

IOWA ETHICS AND CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE BOARD

An Independent Agency of the Executive Branch

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BOARD MEMBERS:
James Albert, Chair
John Walsh, Vice Chair
Carole Tillotson
Jonathan Roos
Mary Rueter
Elaine Olson

To: COUNTY/ LOCAL CANDIDATES, PACs and PARTIES
From: IOWA ETHICS AND CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE BOARD
Re: CAMPAIGN FINANCE OVERVIEW
Date: February 3, 2020

The Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board is the state agency responsible for administering the campaign finance laws in Iowa Code chapter 68A. This memo is a brief overview of Iowa's campaign finance laws. Please visit the Board's website or contact the Board's staff for more information.

1. *Website.* The Board's website has detailed campaign finance information. Go to <https://ethics.iowa.gov> and click on **Campaigns** on the menu bar and then select your committee type.

2. *Contact information:*

County/Local Candidates Auditor

Tim Annee
tim.annee@iowa.gov
(515) 281-4104

County Parties & PACs Auditor

Jason Hacker
jason.hacker@iowa.gov
(515) 281-4411

3. *Registering a Committee.* You must register a campaign committee within 10 days of receiving contributions, making expenditures, or incurring debts in excess of \$1,000 (including a candidate's personal funds). A committee is registered by electronically filing a statement of organization using the Board's web reporting system. The system can be found by clicking on **Web Reporting** at the top right hand corner of the Board's website. If you have not crossed the \$1,000 threshold but want to use a committee name for attribution purposes (see #6 below), you can file Form DR-SFA prior to distributing political material.
4. *Separate Bank Account.* A registered committee is required to keep its funds in a separate account unless it's a candidate's committee and all of its contributions are from the candidate. A candidate's committee must maintain its funds in a financial institution in Iowa. PACs and parties shall either have an Iowa resident as treasurer or maintain all of its funds in a financial institution located in Iowa.
5. *Prohibited Contributors.* You may not accept contributions from corporations, insurance companies, banks or credit unions. This prohibition does not apply to ballot issue PACs.
6. *Attribution Statements.* You must include an attribution statement on most political materials (see Iowa Code section 68A.405 and rule 351—4.38 for details). The statement must say "paid for by" and the name of the registered committee or the name and address of the person or persons responsible for the material if there is no registered committee. A candidate or group under the \$1,000 threshold has the option to register a committee name for attributions statement purposes by filing a Form DR-SFA.
7. *Campaign Signs.* Campaign signs are prohibited on property owned, leased or occupied by a prohibited contributor (see #5 above) unless the signs are for a ballot issue. Campaign signs are also prohibited on public property, including the right-of-way. See Iowa Code section 68A.406 for more details.

8. *Campaign Report Due Dates.* Once you have filed a DR-1, you must start and continue filing reports until you dissolve your committee (even if you have no financial activity during a reporting period). Penalties are assessed for late reports. All reports must be filed electronically via the Board’s Web Reporting System. Reports are due by **4:30 pm** on the date the report is due.

a. *County Candidates, County PACs and County Parties*

Election year:	
Report due date	Covered Period
May 19	January 1 through May 14
July 19	May 15 through July 14
October 19	July 15 through October 14
January 19 (next calendar year)	October 15 through December 31

Non-election year:	
Report due date	Covered Period
January 19 (next calendar year)	January 1 through December 31

b. *City Candidates, City PACs, School Board Candidates, School Board PACs*

Election year:	
Report due date	Covered Period
5 days prior to the election(s) ¹	date of initial activity or previous report through 10 days prior to election
January 19 (next calendar year)	9 days prior to election through December 31

Non-election year:	
Report due date	Covered Period
January 19 (next calendar year)	January 1 through December 31

c. *Ballot Issue Committees*

Election year:	
Report due date	Covered Period
5 days prior to the election(s)	date of initial activity or previous report through 10 days prior to election
May 19	previous report through May 14
July 19	previous report through July 14
October 19	previous report through October 14
January 19 (next calendar year)	previous report through December 31

Non-election year:	
Report due date	Covered Period
January 19 (next calendar year)	January 1 through December 31

d. *Election Year Defined.* The year in which the name of the candidate or ballot issue appears on the ballot. Election year for county PACs and parties is every even year. Election year for city PACs and school board PACs is every odd year.

¹ A few cities in Iowa have primary elections. If you are running for city office in one of these cities, you are required to file reports due 5 days before the primary and general elections. In some city elections, a runoff election is required. If you are in a runoff election, you are required to file an additional report 5 days before the runoff.