



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



January 17, 2012

2012 Election Year Guidance & Voting Assistance

Voting is a right, and DoD and Navy provide guidance on [voting resources](#) available for their people as well as certain restrictions pertaining to elections.

Supporting the Right to Vote – the Federal Voting Assistance Program

[Throughout the fleet](#), Navy leaders support participation in the democratic process by:

- Supporting the [Federal Voting Assistance Program \(FVAP\)](#) by publishing factual information about registration and voting laws, with special emphasis on absentee voting requirements.
- Training and equipping voting assistance officers at every level of command.
- Ensuring expeditious processing of [balloting material](#) and proper postmarking and date-stamping of absentee ballots.
- Taking all necessary steps to prevent fraud and to protect voters against any coercion.

Prohibited Activities in Support of Political Events by Military Personnel

All personnel, including reservists, when acting in their official capacity, shall NOT:

- Wear military uniforms at political campaign or election events.
- Associate the Navy with any partisan political campaign or election, candidate, cause, or issue.
- Distribute political campaign or election literature while in uniform, or while on a military installation.
- Engage in public commentary - including speeches and written submissions offered for publication - concerning political campaigns or elections without prior clearance.
- Respond directly to inquiries from political campaign organizations. All inquiries shall be forwarded to a Public Affairs Officer, who will respond with public information unless the request is from elected officials.

Prohibited Uses of Navy Installations

Elected officials who are also candidates may visit installations on official business, and commanders should offer all candidates for national office who are not current government officials the same access to installations as any other unofficial visitor. However, commanders shall NOT allow the use of Navy installations for:

- Filming or photographing of military equipment for use in political campaign or election advertisements, commercials, or literature. This does not apply outside the confines of an installation.
- Use by any candidate for political campaign or election events including public assemblies or town hall meetings, speeches, fundraisers, press conferences, post-election celebrations, and concession addresses.
- Campaign or election activity or comments to the media by candidates visiting on official business.

Key Messages	Facts & Figures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is long-standing policy that DoD personnel acting in their official capacity may not engage in activities that associate DoD with any partisan political campaign or election, candidate, cause or issue. • Consistent with official guidance, commanders may welcome visits by candidates seeking to receive briefings, tours, or other official DoD information. • The FVAP provides U.S. citizens worldwide a broad range of non-partisan information and assistance to facilitate participation in the democratic process – regardless of where they work or live. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations pertaining to federal civilian employees are covered in the Hatch Act of 1939, amended in 1993. • DoD publications shall not publish content provided by a candidate's campaign or other partisan election or issue content, including cartoons and editorials. • Voting assistance resources are available by telephone at commercial (800) 438-8683, (703) 588-1584, DSN 425-1584, by e-mail: vote@fvap.ncr.gov, or online at http://www.fvap.gov. For more guidance, see DoD Directive 1344.10 and NAVADMIN 382/11.