



CITIZEN POLITICAL ACTIVITY DEPARTMENT POLICY

PURPOSE:

To guarantee the public the ability to express their political philosophies and opinions within County Parks without undo disturbance or inconvenience to other park users.

POLICY:

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States recognizes that the public must be assured a legitimate place to express political philosophy and opinions. Historically and legally, parks have offered such a place. These activities shall be regulated, however, to assure that the visiting public is not disturbed or inconvenienced by such expressions or solicitations.

PROCEDURE:

A. Polling Places

1. Parks that are used for Polling Places are under the regulation of the Board of Elections. As such, the regulation of these sites relative to election laws is controlled by the on-site election judge who will be at the site for the entire time of the election or vote. Any questions of procedure or law should be directed to the on-site election judge.

B. Roadside Signs and Banners

1. Signs and banners, such as campaign signs, may not be posted in County Parks or along roadways adjacent to County Parks, except as noted below.

C. Facility Permits for Political Activities

1. Individuals or organizations may reserve park facilities for use as a public forum to talk to their constituents
2. These individuals or organizations may post signs at the reserved site or elsewhere to give directions to their site, provided that the posting does not damage park property. Following the activity, the signs should be removed.

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D. Petition Drives and Protests

1. Citizens may circulate petitions or conduct protest demonstrations in County Parks provided that they do not hinder other activities in the area. If the area is under a contract or reservation such as for a concert or exhibition, the petitioner/protestor and participating public should be able to mutually co-exist. A specific area should be designated for petitioners/protestors if at all possible.

E. Public Forums

The number of forums, focus groups, seminars, town hall meetings conducted by County Council members, County Executive, and public policy issue forums by senators and representatives would be limited to three per year per person; any requests from these individuals for more than the specified number would be at the discretion of the Director. All requests would be based on availability.

Functions that could qualify for waiving of fees are:

1. Parks programming focus groups, County Police SkyWarn seminars, and town hall meetings conducted by County Council members or County Executive, and public policy issue forums by senators and representatives.
2. These elections and public information sessions shall be permitted at no cost to the convener.
3. It is the responsibility of the facility staff to let the Director's Secretary know: the dates and times the facility is being used, who is using the facility, and the purpose of their meeting.
4. This DOES NOT include political meetings or fund-raisers.

Director

Date

Effective Date: 07/92

Revision Date: 04/01

Revision Date: 04/02

Revision Date: 03/10