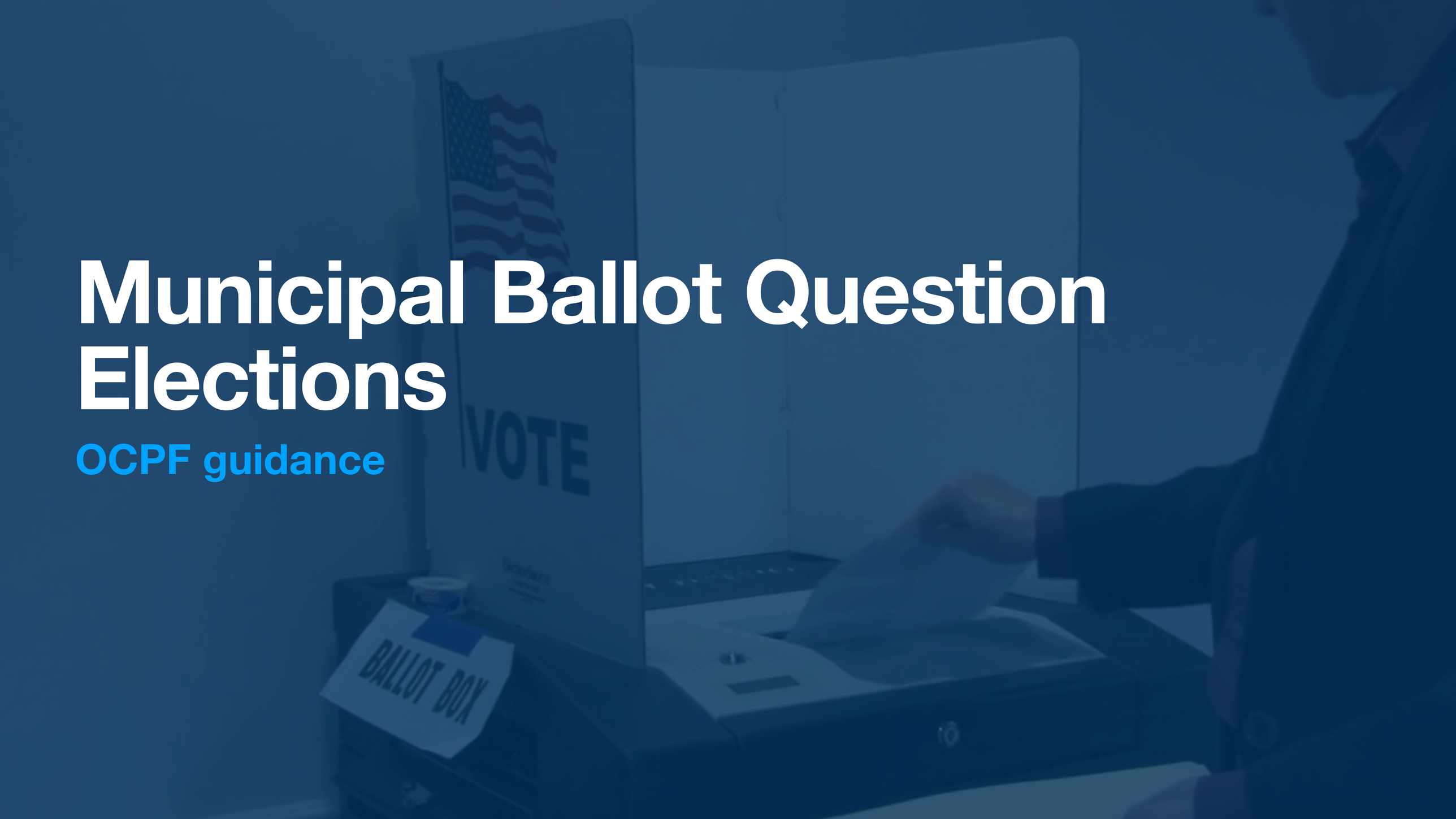
Municipal Ballot Question Elections

OCPF guidance

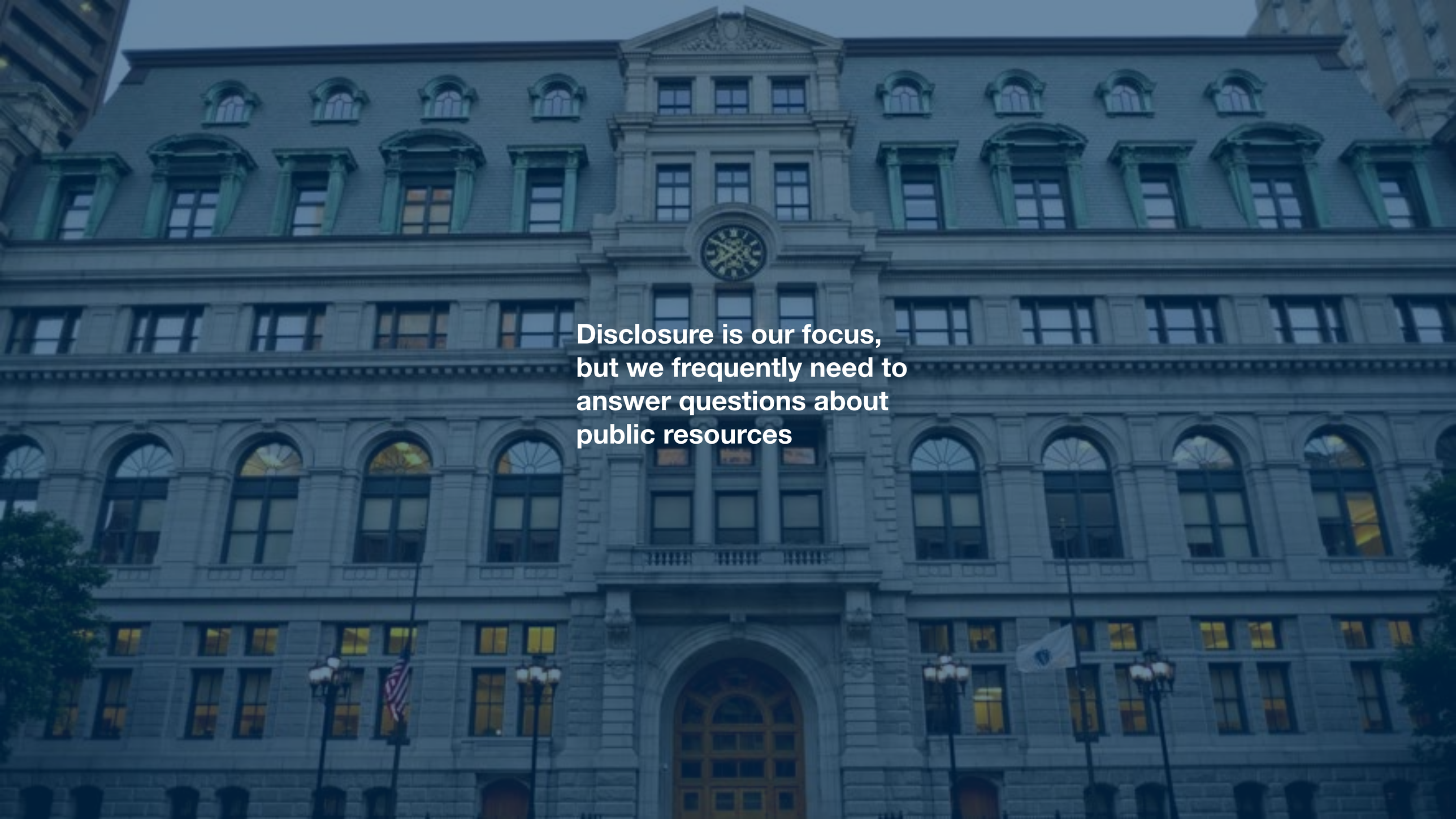


OCPF: typical day

Educate people on the campaign finance law

