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Disclosure 101: Candidates and Committees

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Zoom Logistics


- Cameras & microphones
- Using the chat box
- Chat is saved
- Class not recorded



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Why This Class?

-  Increase your understanding
-  Increase your confidence
-  Decrease reporting errors

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Today's Agenda

- Overview of PDC
- Overview of reporting
- Contributions
- **Break (10 minutes)**
- Volunteers
- Fundraisers
- Expenditures
- Debt
- Advertising
- How to get more information

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About the PDC


- 1972 ballot
- Initiative 276

"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
WAC 390


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Reporting Overview

Candidates & Committees



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You become a candidate when you...

1. **Raise** or spend money for your campaign,
2. **Reserve** space or purchase advertising to promote your candidacy,
3. **Authorize** someone else to do either 1 or 2,
4. **State publicly** that you are seeking office, or
5. **File** a declaration of candidacy



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You become a committee when...

*Your organization first has the expectation of **receiving contributions** or **making expenditures** in support of, or opposition to, any candidate or any ballot proposition.*



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Reports Referenced Today

WHAT	WHO	WHY
F-1 financial affairs	- All state/county candidates - Some local candidates	Report personal finances
"C" reports	- All state/county candidates - Some local candidates - Some committees	Register and report on campaigns

Reporting guidance is on our website.



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★ Key Point



All reports must now be filed electronically.

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State and county-wide candidates must...

- ✓ File Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1)
- ✓ File Candidate Registration (C-1)

File within **2 weeks** of becoming a candidate.

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Local Candidate Filing Requirements

# OF VOTERS	MONEY RAISED	F-1	C REPORTS
Under 2,000	Less than \$7,000	NO	NO
2,000-4,999	Less than \$7,000	YES	NO
5,000+		YES	YES

These rules also apply to judicial candidates.
File within **2 weeks** of becoming a candidate.

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The F-1 Personal Financial Affairs Statement

- Required for most
- Even first-time candidates report previous 12 months
- About **personal** finances, not campaign
 1. Income range and sources
 2. Assets
 3. WA real estate
 4. Debt (excluding credit card)
 5. Businesses you own (10% or more) or serve in a position
 6. Lobbying
 7. Gifts and travel (if currently holding office)

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Committees must...

- ✓ File Committee Registration (C-1pc)

File C-1pc within **14 days** of becoming a committee.*

*This is reduced to **3 business days** if the election will be held within 3 weeks.

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Choose Your Reporting Option

MINI-REPORTING if:

- No more than \$7,000 raised or spent
- No more than \$500 per contributor
- No contribution or expenditure reports* (*do keep records!*)

FULL-REPORTING if:

- More than \$7,000 raised or spent
- More than \$500 per contributor
- Must report contributions and expenditures*

*See [website](#) for exceptions.

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★ Key Point

Good reporting begins with good record-keeping. Regardless of your reporting method, always keep accurate, detailed records for at least five years. Be prepared for campaign records requests.

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Full Reporting: The C-3

The C-3 reports monetary contribution deposits.

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Full Reporting: The C-4

The C-4 reports money in and out, including "in-kind" contributions.

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Contributions



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Accepting Contributions

- **Separate** bank account needed to accept contributions
- Candidates **can** be their own treasurer
- Anonymous contributions cannot exceed:
 - \$500 per calendar year, or
 - 1% of total per calendar year
 - Whichever is greater

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★ Key Point

*You must have a way of collecting the **information** you are required to **report** about your contributors.*

Don't solicit anonymous donations.



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Reporting Common Contributions

COMMON TYPES	AMOUNT/VALUE	WHAT TO REPORT ABOUT CONTRIBUTOR
Monetary contribution	Over \$100 total	Name; address
	Over \$250 total	Name; address; occupation; employer name, city, and state
In-Kind (goods/services)	Over \$100 total	Name; address
	Over \$250 total	Name; address; occupation; employer name, city, and state
Pledge	\$150 or more	Name; address

There are **other types** of contributions. Ask us or see our website.



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Receipts NOT Reported as “Contributions”

- Bank interest
- Vendor refunds
- Reimbursement from another campaign for shared expenses
- Contributions returned within 10 days
- Some volunteer services (more on this later)



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Receipts NOT Reported as “Contributions”

- Volunteer expenses of less than \$200 across the campaign
- Home hospitality expenses (no fees; no contributions)
- Some signage and other communication contributions

See more on our website.



