February 12, 2019

Advocacy 101

Presented by

Connie Schulze

Director of Government Affairs

School of Medicine and Public Health
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

UW Health

Advocacy 101

Disclaimer:

The information that follows is intended to serve as a guide to aid those with an interest in advocacy. However, the political landscape is always changing and priorities at the institution and enterprise are also evolving over time. Therefore, anyone interested in taking part in an advocacy endeavor or political activity with the potential to impact UW Health/SMPH/UW-Madison is strongly encouraged to contact Connie Schulze in Government Affairs at 608/516-2552 (cell) for input and additional guidance beyond what is provided here.

Advocacy 101

[SMPH] A general rule of thumb is advocacy activities must be done separately from work time or work locations, and employees must use only personal resources unless authorized by the University.

https://staterelations.wisc.edu/get-involved/

Advocacy 101

[UW Health] employees are expected to use their own time and resources when engaging in political activity, if their job at UW Health does not specifically involve such political advocacy.

Provided by UW Health Corporate Counsel

Advocacy 101

The **UW Health Code of Conduct**, which applies to all UW Health employees (e.g., medical staff, UWHC, UWMF, wholly owned subsidiaries and affiliates), provides in pertinent part:

"*UW Health encourages medical staff, employees, and agents to vote and participate in the political process. However,* ***the use of UW Health property or funds to support a political cause, party or candidate for public office is prohibited. UW Health assets, such as telephones, copiers, and our work time should not be used to support political activity.*** *All medical staff, employees, and agents clearly indicate that the political views they express as individuals are their own and not those of UW Health.*" Emphasis added. See Code of Conduct Section VII(C) on page 7. Click here to view it on U-Connect.

Based on the above excerpt from the Code of Conduct, employees who are not employed to engage in political activity, e.g., government affairs liaisons, lobbyists, etc., must use their own time and resources, including paid time off when engaging in political activity during work hours.

"Political activity" is broadly defined. A few examples are expressing support for a political cause or political candidate either verbally or in-writing, attempting to raise funds to support a cause or candidate, sharing campaign literature, wearing an article of clothing to support a candidate or political cause. Attempts to influence public policy are also considered "political activity."

Advocacy 101

UW Health prohibits employees from using work time and resources to solicit others for political campaigns, petitions or other unsanctioned activities. **Section III of UW Health Policy 1.43**, Non-Solicitation, provides in pertinent part:

"A. Employees are prohibited from soliciting and/or distributing materials or information during the work time of both the solicitor and the person being solicited. See section III.G. of this policy for exceptions.
B. Employees are prohibited at all times from soliciting or distributing any materials or literature in work areas. This prohibition applies to both work time and non-work time. Work areas include any area where work is performed, including but not limited to personal offices, cubicles, and all patient care areas (e.g. patient rooms, treatment areas, adjacent hallways and corridors, elevators, stairways and other areas regularly used by patients and visitors in the course of receiving treatment). Work areas do not include break rooms or other areas designated by department managers for non-work activities.
C. Employees and other individuals are not permitted to solicit at any time for any purpose via any UW Health resources (including without limitation; bulletin boards, computers, mail, email and telecommunication systems, photocopiers and telephone lists and databases) unless specifically authorized by the Vice President of Public Affairs, Director of Community Relations, or their designee, or as otherwise specifically authorized by UW Health…."

The definition of solicitation in Policy 1.43 includes political activity (e.g., strongly urging a cause or belief such as a political campaign or organizational membership). Click here to view Policy 1.43.

Advocacy 101

In addition to the UW Health Code of Conduct and Policy 1.43, which apply to UWHC and UWMF employees, UWMF also has guidelines for physicians in clinics that prohibit political activity in the name of UWMF. The ***Guidelines for Professional Conduct of Physician Faculty in the Clinical Setting***, at Section II(K)(4) provide as follows:

"*Do not use the name or auspices of UWMF, directly or indirectly, to intervene in a political campaign and do not attempt to influence legislation, in the name of or with the backing of UWMF.*"
Click here to view the Guidelines in their entirety.

Advocacy 101

Except for government relations liaisons, contract lobbyists, and a few others, employees' participation in political activities are considered outside activities, as they are not part of the employees' assigned work duties. In limited situations, UWHC might approve individuals to participate in a legislative hearing, presentation or other activity as a hospital duty or hospital-sponsored activity (e.g., when an employee is a subject matter expert and participation is desired to convey specific information or augment a specific lobbying strategy). The **UWHC Code of Ethics**, would permit granting approval for hospital-sponsored activity. The Code of Ethics provides in pertinent part:

"*It is understood that UWHC employees engage in a variety of outside activities. UWHC encourages employees to be engaged in community and family activities.* ***It is expected that that these and other outside activities will not occur during the time when the employee has hospital duties, unless the outside activity has been approved as a hospital duty or a hospital-sponsored activity****.*
Otherwise absence from regular duties to engage in outside activities should be scheduled as vacation, holiday, leave or other approved time off from work. This time off needs to be scheduled in advance like other time off, so that hospital operations will not be disrupted. Exceptions are made where required by law." Emphasis added. Click here to view the standards for outside activities.

The ability to grant approval for hospital-sponsored activity from time to time is not intended to circumvent the rules prohibiting political activity during work time. Instead, the Code of Ethics allows UWHC to approve certain activities as a hospital duty when warranted.

Advocacy 101

So what does all of that mean in practice?

Advocacy 101

- ✓ **DO** respond as an individual to requests for information from policy-makers. Please update Government Affairs as a courtesy.
- ✓ **DO** support the institution and enterprise if asked by Government Affairs to testify at a committee hearing, review a briefing paper, attend a meeting, apply your expertise to proposed legislation, etc.
- ✓ **DO** work as an individual, in concert with professional organizations and colleagues wherever possible to support or oppose public policies that are important to you.
- ✓ **DO** use your personal Twitter accounts, email, Facebook, etc. to express your opinion on public policy.
- ✓ **DO** contact Government Affairs about issues that matter to you or the enterprise. There may be opportunity to work together.

Advocacy 101

- ✓ **DON'T** present your views to a policy-maker on behalf of the enterprise unless asked to do so by Government Affairs or your leader.
- ✓ **DON'T** invite public officials to visit/tour a facility without first consulting Government Affairs.
- ✓ **DON'T** use SMPH or UW Health resources, including email for political activity.
- ✓ **DON'T** use work time for political activity.

Advocacy 101

Advice to live by……

1. Use your best judgement.

2. Consult your dept. chair or leader.

Questions? Please ask!