Assist with filing reports

Assist with fixing errors

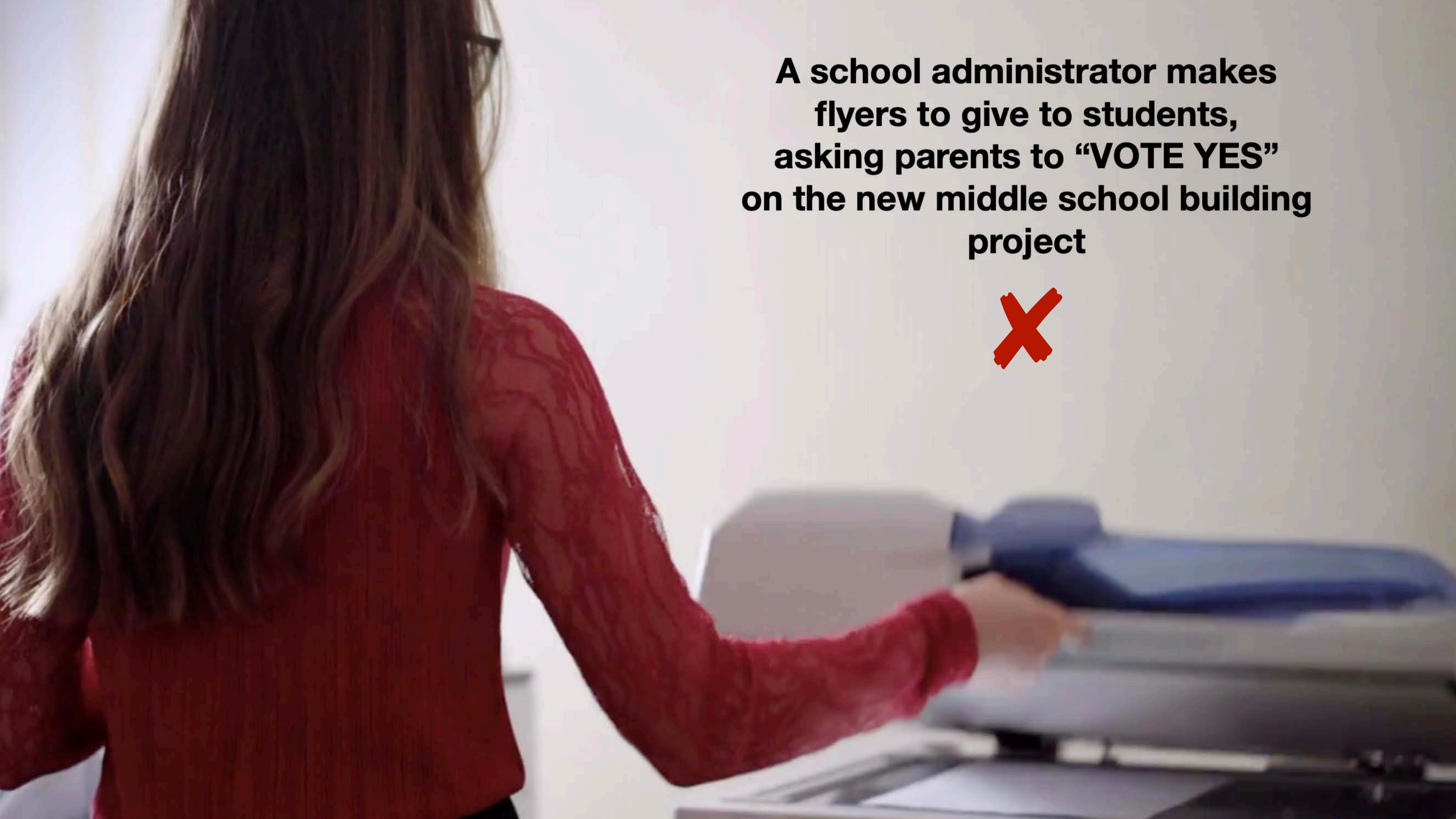


Disclosure is our focus, but we frequently need to answer questions about public resources

