

PDC Compliance

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Public Disclosure Commission

Candidate/Committee
Campaign Finance Reporting

“The public’s right to know of the financing of political campaigns and lobbying and the financial affairs of elected officials and candidates far outweighs any right that these matters remain secret and private.”

RCW 42.17A.001(10)

Campaign Finance

Starting Off on the Right Foot

You are a candidate when you:

- Raise or spend money for your campaign;
- Reserve space or purchase advertising;
- Authorize someone else to do 1 or 2;
- State publicly that you are seeking office;
or
- File a declaration of candidacy

Filing Disclosure Reports

State Office and County-Wide Office Candidates

Personal Financial Affairs Statement

PDC Form F-1

Campaign Disclosure Reports

“C Series” Reports

Local Office Candidates

Under 2,000 Registered Voters+raising less than \$5,000

- No reporting requirement

2,000 or more Registered Voter+raising less than \$5,000

- Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1)

5,000 or more Registered Voters

- Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1)

+

- Campaign Disclosure Reports (“C series” reports)

Initial Candidate Filing

Within two weeks of becoming a candidate:

File Personal Financial Affairs (F-1)

(2,000 or more registered voters)

File Candidate Registration (C-1)

(5,000 or more registered voters)

Committee Registration

File C-1pc within 2 weeks of forming a committee or expecting to receive funds.

Register within **3 business days** when committee organizes **within the last 3 weeks before an election.**

Reporting Options

Mini Reporting

- No more than \$5,000* in addition to filing fee
- No more than \$500* from any one source
- C-1 and F-1 Reports – candidate
- C-1pc - committee
- Public inspection of campaign records

Full Reporting

- Candidates expecting to spend more than \$5,000* or who want to accept more than \$500* from a donor other than the candidate.
- C-3 Reports.....Contributions Received
- C-4 Reports.....Expenditures Made and appropriate schedules

Electronic Filing

Mandatory Electronic Filing

- All filers are now required to file electronically

Contribution Limits

- State Executive \$2,000 per election
- Any judicial office \$2,000 per election
- Port Commissioner \$2,000 per election

- State Legislative \$1,000 per election
- County Office \$1,000 per election
- City Council or Mayor \$1,000 per election
- School Board \$1,000 per election
- King Co Hosp 1&2 \$1,000 per election
- Snoh Co Hosp 2 \$1,000 per election

General Limitation on last minute contributions of \$5,000 from any one source 21 days before the general election.

2020 Key Reporting Dates for Candidates

DATE	ACTIVITY	C-4 REPORT PERIOD
Within two weeks of becoming a candidate	File a C-1 (non-incumbents also file an F-1)	
Jan 10	File monthly C-4 & C-3, if necessary	close of last report thru Dec 31
Feb 10	-	close of last report thru Jan 31
Mar 10	-	close of last report thru Feb 29
Apr 10	-	close of last report thru Mar 31
May 11	-	close of last report thru Apr 30
May 11 – 15	Declaration of candidacy filing week	
June 1	Begin filing C-3 reports weekly, each Monday, for deposits made during previous 7 days (Monday thru Sunday)	
June 10	File monthly C-4, if necessary	close of last report thru May 31
June 22	Final day before primary to change from mini to full reporting without special circumstances ¹	
July 14	21 day pre-primary C-4 due ²	June 1 thru July 13
July 25 – Aug 3	Campaign books open for public inspection	
July 28	7 day pre-primary C-4 due	July 14 thru July 27
July 28 – Aug 3	Special reports due if candidate receives contributions of \$1,000 or more from one source. ³	
Aug 4	PRIMARY ELECTION DAY	
Aug 31	Final day before general to change from mini to full reporting without special circumstances ¹	
Sept 10	Post-primary C-4 due	July 28 thru Aug 31
Oct 13	21 day pre-general C-4 due	Sep 1 thru Oct 12
Oct 13 – Nov 2	Special reports due if candidate receives contributions of \$1,000 or more in the aggregate from one source. Unless the contribution is from the <u>state committee</u> of a major political party or a minor party, a candidate may not now receive from one source contributions totaling over \$5,000 in the aggregate. ³	
Oct 24 – Nov 2	Campaign books open for public inspection	
Oct 27	7 day pre-general C-4 due	Oct 13 thru Oct 26
Nov 3	GENERAL ELECTION DAY	
Dec 10	Post-general C-4 due (and C-3, if necessary)	Oct 27 thru Nov 30
Jan 11 (2021)	End of election cycle C-4 due (and C-3, if necessary)	Dec 1 – Dec 31

¹ See [WAC 390-16-125](#).

² Only required of candidates whose names will appear on the primary election ballot or who are running as write-in candidates in the primary election. Candidates who are only in the general election file monthly reports for June, July, and August – these reports are due on the 10th of the following month.

³ Does not constitute authority to exceed any applicable local or state contribution limit.

