity at IHE facilities:

- a. IHE facilities shall not be used for any political activity, including but not limited to use for the purposes of canvassing, campaigning, making political announcements, touring, and other activities. During an election campaign, political parties are not permitted to use IHE facilities as a backdrop or host location for any campaign event or activity.
- b. Elected officials may access IHE facilities for the purpose of carrying out their duties to the elected office, provided they do not engage in any political activity and comply with applicable IHE policies and all standard access requirements in place at the facility.
- c. Any other political activity is not permitted in IHE facilities.

## 3. Candidate for election:

- a. All IHE staff must disclose their candidacy and seek approval to take a leave of absence during the election period, in order to manage any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise from being a candidate in an election or serving in an elected office.
- b. IHE staff who are:
  - i. elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, the Parliament of Canada, or a municipal office (including school trustee) are required to disclose the elected position and comply with the decision of IHE senior staff to remove or mitigate a real, potential, or perceived conflict position; or
  - ii. not elected and are on an approved leave of absence from the IHE may return to their position or similar position with the IHE effective the first day after the election.
- c. IHE staff requesting time off to assist in another individual's campaign are required to follow the standard processes for processing and approving paid or unpaid time off (e.g., vacation request, leave of absence).

## 4. Communications and marketing activities:

- a. During an election or by-election period, the IHE shall not advertise or publish any information about its programs or activities unless the advertisement or publication:
  - i. is required by law;
  - ii. is required at that time to solicit proposals or tenders for contracts or applications for employment; and/or
  - iii. is a continuation of earlier publications or advertisements and is required for an ongoing program of the IHE, and/or to fulfill contractual commitments (e.g., requests to respond to ongoing surveys,

advertisements for educational courses, information that is posted on an established schedule such as quarterly newsletters, reports from contracts with timelines established prior to an electoral period).

- b. During an election or by-election period, all advertisements and publications considered for release (including but not limited to social media – see definition of *advertisements and publications* below) must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Communications.
- c. All media inquiries and requests for participation in any roundtables or forums should be directed to the Director of Communications.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- *IHE staff* means IHE employees, and others who may act on behalf of the IHE.
- *IHE senior staff* means employees responsible for directing or overseeing an IHE staff member, or the person to whom that IHE staff member reports. This includes the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, other executives who report directly to the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, and any other person so designated by the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer or the IHE Board.
- *Political activity* means an action that supports or opposes a political party, candidate, or cause at any level of government, including but not limited to:
  - seeking nomination as or being a candidate for election;
  - volunteering for a political party or candidate;
  - campaign visits, tours, or events from candidates and/or their representatives;
  - posting political party, candidate, or campaign signs, posters, social media content, or other materials;
  - distributing political party, candidate, or campaign literature;
  - wearing or distributing political party, candidate, or campaign attire including buttons;
  - soliciting political donations or fundraising; and/or
  - soliciting petition/nomination signatures
- *Political donations (or donations)* means the contribution of funds (including but not limited to cash, cheques, purchase orders, p-cards/credit card purchases, and funding requests made to accounts payable), time, gifts (including but not limited to door prizes and silent auction gifts), or resources to a political activity, political party, or candidate.

- *Political party* means an organization, including associated constituency associations, established under the *Elections Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (Alberta) or *Canada Elections Act* (Canada) and registered with Elections Alberta or Elections Canada to nominate candidates in an election.
- *Advertisements and publications* means materials and text that are distributed/posted through media outlets (e.g., opinion editorials), the IHE website, affiliated websites, and/or social media platforms.

## References

- IHE Policies and Directives
- *Elections Act* (Alberta)
- *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (Alberta)
- *Canada Elections Act* (Canada)

If you have any questions or comments regarding the information in this policy, please contact Jasmine Brown, Director of Communications, at [jbrown@ihe.ca](mailto:jbrown@ihe.ca), or John Sproule, Senior Director of Policy, at [jsproule@ihe.ca](mailto:jsproule@ihe.ca).

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