

NASPE Communications Awards
2015

Video: Prohibited Political Activity
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptp1LZ7gBJ0>

Louisiana

Lindsay Ruiz de Chavez
Public Information Director
Department of State Civil Service
P.O. Box 94111
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9111
Phone: 225-342-8272
Fax: 225-342-8058
Email: Lindsay.Ruiz@la.gov

1. Brief description

Our submission is an in-house video entitled Prohibited Political Activity (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptp1LZ7gBJ0>). It is hosted on the State Civil Service YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/LAStateCivilService>) and discusses which political activities a classified state employee is prohibited from participating in as well as which activities are allowed. The video was written, recorded, directed, and produced in house using State Civil Service staff. Furthermore, all roles in the video were also portrayed by SCS staff.

2. How long has the submission been in existence?

The video was released on October 28, 2014. However, the general circular that the video was based on was published July 2011. Production of the video began August 2014 with filming taking place September 2014.

3. Why was the submission created?

Classified employees in Louisiana are prohibited from participating in political activity by Article X, Section 9 of the Louisiana State Constitution. The video was created to help better explain what political activities were allowed and which ones were prohibited. While the general circular that explained the policy existed and is published on a semiannual basis, State Civil Service still received numerous and frequent questions regarding the political restrictions placed upon state classified employees. Many people expressed difficulty understanding the document due to its terminology and lack of examples. The video took the information contained in the document and applied it to real life situations. This allowed for better understanding of the policy.

4. How does this submission support the goals and objectives of your agenda/department?

At the Louisiana Department of State Civil Service, our mandate is to serve the citizens of Louisiana by promoting a classified workforce hired and managed based on merit system

principles and free from political influence. Therefore, it is important to limit the political involvement of the state's classified workforce as stated above. By prohibiting certain political activities, State Civil Service ensures that classified employees do not appear to support or oppose a certain political party, candidate, or faction. In doing this, State Civil Service is protecting the classified employee from any potential political retaliation or interference.

This video ensures that the Prohibited Political Activity policy is understood by the classified workforce. By explaining the policy using real-life examples, classified employees are able to better understand what they are prohibited from doing as well as what they are allowed to do. This understanding ensures that they will be less likely to mistakenly participate in a prohibited activity.

5. Have you been able to measure the effectiveness of this submission? If so, how?

As mentioned, the video was released in October 2014. At the time of its release, a memo was sent to all HR Directors informing them of the video. Since its release, we have issued the general circular regarding prohibited political activity twice. Usually the release of the circular results in quite a few calls regarding questions about the information contained within the document. However, the last two times the circular has been issued, a link to the video was sent as well. In that timespan we have received a great deal of positive feedback regarding the video. Some agencies have even made the video mandatory for their employees and have requested the video be put into the state's Learning Management System so that they can track when their employees have finished the video. Since the release, over 6,000 people have viewed the video, both on our YouTube channel and our LMS. It is important to note that we are in an election year and as such, we expect these numbers to increase dramatically as the year progresses.