2020 Key Reporting Dates for Committees

DATE	ACTIVITY	C-4 REPORT PERIOD
Within two weeks of forming	File a C-1pc (file an amended C-1pc within ten days of change in committee makeup) ¹	
Jan 10	File monthly C-4 & C-3, if necessary	close of last report thru Dec 31
Feb 10	-	close of last report thru Jan 31
Mar 10	-	close of last report thru Feb 29
Apr 10	-	close of last report thru Mar 31
May 11	-	close of last report thru Apr 30
June 1	Begin filing C-3 reports weekly, each Monday, for deposits made during previous 7 days (Monday thru Sunday)	
June 10	File monthly C-4, if necessary	close of last report thru May 31
June 22	Final day before primary to change from mini to full reporting without special circumstances ²	
July 14	21 day pre-primary C-4 due ³	June 1 thru July 13
July 25 – Aug 3	Committee's books open for public inspection	
July 28	7 day pre-primary C-4 due	July 14 thru July 27
July 28 – Aug 3	Special reports due if committee makes or receives contributions of \$1,000 or more from one source. ⁴	
Aug 4	PRIMARY ELECTION DAY	
Aug 31	Final day before general to change from mini to full reporting without special circumstances ²	
Sept 10	Post-primary C-4 due	July 28 thru Aug 31
Oct 13	21 day pre-general C-4 due	Sep 1 thru Oct 12
Oct 13 – Nov 2	Special reports due if committee makes or receives contributions of \$1,000 or more in the aggregate from one source. ⁴ Further, unless the contribution is from the <u>state committee</u> of a bona fide political party, no committee, <i>except for ballot measure committees</i> , may 1) receive contributions over \$5,000 in the aggregate from one source or 2) make aggregate contributions totaling over \$5,000 to a candidate or other political committee.	
Oct 24 – Nov 2	Committee's books open for public inspection	
Oct 27	7 day pre-general C-4 due	Oct 13 thru Oct 26
Nov 3	GENERAL ELECTION DAY	
Dec 10	Post-general C-4 due (and C-3, if necessary)	Oct 27 thru Nov 30
Jan 11 (2021)	End of election cycle C-4 due (and C-3, if necessary)	Dec 1 – Dec 31

¹ Committees forming within 3 weeks of the election must file C-1pc within 3 business days of organizing.

² See [WAC 390-16-125](#).

³ Primary election reports not required of committees only supporting or opposing general election ballot measures. These committees instead file monthly reports for June, July, and August. These monthly reports are due on the 10th of the following month.

⁴ Does not authorize committee to exceed any applicable local or state contribution limit.

Political Advertising

Sponsor Identification

Written:	Name and address of sponsor
Broadcast:	Sponsor's name
Party:	All forms of advertising
Office Sought:	Not required

General Requirements

- Yard Signs: Exempt (Other Items)
- Photographs: One within 5 years
- Treasurer Name: Not required
- Size/Placement: First Page, 10 point type, no screening and set apart from text.

Prohibitions and Restrictions

- **Concealment**—Cannot use a fictitious name, no name or substitute name in order to conceal the truth.
- **Contributing to Others**—Cannot transfer campaign funds to other candidate or political committee.

- **Personal Use of Contributions**—Any expenditure not directly related to the candidate's election is prohibited.
- **Reimbursement for Contributions**—No one may directly or indirectly reimburse another person for a contribution.
- **Use of Public Agency Facilities**—Cannot use public facilities to assist in campaigns.

- **Soliciting Government Employees** – Officials may not solicit, directly or indirectly, contributions from an employee in the official's agency.
- **Charging for Endorsement** – No person may solicit money in exchange for an endorsement or media coverage.
- **Anonymous Contributions**—\$300 or 1 percent of total contributions received in Calendar year.

Qualifying Low-Cost Fund Raisers

If a qualifying low-cost fund raiser is held, you only need report on the C-3 the activity's date, a description of the event, and the total amount received from all contributors paying \$50 or less.

You do not have to keep track of how much each person contributed and record that information in your records or itemize it on a contribution report. In-kind contributions of \$50 or under received in connection with a qualifying low-cost fund raiser need not be reported at all. Any event satisfying one of the criteria listed below qualifies as a low-cost fund raiser.

The following events qualify as low-cost fund raisers:

- retail sales of goods or services at a reasonable approximation of their fair market value;
- a licensed and legally operated gambling operation;
- a food and beverage event where the admission price or the cost for the food and beverages is no more than \$25;
- an entertainment event (concert, dance, theater performance, etc.) where the admission price is no more than \$25; and
- an auction or similar sale where the total fair market value of items donated by any person is no more than \$50.

If someone pays over \$50 to participate in a qualifying event, pays more than \$50 to purchase auction or sale items,

you must record the full amount of that contribution in your records, identify the person's name and address on the C-3 report (or, if in-kind, on the Schedule B to the C-4) and show occupation and employer if the individual has given more than \$100 to the campaign. However, the remainder of the funds collected from participants paying \$50 or less may still be lumped together and reported as a single sum on the C-3.

