

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AT MARCHES

Tips for Participating in Marches, Demonstrations, and Peaceful Protests

1) The First Amendment protects a Federal employee's right to engage in personal speech, such as participating in marches that oppose the actions or policies of the current Administration.

2) Federal employees' personal speech may not be protected if it causes disruption to the workplace, so Federal employees should not use work time or resources (like government email or printers) to organize participation in marches or create signs.

3) Federal employees may, on their own time, inform friends and colleagues about the march and encourage them to participate.

4) Federal employees should not encourage a subordinate to participate in march, nor encourage them to contribute funds, or take steps that may make a subordinate or coworker feel coerced to do so.

5) Federal employees can, on their own time, use their personal social media accounts to provide information on and support for the march.

6) Federal employees participating in the march can express concerns regarding Administration policies or practices (for example, Federal employees can call for the Administration to "Restore Scientific Integrity Now"). Federal employees wishing to express partisan political messages (for example, "Dump Trump 2020") should comply with their agency's Hatch Act guidance and consult ethics officials if they have any questions.

7) If a Federal employee will miss work to take part in the march, that employee should use normal processes to obtain leave.

8) While participating in the march, Federal employees should be clear that any views expressed are their own and are not statements on behalf of their agency or office.

9) Federal employees may be able to accept travel costs, such as a free bus ride to Washington, D.C., from non-profits to participate in First Amendment activities like a march.

10) Federal employees should consult ethics officials and follow their agency protocols regarding travel gifts carefully and obtain approval for the acceptance of travel costs where required.

These tips are specific to federal employees. These tips may not apply to state or local public employees, so please consult relevant local authorities or your employer.

