

# Pennsylvania Campaign Finance Introduction

Compiled by Autumn Pangia, 570-350-2770, [ajpangia@gmail.com](mailto:ajpangia@gmail.com)

The following is summary of regulations which are written with no specific regard to the electronic filing process now available. These are expenditure and documentation requirements to understand for all involved in a political campaign in PA; advice on using the on-line system to submit your information is provided separately.

## Font key:

***These are my notes on the election/finance statute, sometimes it's just paraphrasing in plain language the details that follow***

Quoted from the regulation

**Important quotes from the regulation**

Source of copied material & full regulation for review if desired:

<https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/004/chapter177/chap177toc.html&d=>

## 177.1 (General)

***Candidates can file DSEB-502 to report self-funded campaigns, they don't need a committee:***

(a) Every political committee and candidate shall file cumulative annual Campaign Finance Reports on the current version of Form **DSEB-502**, as described in § 177.9 (relating to official forms).

***I only need to report if my expenditures exceed \$250, which it will, I didn't bother copying in the section regarding expenditures that fail to exceed \$250:***

(b) Each treasurer of a political committee and **each candidate which receives contributions or makes expenditures or incurs liabilities exceeding the sum of \$250 shall file Campaign Finance Reports on the current version of Form DSEB- 502, as described in § 177.9**, with the Secretary or the respective county board of elections, or both.

***Below lists what qualifies as an expenditure:***

(d) For purposes of this section, **expenditures shall consist of the following:**

- (1) Printing and traveling expenses and personal expenses incident thereto, stationery, advertising, postage, expressage, freight, telegraph, telephone and public messenger service.
- (2) The rental of radio facilities and amplified systems.
- (3) Political meetings, demonstrations and conventions and the pay and transportation of speakers.
- (4) The rent, maintenance and furnishing of offices.
- (5) The payment of clerks, typewriters, stenographers, janitors and messengers actually employed.
- (6) Transportation of electors to and from the polls.
- (7) The employment of watchers at primaries and elections to the number and in the amount permitted by the Pennsylvania Election Code (25 P. S. § § [2600—3573](#)).
- (8) Expenses, legal counsel, incurred in good faith in connection with any primary or elections.
- (9) Contributions to other political committees.

(e) The Nomination Filing Petition Fees are expenditures for the purposes of this section ***I interpret the following to mean that supporters can spend up to \$100 promoting my candidacy without needing to file a DSEB-505; if they simply contribute to my campaign they don't need to file the form.***

(f) Every person, other than a political committee or candidate who makes independent expenditures expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate or question appearing on the ballot, other than by contribution to a political committee or candidate, in an amount exceeding the sum of \$100 during a calendar year shall file Independent Expenditure Reports on the current version of Form DSEB-505, as described in § 177.9, with the Secretary or the respective county board of elections, or both.

### **§ 177.2. Form and content of reports.**

(b) The Campaign Finance Report, to be signed and sworn to by the individual submitting the report, shall include the following:

***Anyone contributing more than \$250 needs to provide their employer info in addition to full name and mailing address.***

(1) The full name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer, if any, or the principal place of business, if self-employed, of each person who has made one or more contributions to or for the committee or candidate within the reporting period in an aggregate amount or value in excess of \$250, together with the amount and date of the contributions. The accuracy of the information furnished to the candidate or committee shall be the responsibility of the contributor.

***Anyone contributing more than \$50 must provide their full name and mailing address, employer info not necessary.***

(2) The full name and mailing address of each person who has made one or more contributions to or for the committee or candidate within the reporting period in an aggregate amount or value in excess of \$50, together with the amount and date of the contributions. The accuracy of the information furnished by the contributor shall be the responsibility of the contributor.

(3) The total sum of individual contributions made to or for the committee or candidate during the reporting period and not reported under paragraphs (1) and (2).

***Regarding receipts, the following is from 177.2 (c): (1) indicated receipts are necessary for any expenditures exceeding \$25. Below summarizes the info necessary on a receipt. I made a receipt form where I could make notes of these details in case not included on the receipt. Important to note that the receipts don't get uploaded in electronic reporting; you simply must maintain them on file in case of an audit.***

(2) The receipted bill shall contain the following:

- (i) The identification of the person to whom the expenditure is made.
- (ii) The amount of the expenditures.
- (iii) The particulars of the expenditures.
- (iv) The date the expenditures were made.

(3) When a receipted bill is not available, the treasurer may retain the following:

- (i) The cancelled check showing payment of the bill.
- (ii) The bill, invoice or other contemporaneous memorandum of the transaction supplied to the committee by the payee containing the same information as referred to in paragraph (2).
- (iii) Both.

### **§ 177.3. Filing dates.**

(3) Candidates for offices which are not Statewide and political committees supporting these candidates shall file a **preelection report not later than 10 days prior to the election.** This report shall indicate receipts and expenditures as of 15 days before the election.

(c) Postelection report. Candidates and political committees and persons who make independent expenditures and are required to file a preelection report shall also file a **postelection report not later than 30 days after the election. This report shall indicate receipts and expenditures as of 20 days after the election.**

(d) Late contributions and independent expenditures. Late contributions and independent expenditures reports shall conform with the following:

(1) Candidates and political committees authorized by a candidate and created solely for the purpose of influencing an election on behalf of that candidate shall **report any contribution or pledge of \$500 or more which is received or made after 15 days prior to the election.** This report shall be made either in person or by telegram by the candidate, chairperson or treasurer **within 24 hours of receipt.**

(2) Persons making an independent expenditure of \$500 or more after 15 days prior to the election shall make a report of that fact. This report shall be made in person or by telegram within 24 hours of the expenditure.

***Below is why you want to make sure to spend all that is left of your campaign funds so your post-election report is zero-ing out the account:***

(e) Annual report. Annual reports shall conform with the following:

(1) Political committees and candidates are required to file a cumulative annual report on January 31 of each year, for elections, beginning January 31, 1980.

(2) The reports shall indicate receipts and expenditures as of January 15 of each year and **shall be filed annually until no balance or debt remains.**