



WOODSTOCK POLICE SERVICE BOARD POLICY

Subject:	Political Activity of Police Officers
Policy Number:	AI-035
Effective Date:	October 28, 2024
Reviewed:	
Amended:	

Authority/Legislative References

Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1

Ontario Regulation 402/23 Political Activity

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to outline the guidelines and restrictions regarding the political activities of police officers employed by the Woodstock Police Service (the "Service"), in accordance with the *Community Safety and Policing* (the "Act") and *Ontario Regulation 402/23 Political Activity* (O. Reg. 402/23).

The Woodstock Police Service Board (the "Board") recognizes the right of police officers to engage in political activities while ensuring that such activities do not compromise their duties, impartiality, or public confidence in the Service. This policy sets forth the permissible political activities, conditions, and restrictions for police officers.

Policy Application

1. Police officers have the right to vote in elections, be a member of or hold a position in a political organization, and make contributions to political organizations or candidates.
2. When off-duty and not in uniform, police officers may:
 - a. attend and participate in public meetings, including those with elected representatives, government officials, or candidates;
 - b. attend and participate in meetings or conventions of a political organization;
 - c. canvass for or act as a scrutineer for a political organization or candidate; and
 - d. on polling day, transport voters to polling places on behalf of a candidate.
3. Police officers must not:
 - a. express views on issues directly related to their responsibilities as police officers;
 - b. associate their views with their police position or represent those views as those of the Service;
 - c. solicit or receive funds on behalf of political organizations or candidates; or
 - d. engage in any political activities that would or could place them in a conflict of interest.
4. On-duty activities are only permissible if authorized by the Chief or, in the case of the Chief, by the Board.
5. Officers may express views on issues not related to election campaigns and

may attend public meetings as long as they do not support or oppose candidates or political parties during election periods.

6. Police officers may not seek or hold candidacy in federal or provincial elections unless on a leave of absence without pay as granted by the Board.
7. Officers may seek candidacy or serve on a band council or municipal council if the Service does not operate within the relevant band or municipality, and the candidacy does not interfere with their duties or create a conflict of interest. In such cases, officers may not need a leave of absence, but must apply for one if required.
8. Officers elected to federal or provincial positions must resign immediately.
9. Officers elected to band councils or municipal councils may not need to resign if it does not interfere with their duties or create a conflict of interest. However, they must abstain from discussions or votes related to the Service's budget.
10. The Chief will address any concerns or complaints related to political activities to ensure adherence to this policy.