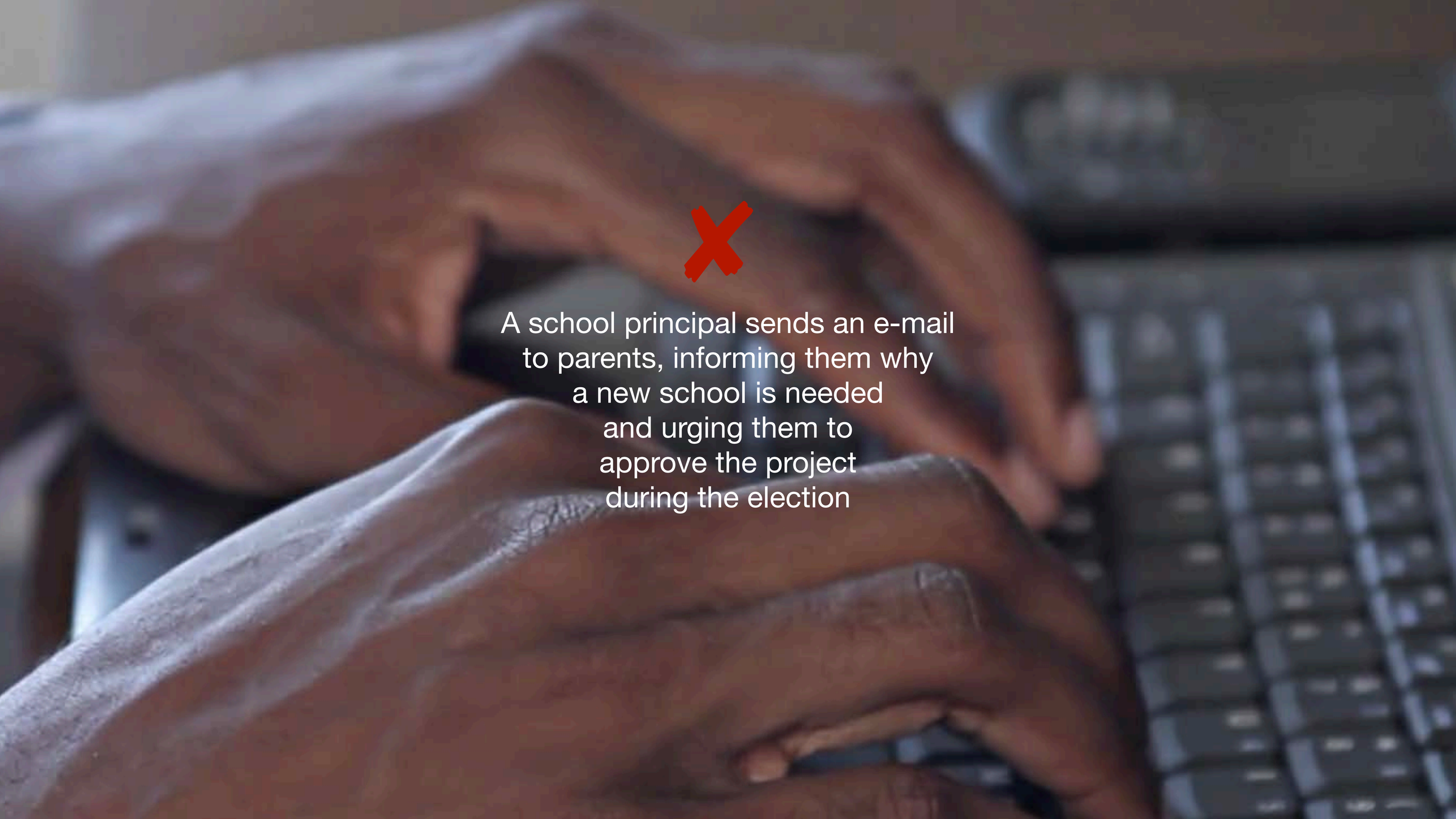
Public Resources

Anything paid for by the taxpayers cannot be used for campaign purposes …

Prohibited issues usually involve the distribution of information …


A school administrator makes flyers to give to students, asking parents to “VOTE YES” on the new middle school building project

A school superintendent uses the school’s postage machine to mail letters to parents, asking them to approve the budget override ballot question



A school principal sends an e-mail
to parents, informing them why
a new school is needed
and urging them to
approve the project
during the election

The school newsletter that is e-mailed
to parents and students
may not contain information about the
ballot question election

The use of the school
robocall system
is prohibited

whether it is on the statewide ballot or placed before voters in a single city or town.[2] See OCPF Interpretive Bulletin IB-91-01 and advisory opinions cited therein for more specific guidance on activities that fall under this prohibition. In addition, public resources may not be used to distribute even admittedly objective information regarding a ballot question unless expressly authorized by state law. See IB-91-01.

