



## PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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### NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR POLITICAL COMMITTEES

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2012

([Chapter 145, Laws of 2011](#))

- A political committee must receive \$10 each from at least 10 Washington registered voters before contributing to another political committee.
- E-filing contribution and expenditure reports is required by a committee that spends at least \$5,000 in 2012 or spent at least \$5,000 in 2011.
- A political committee's name must contain its sponsor's name. A committee that has multiple sponsors may include all – but must include at least one – sponsor's name in the committee's name.

“Sponsor” of a political committee includes any person, except a committee authorized by a candidate or by a public official against whom recall charges have been filed to whom any of the following applies:

- ♦ the committee receives 80% or more of its contributions either from the person or from the person's members, officers, employees, or shareholders;
- ♦ the person collects contributions for the committee by use of payroll deductions or dues from its members, officers, or employees.

“Person” includes an individual, partnership, joint venture, public or private corporation, association, federal, state, or local governmental entity or agency however constituted, candidate, committee, political committee, political party, executive committee thereof, or any other organization or group of persons, however organized. RCW 42.17.020(36)

- A political committee shall include a known sponsor in its name when registering. Thereafter, a sponsored committee's registration must accurately disclose a sponsor's name 60 days before an election in which the committee participates. Interim amendments will not be required to show changes to a sponsor's status.
- Any registered political committee that has not filed a final report as of December 31, 2011 will be required to reregister in January. The Public Disclosure Commission has filed a [draft administrative rule](#) clarifying which contributions count towards determining who is a sponsor under the 80% threshold. A public hearing on this and other draft rules related to Chapter 145, Laws of 2011 will be held December 8, 2011.
- A person may sponsor only one political committee for the same elected office or same ballot measure per election cycle.
- No two committees may have the exact same name.

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Other changes going into effect January 1, 2012:

The threshold for electioneering communications drops from \$5,000 to \$1,000.

The Commission's penalty authority increases to \$10,000 and certain violations may be referred for criminal prosecution.