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Contribution Limits

- See **chart** (link in class email)
- Limits changed 4-1-23 to reflect inflation
- Consider primary and general elections separately
- Two-party checks divided equally unless specified
- \$7,500 limitation 21 days before general election



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Candidate Loans

- Money given to a campaign, with the expectation of repayment
- Reported to PDC
- Governed by a written agreement between campaign and loaner
- \$7,500 repayment limit per election
- 21 days turns a reimbursement situation into a loan



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Foreign Contributions

- No foreign national financing or involvement in decision-making
- Collect a "certification" if donor is not an individual person
 - For each contribution they make; very limited exceptions
- PDC provides a sample certification



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Sample Certification

Use our sample or use your own form.

Certification that Contribution Is Not From a Foreign National

I certify that the entity _____ making this contribution is not organized under the laws of, and does not have its principal place of business in, a foreign country. This contribution is not financed in any part by a foreign national, and foreign nationals were not involved in making decisions regarding the contribution in any way.

Amount of Contribution: _____

Date of Contribution: _____

Name of Authorized Agent: _____

Date Submitted: _____

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If no certification, campaign may...

1. Hold the contribution in regular bank account until the next PDC report is due, or for 10 days, whichever is later

OR


2. Segregate the contribution to prevent it from commingling with other contributions, for up to 30 days

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Volunteers



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Common Volunteer Services

- Office or event staffing
- Planning events
- Handling mail/email
- Surveying/polling
- Getting out the vote
- Scheduling appointments
- Helping with compliance
- Website or social media work
- Building or placing signage
- Driving candidates/voters/staff

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Volunteer services...

- Aren't "contributions" if the volunteer isn't:
 - Compensated for the work
 - Ordinarily paid for this type of work
- Don't count toward contribution limits if these conditions are met
- Include some exceptions for attorneys and accountants

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Fundraisers



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5 Types of Low-Cost Fundraisers

1. Retail sales at fair market value
2. A lawful gambling operation
3. Food or beverage event with stated admission **\$100 or less**
4. Entertainment event with stated admission **\$100 or less**
5. An auction with items valued at **\$150 or less per donor**

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On Using Public Agency Facilities

State law restricts the use of public facilities to support or oppose candidates or ballot measures.



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Expenditures



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Reporting Common Expenditures

COMMON TYPES	WHAT TO REPORT ABOUT EXPENDITURE
Vendor purchase	Vendor name and address
Reimbursement	Item purchased, vendor name and location, person reimbursed
Consultant services	Work provided, date, name and address of vendor/sub-vendor

All candidate campaign expenditures must be related to the **campaign**.



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★ Key Point

*You (and others who spend for the campaign) must keep **receipts**.*



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Debt includes...

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

Debt **does not** include regularly occurring expenses of the same amount, unless past due.



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Reporting Debt


- Reported on the C-4 if over \$1,000
- Requirements based on time of year
 - Most of the time: Debt over \$1,000 outstanding more than **10 business days**, as of C-4 end date
 - Within 30 days of election: Debt over \$1,000 outstanding more than **5 business days**, as of C-4 end date

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Key Dates



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2024 Key Dates: Special Elections

ELECTION DATE	Start filing C-3s Mondays		File 21-day C-4	File 7-day C-4	File C-4 on the 10th of the following month
February 13 2024	October 2 2023	File monthly C-4 reports from the beginning of the campaign through Dec. 11 (covering previous month.)	January 23 Report covers: Dec. 1, 2023 - Jan. 22, 2024	February 6 Report covers: Jan. 22 - Feb. 5, 2024	March 11 Report covers: Feb. 7 - Feb. 29, 2024.
April 23 2024	December 4 2023	File monthly C-4 reports from the beginning of the campaign through March. 11 (covering previous month.)	April 2 Report covers: March 1 - April 1, 2024	April 16 Report covers: April 2 - April 15, 2024	May 10 Report covers: April 17 - May 9, 2024

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2024 Key Reporting Dates

January 10	File a C-3 for each deposit made in the previous month and a C-4 report that covers the period through Dec. 31
February 12	File a C-3 for each deposit made in the previous month and a C-4 report that covers the period through Jan. 31
March 11	File a C-3 for each deposit made in the previous month and a C-4 report that covers the period through Feb. 29
April 10	File a C-3 for each deposit made in the previous month and a C-4 report that covers the period through March 31
May 10	File a C-3 for each deposit made in the previous month and a C-4 report that covers the period through April 30
May 6-10	Declaration of candidacy filing week
May 6-30	Begin filing C-3 reports weekly, each Monday, for deposits made during previous 7 days (Monday through Sunday)
June 3	
June 10	File monthly C-4, if necessary, that covers the period through May 31
June 24	Last day before primary election to change from mini to full reporting without special circumstances (See WAC 390-16-125)
July 16	Candidates appearing on the primary election ballot file a C-4 that covers the period June 1 through July 15. So do committees supporting or opposing candidates. Candidates not on the primary election ballot and committees only supporting or opposing general election ballot measures file monthly reports in June, July and August. These reports due on the 10th of the following month.