THE 192ND GENERAL COURT OF THE

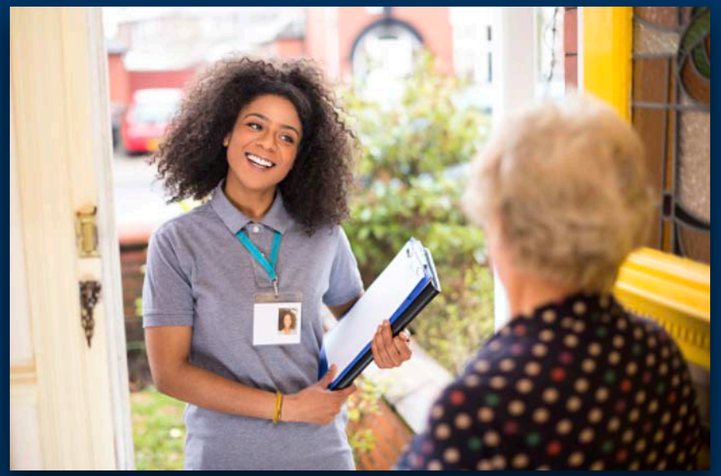
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Bills & Laws Budget Legislators Hearings & Events

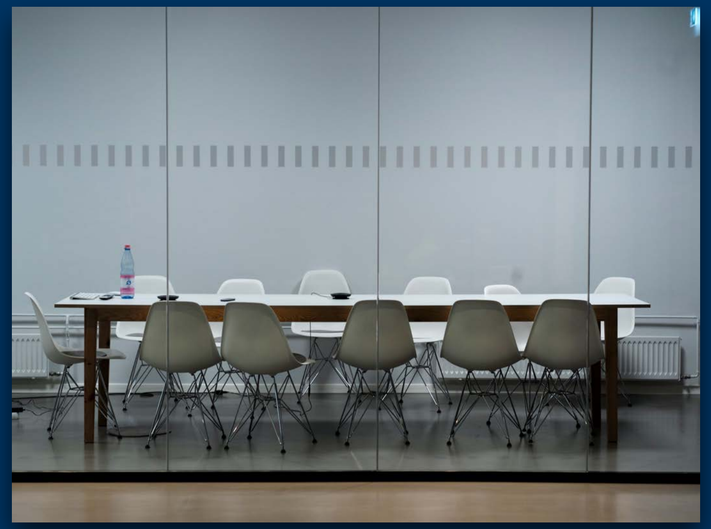
General Laws » Part I » Title VIII » Chapter 53 »

