



October 9, 2026

Sent via email: Jennifer.Cooper-Stephenson@bchydro.com

Jennifer Cooper-Stephenson
BC Hydro & Power Authority
Senior Manager, Employee Relations
333 Dunsmuir Street, 10th Floor
Vancouver, BC V6B 5R3

Dear Ms. Cooper-Stephenson

Re: September 22 communication to employees — political activity

I am writing regarding Charlotte Mitha's September 22 email to employees, particularly the section entitled "Expectations of us as employees."

The Union recognizes the Employer's responsibility to remain institutionally neutral during an election. I believe there has been no dispute in the past between the Parties recognizing the distinction between employees' personal political activities and the performance of their duties.

However, the email sent by Ms. Mitha has been read by many of our members as an erasure of that distinction. Ms. Mitha's statement that employees are expected to conduct themselves in a "neutral and impartial manner," followed by extending that expectation to social media activity and conduct outside work, is being interpreted by our member as direction from their Employer to refrain from all personal political expression or participation.

That is materially broader than the political activity provisions of the Code of Conduct referenced in the email.

Political activities

- **Separation from work:** Clearly separate your political activities from your work at BC Hydro. Do not engage in political activities during work hours or use our assets to support those activities.
- **Costs:** BC Hydro should not incur any costs related to your political activities. This means you cannot use work time, facilities, or resources for these purposes.
- **Impartiality:** Maintain the perception of impartiality in relation to your duties and responsibilities. Do not bring partisan politics at the local, provincial, or national level into the workplace. This is not intended to restrict the speech of union representatives in fulfilling their obligations under their respective collective agreements.
- **Private conversations:** You are welcome to engage in private conversations about political activities with interested co-workers on your own time, but canvassing or campaigning at work is not allowed.

Here are some specific examples of political activities to avoid in the workplace to maintain a professional and impartial work environment.

- **Campaigning:** Actively campaigning for a political candidate or party during work hours or using company resources, such as distributing flyers or campaign materials.
- **Canvassing:** Soliciting votes or support for a political candidate or party within the workplace.
- **Using company assets:** Utilizing BC Hydro's facilities, equipment, or supplies (e.g., printers, email, phones) for political purposes.
- **Hosting political events:** Organizing or hosting political events, rallies, or meetings on company premises.
- **Displaying political materials:** Posting or displaying partisan political posters, signs, or banners in the workplace.
- **Pressuring coworkers:** Pressuring or coercing co-workers to support a particular political candidate or party.
- **Political fundraising:** Conducting fundraising activities for political campaigns or parties during work hours or on company property.

The referenced Code of Conduct directs employees to separate their political activities from their work and prohibits the use of work time and corporate resources for those activities. Its requirement to maintain the perception of impartiality is expressly qualified by the words “in relation to your duties and responsibilities.”

The referenced Code of Conduct also permits private political conversations with interested coworkers on employees' own time and expressly preserves the speech of union representatives fulfilling their obligations under their collective agreements.

These provisions recognize that employees may hold and express political views while maintaining impartiality in their work. They do not establish a general requirement for political neutrality in employees' personal lives.

Whether intentional or inferred in error, to suggest that employees must exercise restraint whenever they may be “identified or perceived as a BC Hydro employee” is concerning. Our members are known within their communities as working for BC Hydro, and some proudly identify their employer on personal social media profiles.

An employee associating themselves publicly on social media with their employment should not be treated as making their personal political views attributable to their Employer.

Our members should not be left concerned or confused about whether supporting a candidate, volunteering on a campaign, displaying a lawn sign, or expressing political views on a personal social media account could attract discipline.

To resolve these concerns, MoveUP requests BC Hydro provide the following in writing written confirmation to the Union that:

- Clarification that the requirement for institutional neutrality does not impose a blanket requirement for employees to remain politically neutral in their personal lives.

- Clarification that Employees may participate in lawful political activities on their own time, subject to applicable obligations regarding confidentiality or representing themselves as speaking for BC Hydro.
- Confirmation that being identifiable as a BC Hydro employee does not, by itself, make personal political expression a breach of the Employer's Code of Conduct

Please also confirm whether BC Hydro intended the September 22 email to introduce any additional restrictions beyond the existing Code. If so, please identify those restrictions, their basis, and any provincial direction relied upon.

Given the immediate potential for this communication to discourage employees' political participation, we request a prompt written response.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nathan Beausoleil', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nathan Beausoleil
Senior Union Representative

cc Carolyn Ryan

NB/km:usw2009