

Active Duty Members: Prohibitions on Political Activities

U.S. Air Force members assigned to duty in the U.K. **cannot participate in any U.K. politics at any level.**

Political activities by active duty Air Force members in American politics, is governed by **AFI 51-902**. Under AFI 51-902, you **may not**:

- a. Use official authority or influence to interfere with an election, to affect its course or outcome, to solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue, or to require or solicit political contributions from others.
- b. Be a candidate for, or hold, civil office, except as specifically authorized by AFI 51-902.
- c. Participate in partisan political management, campaigns, or conventions, or make public speeches.
- d. Allow, publish or sign political articles for soliciting votes for or against a partisan political party or candidate.
- e. Serve in any official capacity or be listed as a sponsor of a partisan political club.
- f. Speak before a partisan political gathering of any kind to promote a partisan political party or candidate.
- g. Participate in any broadcast program or group discussion as an advocate of a partisan political party or candidate.
- h. Conduct a political opinion survey under the auspices of a partisan political group, or distribute partisan political literature.
- i. Perform clerical or other duties for a partisan political committee during a campaign or on Election Day.
- j. Solicit or otherwise engage in fund-raising activities in federal offices or facilities,

- including military reservations, for a partisan political cause or candidate.
- k. March or ride in a partisan political parade.
- l. Display a large political sign, poster, or banner (as distinguished from a bumper sticker) on a private vehicle.
- m. Display a large political sign, poster, banner, or similar device visible to the public at one's residence on a military installation (even if part of privatized housing).
- n. Participate in any organized effort to provide voters with transportation to the polls if the effort is organized by or associated with a partisan political party or candidate.
- o. Engage in the public recruitment of others to become partisan candidates for election to a civil office.
- p. Attend, as an official representative of the Armed Forces, partisan political events, even without actively taking part, or attend such a meeting in one's capacity while in uniform.

If you engage in any of the above prohibited activities, you will be in violation of a lawful order or regulation and subject to prosecution under UCMJ Art.92 in addition to other applicable provisions.

Active Duty Members: Permitted Political Activities

Many political activities are still available for you to engage in as a concerned citizen. You **may**:

- a. Register to vote, vote, and express a personal opinion on political candidates and issues, but not as a representative of the Armed Forces or DoD.
- b. Encourage others to exercise their voting rights, if such encouragement does not

- constitute use of official authority or influence to interfere with the outcome of any election.
- c. Make monetary contributions to a political organization, party, or political committee favoring a particular candidate or slate of candidates, subject to certain limitations.
- d. Attend political meetings or rallies as a spectator, not in uniform, when no inference or appearance of official or endorsement can reasonably be drawn.
- e. Join a political club and attend its meetings when not in uniform.
- f. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, or post on a blog or social media website, expressing the member's personal views about public issues if those views do not attempt to promote a partisan political cause. If the member is identifiable as a member of the Armed Forces, it should clearly state that the views expressed are those of the individual, not the Air Force or DoD.
- g. Display a political bumper sticker on the member's private vehicle or wear a political button when not in uniform and not on duty.
- h. Write a personal letter, not for publication, expressing preference for a specific political candidate or cause if the action is not part of an organized letter-writing campaign on behalf of a partisan political cause or candidate.

Retired and Reserve Component: Prohibited Political Activities

Retired and Reserve Component members serving on active duty for more than **270 days** fall under the same restrictions as active duty members. If serving on active duty for 270 days or less, Retired and Reserve Component members may remain or become a nominee or candidate for a civil office provided there is no interference with the performance of military duties. You **may not**:

- a. Use or allow the use of “in uniform” photographs, drawings or other media to be the primary graphic representation in any campaign media.
- b. Depict or allow their depiction in uniform in a manner that does not accurately reflect their actual performance of duty.

Retired and Reserve Component: Permitted Political Activities

If serving on active duty for 270 days or less, you may remain or become a nominee or candidate for a civil office. You **may**:

- a. Use or mention in campaign literature your military rank or grade and military service affiliation, but must also include your retired or reserve status.
- b. Include current or former specific military duty title or position, or photographs in military uniform, but must also include that this does not imply DoD or USAF endorsement).

Please feel free to contact the base legal office at DSN 238-2028 if you have any questions.

This handout is for basic information on topic covered as it relates to military personnel stationed in the United Kingdom. It is not intended to take the place of legal advice from a Judge Advocate. There may be important exceptions in some states to the information presented here. Please contact the Legal Office for questions and further information. You may view more information on various legal topics at the Air Force Legal Assistance website found at <https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>. Additionally, complete legal worksheets for Wills, Living Wills, Powers of Attorney (General, Special, and for Health Care), and access to the Online Survey are found on the Air Force Legal Assistance website.

Scan Below to Access the:

RAF Mildenhall Legal Office Website
www.mildenhall.af.mil/Info/Legal-Office



Legal Assistance Website
<https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>



Legal Assistance Information Series

MILITARY MEMBERS: POLITICAL ACTIVITIES



Hours of Operation (Walk-ins)
Notary Public & Powers of Attorney
Monday – Friday: 800-1630 hrs

Legal Assistance
By Appointment Only

100 ARW/JA
APO AE 09459
DSN 314-238-2028
COMM (0)1638-54-2028
E-mail: 100ARW.JAV3@mildenhall.af.mil

Scan Below to Access Our Website
www.mildenhall.af.mil/Info/Legal-Office