SECTION 18B

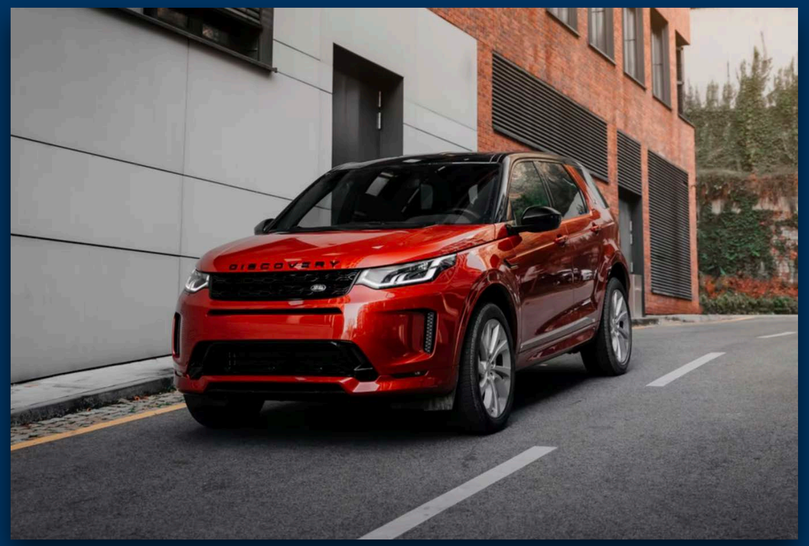
Other Public Resources



Public Employee Time



Government Office Space



Municipal Vehicles

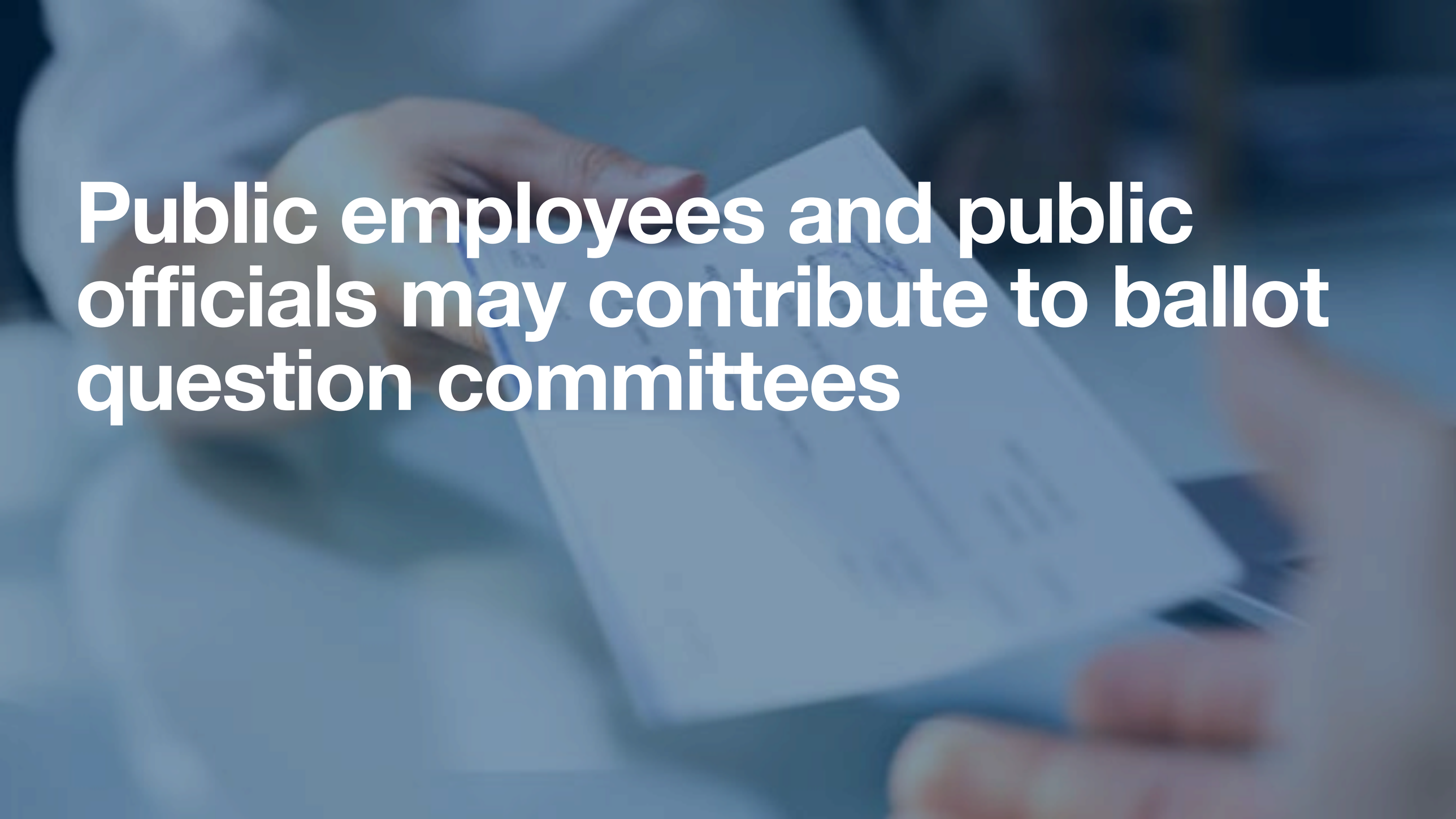
Town Meeting

If you're dealing with an issue of timing between town meeting and the election, contact OCPF in writing for guidance

OCPF@cpf.state.ma.us

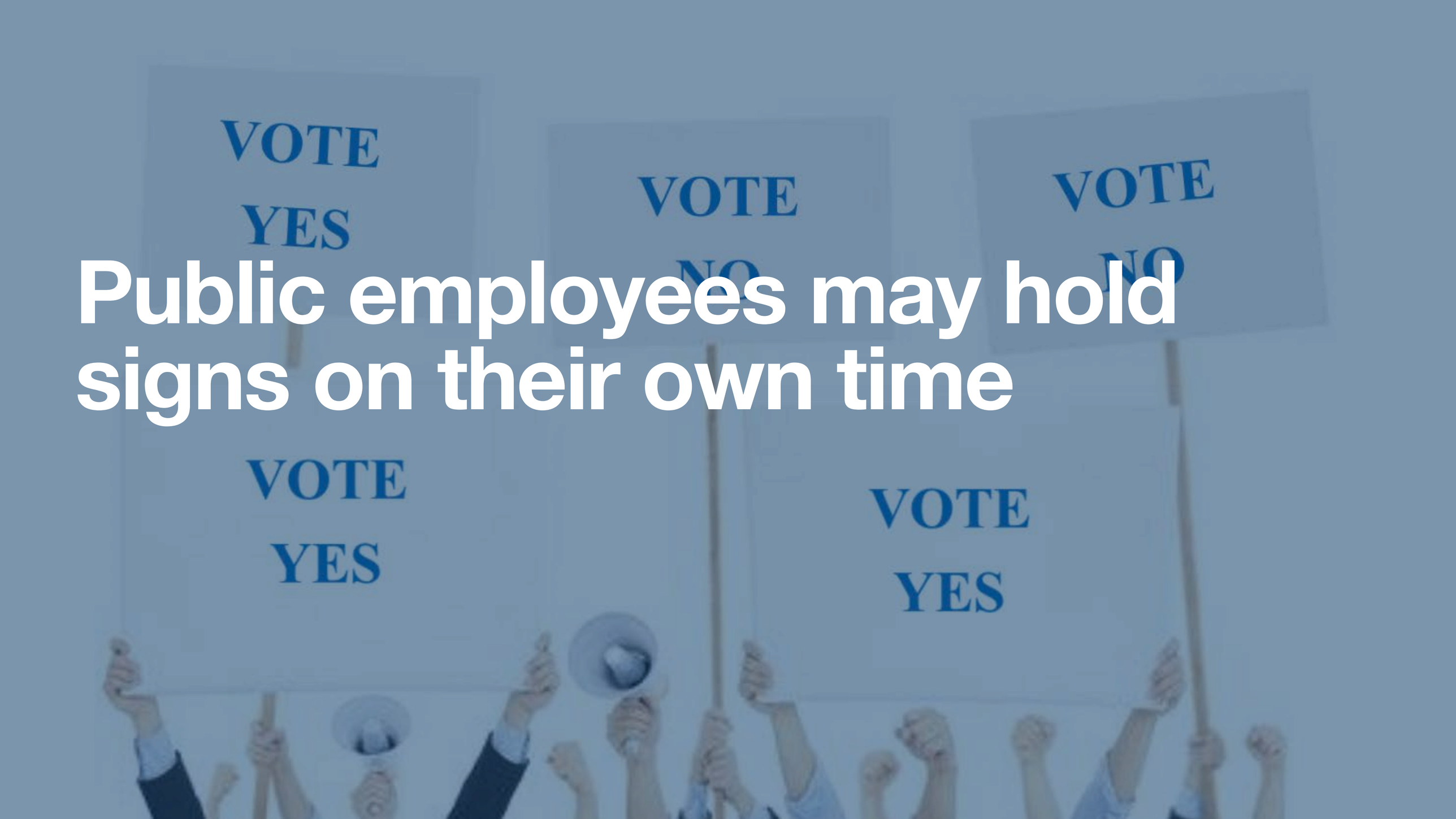
Office of Campaign and Political Finance