The entire event does not qualify as a low-cost fund raiser (and you must record and report the amounts given by each contributor participating in the event) **if you:**

- sell goods or services at over their fair market value, or
- hold events having an admission price of more than \$25, or
- hold an auction and anyone donates items worth more than \$50.

Some people invited to low-cost fund raisers will not pay at the door, but rather will forward a check either before or after the event. So long as they attend the event, you may treat their contribution like other funds received in connection with the event. It's not expected that all the funds received in relation to an event will appear on one C-3, since money will trickle in both before and after the event.

However, if someone does not attend the fund raiser, but sends along a contribution anyway, that money is treated as a regular contribution and is not lumped together with fund raiser receipts.

Volunteer Services -- Personal services of the sort commonly performed by volunteers.

The following are considered volunteer services and are not reportable as contributions or subject to any state contribution limit so long as the individual who performs one or more of these activities is not compensated by any person for the services rendered.

- ≡ Office staffing;
 - ≡ Doorbelling or leaflet drops;
 - ≡ Mail handling (folding, stuffing, sorting and postal preparation);
 - ≡ Political or fundraising event staffing;
 - ≡ Telephone bank activity (conducting voter identification, surveys or polling, and get-out-the-vote campaigns);
 - ≡ Construction and placement of yard signs, hand-held signs or in-door signs;
 - ≡ Acting as a driver for a candidate or campaign staff;
 - ≡ Scheduling campaign appointments and events;
 - ≡ Transporting voters to polling places on election day;
 - ≡ Preparing campaign disclosure reports required by RCW 42.17 and otherwise helping to ensure compliance with state election or public disclosure law*;
- [*Attorneys or accountants, whether they are being paid by their employers or are on their own time, may provide their professional services without a contribution ensuing
- 1) to a candidate in order to assist the candidate in complying with state election or PDC laws, or
 - 2) to a bona fide political party or caucus political committee for any purpose.
- However, these professionals may not provide similar services to any other type of political committee without a contribution ensuing, unless the committee pays the fair market value of the services rendered.]
- ≡ Campaign consulting and management services, polling and survey design, public relations and advertising, or fundraising performed by any individual, so long as the individual does not ordinarily charge a fee or receive compensation for providing the service, and
 - ≡ All similar activities as determined by the Commission. [WAC 390-17-405]

Other Non-Contributions

- ≡ Ordinary home hospitality, including coffee hours, cocktail parties, wine and cheese parties and similar gatherings where the purpose is to meet the candidate or organize a campaign and where no admission fee is charged or contributions expected from those attending.
- ≡ Incidental expenditures by volunteers of \$50 or less in the aggregate for the duration of the campaign.
- ≡ Internal political communications 1) from a corporation or similar enterprise primarily to its officers, management staff and stockholders; 2) from a union, association or other membership organization primarily to its members; or 3) from a political party organization or PAC primarily to its contributors and members.
- ≡ Display of yard or window signs on a person's own property (so long as a person does not normally charge a fee to display a message).

Reporting contributions (monetary & in-kind)

More than \$25 total

- Contributor's name & address

More than \$100 from individual

- Name & Address

+

- Occupation, Employer's Name & Address

Report all pledges of \$100 or more

Candidate Loans

Limit = \$6,000 per election

Includes

- monetary loans
- out-of-pocket expenditures not reimbursed within 21 days

Expenditures

Report vendor's name & address

Reimbursements –

Vendor = person being reimbursed

Disclose what was purchased and where

Consultants

Report subcontracted work

- date
- name of subcontractor
- service provided
- amount paid

Debt

What must be reported differs by time of year:

- C-4 reports which are due within 30 days before an election; at the end of the reporting period, report any debt of more than \$750 that is outstanding for more than five business days.
- C-4 reports which are due at all other times; at the end of the reporting period, report any debt of more than \$750 that is outstanding for more than 10 business days.

Debt

Debt includes:

- Reimbursements not yet made (except to candidate)
- Contingent liabilities such as a “victory bonus”
- Orders placed
- Other liabilities not yet paid

Estimate if exact amount is unknown

Debt

Does NOT include:

- Regularly recurring expenses of the same amount (such as rent, utilities, insurance, cellular phone costs, and payments to campaign staff) provided they are not past due

Frequently Asked Questions

- Where Do I File PDC Reports?
- Must I have a Separate Campaign Account?
- May I Serve as My Own Treasurer?
- From Whom May I Accept Contributions?
- Is There an Expenditure Limit?
- Can I be Reimbursed for Personal Funds I Spend on My Campaign?
- How long must I keep campaign records?

Contacting the PDC

- www.pdc.wa.gov
 - forms
 - manual
 - electronic filing
- pdc@pdc.wa.gov
- (877) 601-2828 or (360) 753-1111