

# *Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board*

## **Campaign Expenditure and Noncampaign Disbursement Issues**

The following information is intended to assist candidates and treasurers in complying with expenditure requirements. Read the provisions carefully. Contact the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board if you have specific questions.

### **Authorization**

The treasurer must authorize each payment that is made by the candidate's committee or another entity on behalf of the committee.

**Advance written authorization** by the candidate or treasurer is required for another entity to make an approved expenditure in excess of \$20 on behalf of the candidate. These approved expenditures are in-kind contributions and apply to the contribution limit. They may also apply to the spending limit so be sure to specify **at the time of approval** a maximum amount that may be spent on behalf of the candidate.

A suggested form for written authorization may be printed from the Board's website or is available by calling the Board office.

### **Campaign Expenditures**

Expenditures that are made for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of the candidate. These expenditures apply toward the spending limit of candidates who sign a public subsidy agreement. Campaign expenditure limits include the total of:

1. **Monetary** campaign expenditures, plus
2. **In-kind** campaign expenditures, plus
3. **Unpaid** campaign expenditures.

### **Noncampaign disbursements**

The following noncampaign disbursements may be paid by the candidate's committee but **do not** apply to the spending limit:

- Payment for accounting and legal services;
- Return of a contribution to the source;
- Repayment of a loan;
- Interest on loans;
- Return of public subsidy;
- Payment for food, beverages, and necessary utensils and supplies, entertainment and facility rental, at a fundraising event;
- Constituent services by a member of the legislature or a constitutional officer, including the costs of preparing and distributing a suggestion or idea solicitation to constituents, from the beginning of the term of office to adjournment sine die in the election year for the office held. In the 60 days after adjournment sine die, one-half of constituent service disbursements count toward the expenditure limit;
- Payment for food and beverages consumed by a candidate or volunteers while engaged in campaign activities;
- Payment for food or a beverage consumed while attending a reception or meeting directly related to legislative duties;
- Payment of expenses incurred by elected or appointed leaders of a caucus in carrying out

- leadership responsibilities;
- Payment of candidate's expenses for serving in public office, other than for personal expenses;
- Costs of child care for candidate's children when campaigning;
- Fees, transportation, meals, and lodging paid to attend a campaign school;
- Costs of a post election party during the election year when a candidate's name will no longer appear on a ballot or after the general election;
- Filing fees;
- Post-general election holiday or seasonal cards, thank you notes or advertisements in the news media mailed or published prior to the end of the election cycle;
- Costs of campaign material purchased to replace defective campaign material, if the defective material is destroyed without being used;
- Contributions to a political party;
- Payments for funeral gifts or memorials;
- Cost of a magnet less than six inches in diameter containing legislator contact information distributed to constituents;
- Costs associated with a candidate attending a political party state or national convention in this state;
- Costs of campaigning incurred by a person with a disability, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 363A.03, subd. 12, and which are made necessary by the disability;
- Costs to an incumbent or a winning candidate of providing services to residents in the district after the general election in an election year for the office held;
- Payment of advances of credit in a year after the year in which the advance was reported as an expenditure;
- Payment of fines assessed by the Board; and
- Costs paid to a third party for processing contributions made by a credit/debit card or electronic check.

**Information that must be recorded and reported**

1. Name and address of vendors to whom payments have been made,
2. Amount and specific purpose of the expenditure (if in-kind, the fair market value),
3. Date of the expenditure, and
4. Name, registration number, and address of committees or funds to which contributions have been made.

Itemization on periodic reports is required for all expenses or contributions made to each entity in aggregate of more than \$200 in a calendar year.

If the payment is to a third party (credit card company or other individual or entity being reimbursed by your committee for a payment made on behalf of the committee), you must also record and report all required information about the third party.

For expenditures other than cash (in-kind contributions) keep record of and report:

- Specific description of the donated goods or services (e.g., postage, leaflets).
- Original vendor name and address as well as contributor information.