Permitted Activities

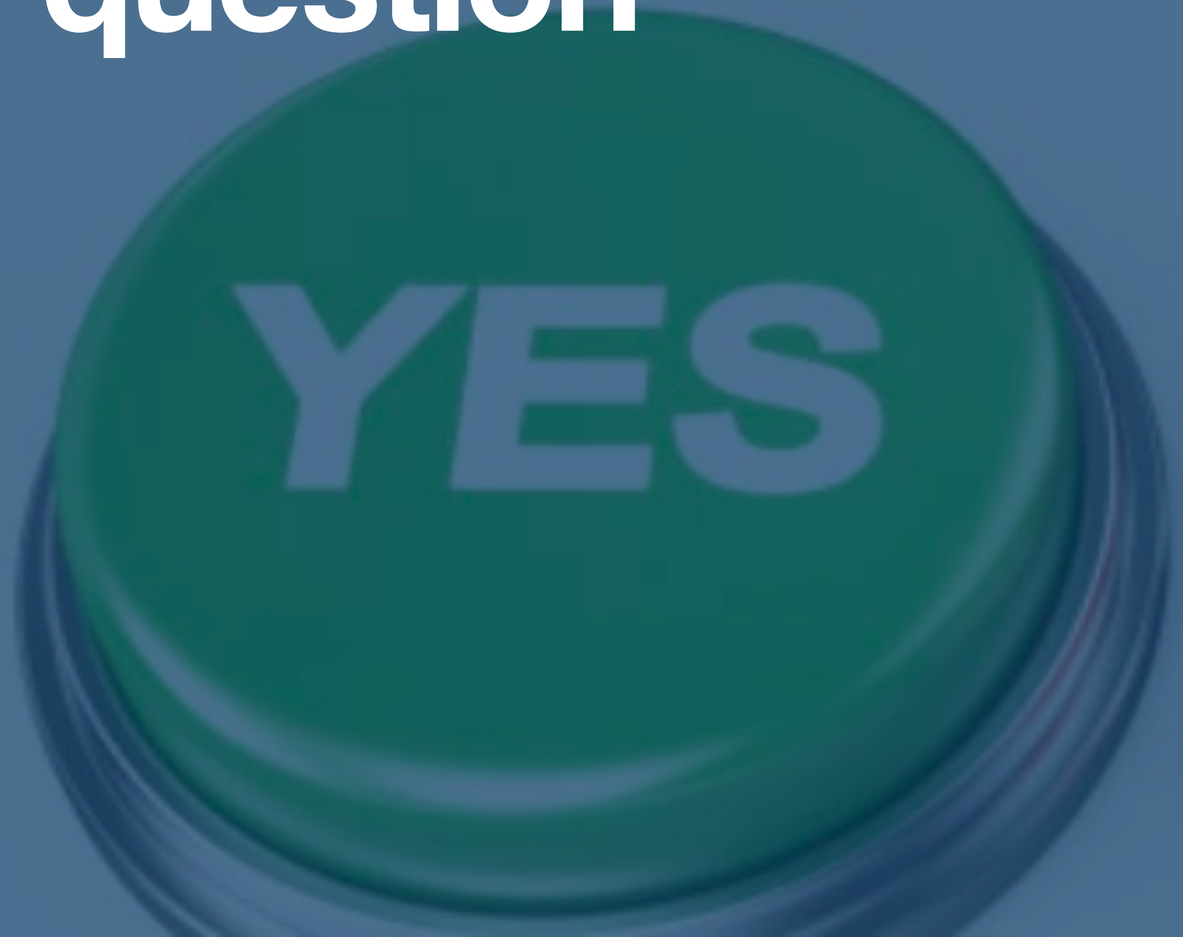


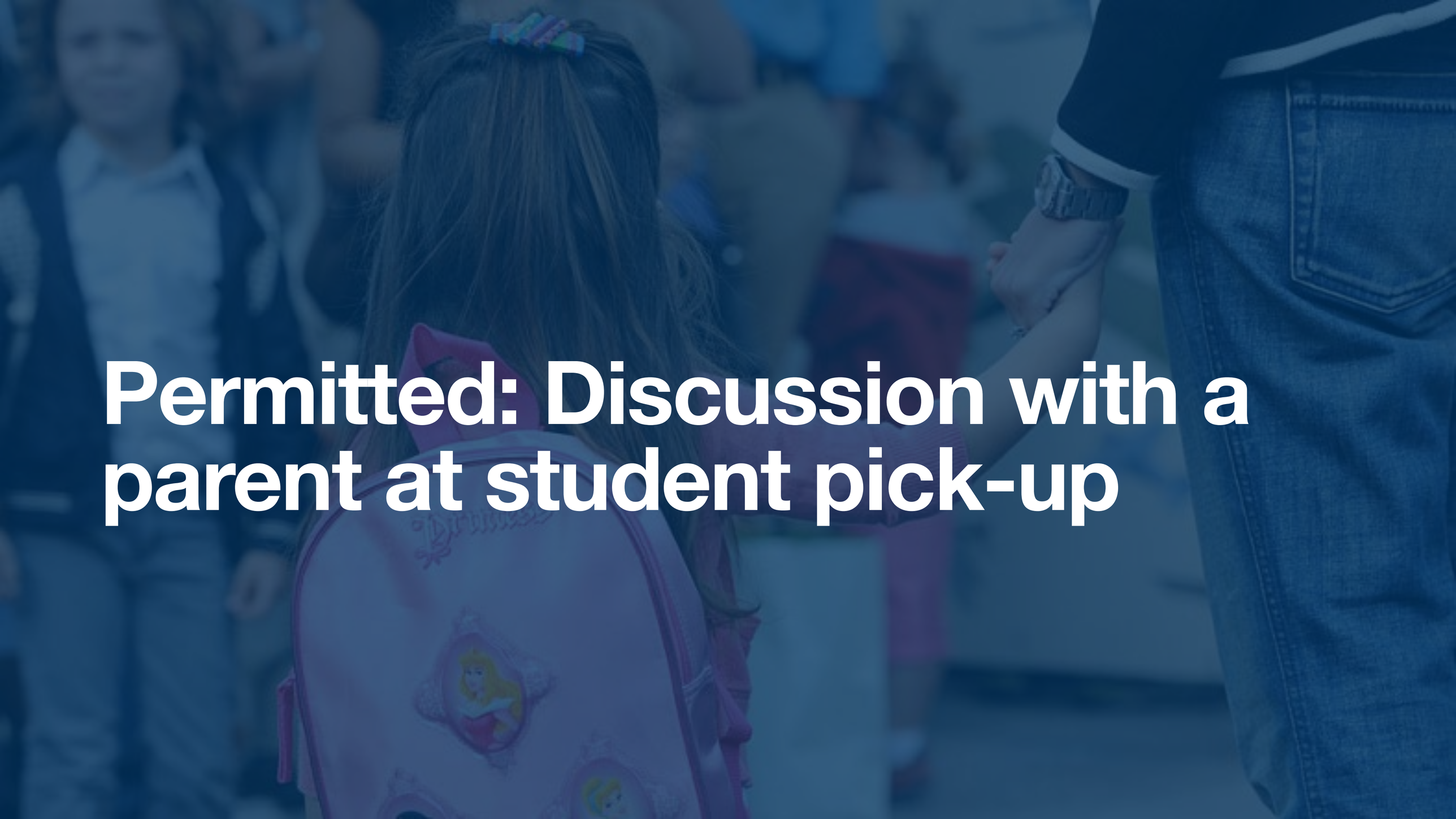
Public employees and public officials may contribute to ballot question committees

