

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

[Campaign Finance Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) & Answers](#)

[Campaign Finance Reporting Law](#) (PA Dept. of State)

[Campaign Finance Reporting Schedule](#)

How to Meet Your Reporting Obligations

All candidates and political committees must periodically report their contributions and expenditures. Candidates for statewide office, or for state legislative offices, or for Court of Common Pleas must file their original reports with the Secretary of the Commonwealth. In addition, they should file copies with the local election office in the **county in which they reside**, not in each county their district touches.

Local candidates must file their reports with the county elections office in the county where nominating petitions are normally filed for that office.

Committees which remain active but are “dormant”, such as when an incumbent is not a candidate in a given year, may usually fulfill their obligations by filing an annual report by January 31 each year. Candidates which are in an active election year must file before and after the Primary and the General election. Candidates are given full schedules when they get their candidate information packets.

In addition, there are state-mandated forms to use to form a political committee and for a candidate to use to authorize a political committee to act on his or her behalf.

Hard copy reports filed by candidates/committees are available for review in the Commissioners’ Office between the hours of 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday thru Friday.

Who Must File

- Any candidate who failed to complete the Waiver of Expense Account Affidavit on their Nomination Petition
- Any candidate that completed the Waiver of Expense Account Affidavit on their Nomination Petition BUT spent or received more than \$250 in a reporting period
- Any candidate that formed a political committee
- All party/candidate committees registered with the state or local county election board office.

When to File

A Campaign Finance Reporting Schedule (see above link) is mandated by law and due dates are specified as follows:

- Sixth Tuesday Pre-Primary (For Statewide Offices only)
- Second Friday Pre-Primary/Election
- 30-Day Post Primary/Election
- Annual Report

Campaign Finance Report (DSEB – 502) – Long Form

This form is intended for the use of candidates, political committees and contributing lobbyists that are required to disclose contributions and expenditures that exceed \$250.00 during the reporting period.

Campaign Finance Statement (DSEB – 503) – Short Form

You may file this statement in lieu of a full report when the amount of contribution (including in-kind contributions) received, the amount of money expended, and the liabilities incurred did not exceed \$250.00 during the reporting period.

Political Committee Registration Statement (DSEB – 500)

Use this form to register a new political committee. You may also use it to amend the original registration when the committee appoints a new chairperson or treasurer, or changes any other required information.

Authorization for a Political Committee to Receive Funds on Behalf of Candidate (DSEB – 501)

The Pennsylvania Election Code provides that no treasurer of a political committee shall receive any money on behalf of a candidate until such political committee has been authorized in writing by the candidate on a form designed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Independent Expenditure Reporting Form (DSEB – 505)

If you make an Independent Expenditure (an expenditure not in cooperation or consultation with any candidate or candidate's political committee) to influence the outcome of the election of a candidate or ballot question. You must file this report if the expenditure exceeds \$100 in a calendar year.

24 Hour Reporting Form

Section 1628 of the Campaign Finance Reporting Law.

Requires that any candidate or political committee authorized by a candidate and created solely for the purpose of influencing an election on behalf of that candidate shall report the late contributions. This is true if they receive any contribution or pledge of \$500 or more after the final pre-primary/pre-election report has been deemed completed. This must happen with 24 hours of receipt of the contribution. These contributions must be reported through and including the day of the primary/election. You may file this report by mail, overnight mail, facsimile at 717-267-3438 or email at: commissioners@franklincountypa.gov. The filing of reports via facsimile or email applies only to the 24 hr. report late contribution report and does not remove the obligation to also report those contributions on the appropriate post-primary/post-election expense report filing.

The campaign finance laws are serious, and failure to file the necessary reports can cause serious fines and penalties, including forfeiture of office. No successful candidate may take office until all reports have been filed.