

IOWA ETHICS AND CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE BOARD

An Independent Agency of the Executive Branch

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BOARD MEMBERS:
James Albert, Chair
Geraldine Leinen, Vice Chair
Bernard McKinley
Phyllis Peters
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TO: LOCAL CANDIDATES, PARTIES, BALLOT ISSUE PACS
FROM: CHARLIE SMITHSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & COUNSEL
Re: CAMPAIGN FINANCE ISSUES

The campaign laws in Iowa Code chapter 68A apply to candidates for local office, political committees (PACs) involved in campaigns for candidates or ballot issues, and party committees that advocate for or against local candidates. The Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board administers the campaign laws. Please be aware of the following “major” items:

1. The Board’s Web site allows you to view and download the laws, rules, advisory opinions, educational brochures, and campaign disclosure forms at www.iowa.gov/ethics. Click on **Campaigns** on the main menu and then select your committee type from the following index.
2. Questions by local candidates and PACs should be directed to Sue Brown at (515) 281-4104 or by email at sue.brown@iowa.gov. County central committees should contact Sandy Reier at (515) 281-4411 or by email at sandy.reier@iowa.gov. You may contact Charlie Smithson at (515) 281-3489 or by cell phone at (515) 681-2354 and by email at charlie.smithson@iowa.gov.
3. The first form new committees file is the statement of organization (DR-1). The form must be filed within 10 days of receiving contributions, making expenditures, or incurring debts in excess of \$750. Under the campaign laws a debt is incurred when an item is ordered.
4. Know when your committee must file disclosure reports. Once you have filed a DR-1, you must start and continue filing reports until you terminate your campaign. Make sure reports are filed with the Board on or before the due date as civil penalties are assessed for late reports. Reports may be hand-delivered, mailed, faxed, e-mailed as an attachment, or filed electronically via the Internet (contact the Board for help). Filed reports are available for viewing on the Board’s Web site.
5. Remember that if an organization gives your committee in excess of \$750, that organization must register as a temporary PAC. Please make sure to have organizations that contribute in excess of \$750 to your committee contact the Board immediately for assistance.
6. Do not accept contributions from corporations, insurance companies, or financial institutions (NOTE: this prohibition does not apply to ballot issue PACs, but the entities would be subject to the reporting requirements set out in #5 above).
7. Put the words “paid for by” and the name of who paid for the material on all political materials (see rule 351—4.38). A “paid for by” attribution must be placed even if a committee has not yet been registered by filing a statement of organization. In these situations, the “paid for by” must include the name and address of the person paying for the material. If the material is paid for by a registered committee, only the name of the committee needs to be placed after the words “paid for by.” Yard signs and other small items are exempt.
8. Review the campaign laws in Chapter 68A and the Board’s rules on campaigning in Chapter 4.