Public employees may hold signs on their own time



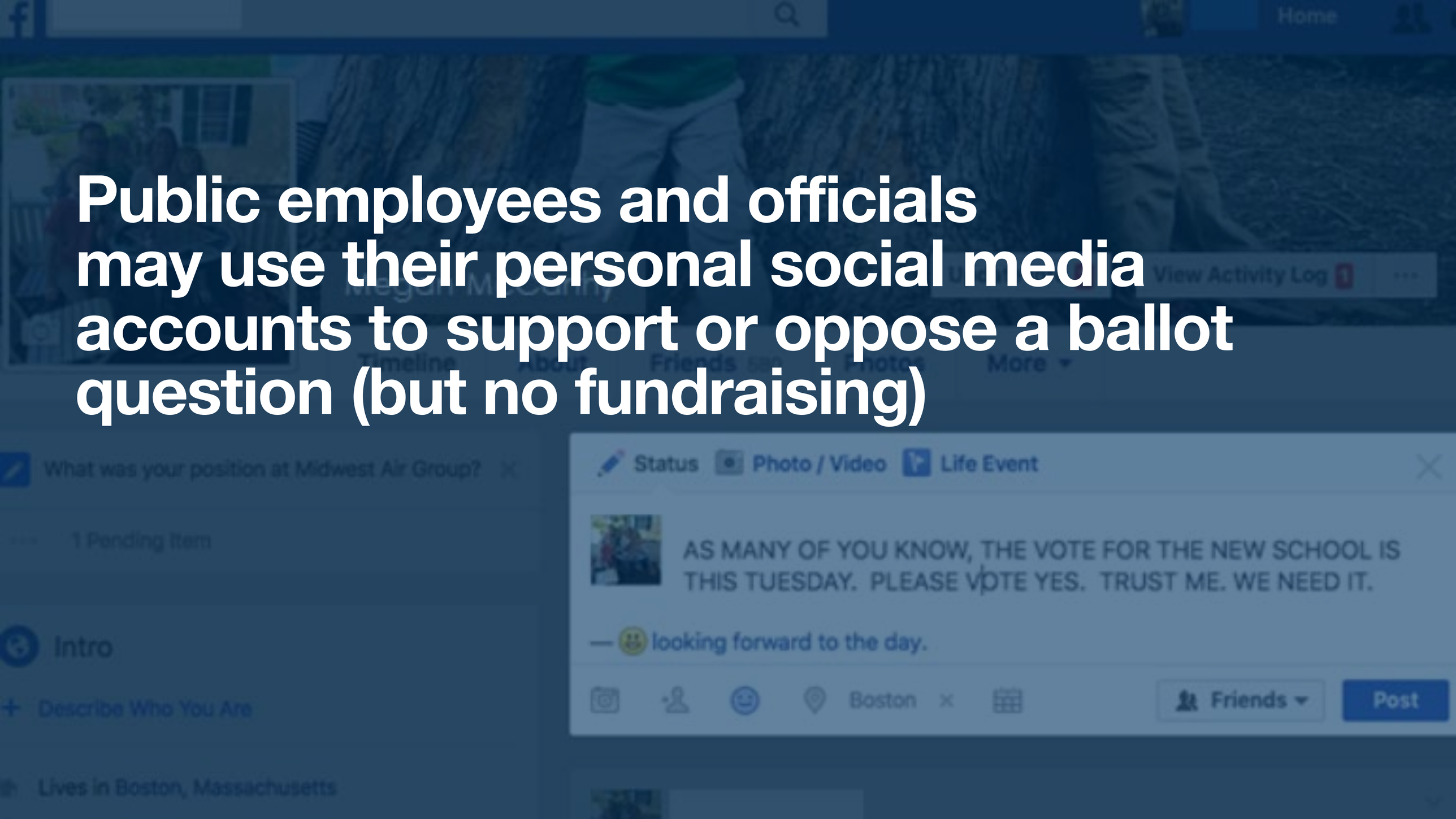
Public officials and employees may take a position on a ballot question





Permitted: Discussion with a parent at student pick-up

Public employees and officials may use their personal social media accounts to support or oppose a ballot question (but no fundraising)



Analyze the impact of a ballot question (Scope of responsibility)

Provide copies of an agency’s analysis on a ballot question to people attending public meetings of a governmental entity

Speak with the media (Scope of responsibility)

Wilmington Middle School

STEAM MAGNET

Home of the Jaguars

Departments

Click here for information about the March 25 Ballot question election

Academic Departments	Classes	Staff
English-Language Arts Department	0	20
History-Social Science	0	19
Mathematics	0	18
Physical Education Department	0	7
Science		19
Special Education	0	14
VAPA	0	3

Post information on the school or municipal website

Educational Support	Staff
Administration	1
Attendance Office	2
Cafeteria	8

Departments

REMEMBER TO VOTE YES ON THE MARCH 25 OVERRIDE! Click here for information.

