POLITICAL OFFICE

The College recognizes that a vibrant community is enhanced by the participation of the citizenry in the political process. To that end, College employees may run for and hold political office concurrent with College employment unless the employee is unable to fulfill their responsibilities to the College, a conflict of interest will arise, or where prohibited by Maryland law.

The potential office holder must keep in mind the possible conflicts of interest and possible repercussions on the College that may result from the employee's candidacy for office and/or the duties of public office. It is incumbent upon the employee to make it clear in all cases to all concerned that the employee represents only him/herself and to always act solely in service to the public office in which the employee serves when functioning as an elected official. It must be made clear that the employee does not represent the College in carrying out such duties.

Employees seeking or holding public office must also recognize that the duties of public office cannot interfere with their responsibilities and duties at the College. Employees are expected to be present at their job during the business hours associated with their position. Employees seeking or holding public office can request approval for use of limited vacation time if the duties of the political office on occasion require absence during the employee's normal College working hours. If an employee wishes to request a leave of absence for campaigning purposes or for fulfillment of political office duties, the employee must petition for leave without pay. The granting of a request for leave will depend upon the needs of the College at the time.

As required by state law, if an employee files for a federal, state, county, or city office, the employee shall not campaign or conduct campaign activities during the normal business hours associated with the employee's position. Nobody in the employee's office can conduct campaigning or campaigning activities for the employee during normal working hours for that person's position at the College. Posting of campaign literature must follow normal College guidelines, as applied to all other candidates, and College e-mail cannot be for campaign purposes. No College supplies, materials, or equipment may be used for campaign purposes or office holding purposes.

Prior to filing for election, the employee must formally notify the President and the Director of Human Resources in writing of the employee's intent and be briefed on this policy. The employee and the College will seek an ethics opinion from the State Ethics Commission in order to determine if any conflict of interest exists and if there is any reason that the employee cannot serve in the public office while, at the same time, continue as a College employee.

See: Maryland Code Ann., Local Government, § 1-301, et seq.
Maryland Code Ann., General Provisions, § 5-101, et seq.