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2024 Key Reporting Dates

July 27 - August 5	Campaign books open for public inspection
July 30	Candidates appearing on the primary election ballot and committees participating in the primary file a C-4 that covers the period July 16 through July 29
July 30 - August 5	Special reports due if candidate or committee receives contributions of \$1,500 or more from a single source, or committee makes contributions of \$1,500 or more.
AUGUST 6	PRIMARY ELECTION DAY
August 30	Last day before general election to change from mini to full reporting without special circumstances (See WAC 390-16-125)
September 10	Post-primary C-4 due that covers the period July 25 through Aug. 31
September 10	Candidates not on the primary election ballot and committees that did not participate in the primary file a report for the month of August

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2024 Key Reporting Dates

October 15	21-day pre-general C-4 report due - report for the period Sept. 1 through Oct. 14. 1. Special reports due if a candidate or political committee receives contributions of \$1,500 or more from a single source, or if a political committee makes a contribution of \$1,500 or more. 2. A candidate for statewide office may not accept contributions from a single source exceeding \$75,000 in the aggregate unless it is from the state committee of a bona fide major or minor political party. 3. A candidate for another office or a political committee may not receive contributions from a single source exceeding \$7,500 in the aggregate unless it is from the state committee of a bona fide major or minor political party. The exception is ballot measure committees, which may receive larger contributions.
October 15 - November 4	Campaign books open for public inspection
October 29	7-day pre-general C-4 report due - report for the period Oct. 15 through Oct. 28.
November 4	Last Monday that weekly C-3 reports must be filed for general election
NOVEMBER 5	GENERAL ELECTION DAY
December 10	Post-general C-4 due that covers Oct. 29 through Nov. 30. File C-3s that have not been filed for any deposits made in November.
January 10, 2025	End of election cycle C-4 due that covers Dec. 1 through Dec. 31. File C-3s for any deposits made in December.

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Advertising

The importance of identifying sponsors



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Who is an Ad Sponsor?

-  The committee or person paying for the ad
-  Sometimes the campaign itself
-  If no cost, the person who arranges the ad

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Advertising: Sponsor ID

METHOD	WHAT TO INCLUDE	OTHER THINGS TO KNOW
Print ads	Name, address, any party affiliation	10 pt. type, ID on first page
Websites	Name, address, any party affiliation	Can't be hidden or blocked
Broadcast	Name, any party affiliation	For TV or video, see top 3-5 info
Yard signs	Any party affiliation	No sponsor ID if 4'x8' or less
Other signs	Name, address, any party affiliation	Poster: font 10% of largest font

Office sought and treasurer name are **not** required.
 See **website** for suggested wording and **many other details**.

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★ Key Point

*Some forms of advertising are **exempt** from sponsor ID.*

*Others have **many** requirements.*

Please investigate further.



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More About Advertising

RCW 42.17A.4780

- Charging money for an endorsement or media coverage is illegal
- *“No person may solicit a candidate, political committee, political party or other person for money in exchange for an endorsement or an article in the news media supporting or opposing a candidate, committee or party”*

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8 Major Violations

1. Cannot **charge** for endorsement or media coverage
2. Cannot use **public agency facilities** for campaigns
3. Elected officials cannot **solicit** contributions from an employee in the official’s agency
4. Candidates cannot use campaign money for spending **outside the campaign**

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8 Major Violations

- 5. Cannot exceed the **anonymous contribution limit**
- 6. Cannot **reimburse** another person for a contribution
- 7. Candidates cannot use **campaign funds** to assist other candidates or committees
- 8. Cannot **conceal** truth by withholding or substituting information

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★ Key Point

Campaign finances in Washington are some of the most transparent in the country.

*You must not **conceal** what you know, if you are required by law to **disclose**.*

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Thank you!

Remaining Questions?



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