

WACC POLICY

PERSONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Approved by the Board of Directors

September 2016

Preamble

In adopting this policy, WACC intends to affirm the following purposes and principles:

1. This policy applies to both Directors and Employees of World Association for Christian Communication (“WACC”), at all times during their volunteer involvement and/or employment with WACC.
2. This policy does not address the scope of activities that may be undertaken by WACC as a registered Canadian charity; it addresses the personal political activities of WACC Directors and Employees.
3. Engaging in political activities is a protected right under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and a fundamental tenet of a free, fair, and democratic society. The right of every individual to express herself or himself through political activity aligns with WACC’s mission to promote communication for all to advance peace, understanding, and justice around the world.
4. WACC does not seek to limit an individual’s right to personal political expression. However, as a registered Canadian charity, WACC is governed by the *Income Tax Act* (Canada), regulated by the Charities Directorate, and required to report to the Canada Revenue Agency (the “CRA”) on all its activities, including all political activities.
5. Registered charities in Canada are not permitted to engage in partisan political activities, which includes direct or indirect support of, or opposition to, any political party or candidate for public office, in Canada or anywhere in the world. Any breach of this requirement could result in the suspension or revocation of WACC’s charitable status in Canada.
6. The CRA has released specific guidance on the issue. The CRA website states: “Representatives of a charity, such as employees, directors, members, or volunteers, may be involved with an election, political campaign, or any other political activity in their own capacity as individuals, whether during an election period or not.” The CRA goes on to suggest that charities in Canada consider developing a policy to explain and clarify the distinction between an individual’s personal political activities and the activities of the charity.

7. To ensure that WACC does not inadvertently engage in any non-permissible activities, or is not perceived to be engaging in any such activities, any partisan political involvement by Directors and Employees of WACC shall be governed by this policy.

Involvement in non-candidacy political activities

WACC Directors and Employees do not need permission from WACC to engage in non-candidacy political activities. However, they are responsible for ensuring that their engagement is entirely personal and unconnected with their employment or volunteer position with WACC. Such political involvement shall not make use of any WACC resources, including but not limited to, premises, supplies, equipment, email or other internet services, or human resources, including volunteers or paid staff.

Further, any such political activities must not be conducted during work hours and must not interfere with the responsibilities or obligations of the Director or Employee.

Examples of permissible non-candidacy political activities

- Voting in any federal, provincial, municipal, or other regional or territorial election in Canada or in any other country;
- Volunteering or fundraising for a candidate or a political party;
- Supporting or opposing a candidate or a political party by displaying political material, at home or otherwise not on WACC's premises;
- Attending events, meetings, conventions, rallies, or other political gatherings in support of, or in opposition to, a candidate or a political party;
- Developing promotional material such as writing campaign speeches, slogans and pamphlets for a candidate or a political party;
- Using personal social media accounts to express personal views in support of, or in opposition to, a candidate or a political party.

When engaging in any non-candidacy activities, Directors and Employees of WACC must act in an individual capacity and not as a representative of WACC. There must be no suggestion, perceived or actual, that an individual's involvement in any political activity is sponsored or supported by WACC. A breach of this policy, whether intentional or unintentional, may lead to the Director or Employee being required to cease such activity, and in the event the individual does not cease the activity, to the individual being disciplined by WACC, in accordance with the applicable policy.

Involvement in candidacy political activities

Directors and Employees of WACC shall not seek the nomination or run as a candidate in any election, whether in Canada or in any other country, without the consent of the General Secretary.

Employees

An Employee who seeks the nomination or chooses to run as a candidate in a municipal, provincial or regional, or federal election, whether in Canada or in any other country, must apply to the General Secretary for a period of leave without pay. This leave of absence will be granted unless the absence would have an unreasonable impact on the program or service in which the Employee is involved, and an accommodation cannot reasonably be made, as determined by the General Secretary. The period of leave without pay shall commence upon the Employee's public announcement to seek the nomination, or the day he or she files the necessary nomination documentation with a political party, whichever date is the earliest, or an earlier date that may be agreed upon by the Employee and the General Secretary.

An Employee who is successful in his or her electoral campaign must resign his or her position when the election result is finalized. An Employee who is unsuccessful in the campaign is entitled to resume his or her position at a date agreed upon by the General Secretary.

Directors

A Director who chooses to seek a nomination or run as an electoral candidate shall inform the General Secretary of his or her intention, but need not resign from the Board, provided that the Director does not publicize his or her affiliation with WACC in such a way as to suggest that WACC endorses their candidacy. The Director shall not make use of any WACC resources to support his or her campaign, including but not limited to, premises, supplies, equipment, email or other internet services, or human resources, including volunteers or paid staff. The Director shall consult with WACC to ensure that all communications sent from the Director regarding his or her candidacy do not implicate WACC in any way.

A Director who is successful in his or her electoral campaign need not necessarily resign from the Board of WACC when the election result is finalized. The Director, shall, however, consult with WACC to consider whether his or her position on the Board may reasonably continue, taking into consideration the position of partisan neutrality that WACC must maintain and the new obligations and commitments of the Director. WACC reserves the right to request that a Director tender his or her resignation from the Board if that would be in the best interest of WACC. Each situation shall be approached on a case-by-case basis, and no decision made shall govern future decisions in this matter.