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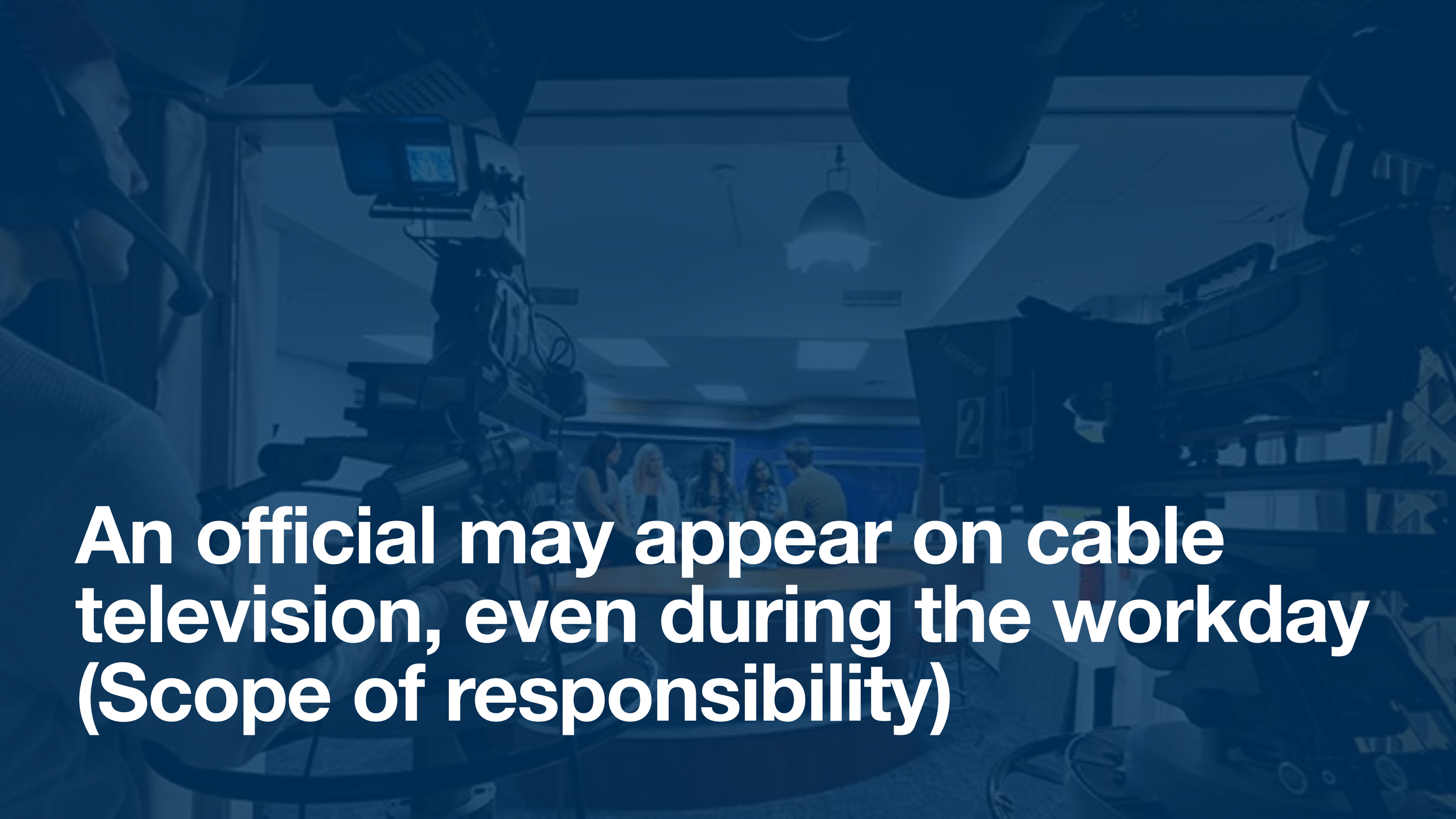

An official may appear on cable television, even during the workday (Scope of responsibility)

EQUAL ACCESS

Ballot Questions

Form CPF M 102: Campaign Finance Report
Municipal Form

Office of Campaign and Political Finance

Commonwealth
of Massachusetts

File with: City or Town Clerk or Election Commission

Fill in Reporting Period dates: Beginning Date: 1/1/2022 Ending Date: 5/6/2022

Type of Report: (Check one)

- [ ] 8th day preceding preliminary
- [x] 8th day preceding election
- [ ] 30 day after election
- [ ] year-end report
- [ ] dissolution

BALLOT QUESTION COMMITTEE

Candidate's Name (if applicable)

Office Sought and District

Residential Address

E-mail:

Phone # (optional):

VOTE YES ON THE NEW SCHOOL BQ COMMITTEE

Committee Name

JOHN TAVNER

Name of Committee Treasurer

112233 Main St., ANYTOWN MA

Committee Mailing Address

E-mail: VOTEYES@GMAIL.COM

Phone # (optional): 1234567891