



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

STATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS: AN OVERVIEW



In 1757, George Washington spent about \$195 for food and drinks to help win election to the Virginia House of Burgesses. This practice of using money or gifts to influence the outcome of an election would soon be abolished by the Virginia legislature, but it remains an important issue for today's legislators. All 50 states regulate the way money is spent in politics and elections, publishing entire code sections dedicated to providing accountability and transparency in this area. The cost of elections and campaigns continues to rise, and candidates are forced to rely on contributions from the private sector to fund the ever-increasing costs. Seen by many as a natural extension of an individual's freedom of speech, using money to influence elections troubles those who believe money can have a corruptive influence on candidates. State legislators wishing to change their state's campaign finance laws must be sensitive to these separate views, while adhering to the principles set

forth by Supreme Court decisions that further alter the role of money in politics.

This page provides an overview of commonly used methods to regulate campaign finance, as well as influential court decisions that helped shape this regulation. To see a list of campaign finance bills that legislators have introduced in 2015, see NCSL's 2015 Campaign Finance Legislation Database.

How Do States Regulate Campaign Finance?

As there is no right answer to the question of how large a role money should play in politics, there are many methods used to regulate campaign finance. The three discussed below are the most common. These methods include 1) the imposition of disclosure and reporting requirements, (2) setting contribution limits to candidate's campaigns, and 3) providing a method for public financing of elections. Because the federal government leaves elections largely up to the states, the methods used by each state varies dramatically. To learn more about types of restrictions imposed by states, follow the links below each subheading.

Disclosure

The most common means of regulating political spending is through various disclosure and reporting requirements. All 50 states mandate that candidates for elective office report the contributions they receive and the expenditures they make while pursuing public office. This area of campaign finance is constantly evolving, so please see NCSL's 2015 Campaign Finance Legislation Database for examples of laws, introduced this year, that deal with disclosure requirements.

To learn more about disclosure during elections, please follow this link.

Contribution Limits

The second most common means of regulating money in elections is through the imposition of limits on the amount of money any group or individual can contribute to a campaign. This area has grabbed the most attention, with recent Supreme Court cases bringing contribution limits to the forefront of the campaign finance debate.

To learn more about how states regulate the amount of money that can be contributed to campaigns, please follow this link.

Public Financing of Elections

A third method states use to regulate spending in elections is by providing a means by which candidates can accept public funds to conduct their campaign. This approach mirrors the federal public financing option, which was instituted by the FEC in 1974. If a candidate opts into this program, he or she makes certain promises to not raise private capital, and

can only spend on their campaign an amount established by the state.

To learn more about public financing programs offered by states, please follow this link.

Campaign Finance and the Supreme Court

Though legislators have no say in how the Supreme Court interprets campaign finance laws, the Court's decisions force lawmakers to adapt to the changing legal landscape. This page outlines some of the most important Supreme Court decisions on Campaign Finance, with emphasis on how states have adapt to the rulings of the nation's highest court. Rulings from other federal and state courts also dramatically impact campaign finance, but their impacts are geographically limited and not included in this page.

Additional Resources

- Campaign Finance Helpful Links
- NCSL's 2015 Database of Campaign Finance Legislation
- NCSL's 2014 Database of Campaign Finance Legislation (through mid-February 2014)
- NCSL's 1999-2013 Database of Campaign Finance Legislation
- NCSL blog on What's an Election Cycle?

About This Project

The content for this webpage was created by Brian Cruikshank from William and Mary Law School, in coordination with NCSL's staff.

If you don't find the information you need, please contact our elections team at 303-364-7700 or elections-info@ncsl.org. NCSL staff can do specialized searches for legislators and legislative staff.

NCSL Member Toolbox

Members Resources

- Get Involved With NCSL
- Jobs Clearinghouse
- Legislative Careers
- NCSL Staff Directories
- Staff Directories
- StateConnect Directory

Policy & Research Resources

- Bill Information Service
- Legislative Websites
- NCSL Bookstore
- State Legislatures Magazine

Accessibility Support

- Tel: 1-800-659-2858 or 711
- Accessibility Support
- Accessibility Policy

Meeting Resources

- Calendar
- Online Registration

Press Room

- Media Contact
- NCSL in the News
- Press Releases

Denver

7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Tel: 303-364-7700 | Fax: 303-364-7800

Washington

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
Tel: 202-624-6400 | Fax: 202-737-1069



NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

Disclosure and Reporting Requirements

7/17/2015

Overview



Candidates for state office in 2014 received campaign contributions from more than 2 million different sources.

To ensure that these contributions comply with state law, all 50 states mandate some form of disclosure and reporting of these contributions. A candidate typically must register with the state election administration agency, maintain receipts from contributions and expenditures, and report them on dates established by the legislature.

Combined with public financing options and contributions limits, disclosure helps to provide transparency by publishing the sources of a candidate's election fund. Most states now mandate that candidates report this information electronically. This process enables the lists of contributors to be posted automatically, giving concerned citizens access to the sources of campaign contributions. The Campaign Finance Institute maintains a list of every state reporting agency. To see state-specific reports, follow this [link](#).

Disclosure and Reporting Requirements are the driving force behind today's campaign finance legislations. Out of the more than 700 bills NCSL has tracked in the 2015 Campaign Finance Legislation Database, over 300 of them deal with the modification or implementation of disclosure and reporting requirements.

This page follows two states' disclosure requirements, helping to illuminate how legislators can use this method to regulate campaign finance. For more information on disclosure and reporting of independent expenditures across the states, see NCSL's chart on [Independent Expenditure Reporting](#).

Disclosure and Reports of Contributions and Expenditures for Candidates

Though the reporting requirements and schedules vary, most states require disclosure of contributions (1) annually, (2) right before an election, and (3) soon after the election. An additional 14 states require a candidate to disclose receipts of large contributions (typically more than \$500 from a single source) within 24 hours. NCSL's chart outlining state disclosure requirements provides the code sections to locate states' individual reporting guidelines.

As an example, Mississippi Code Ann. § 23-15-807 provides disclosure guidelines for candidates for state office. During election years, candidates must file reports seven days before an election for which they have received contributions or made expenditures. They must also file periodic reports after April, May, June, September, and December of every gubernatorial election year, and an annual report the following January. Finally, if the candidate receives a contribution of \$200 or more from a single source within 10 days of an election, the candidate must disclose it within 48 hours. The contents of these reports must include "the total amount of all contributions and the total amount of all expenditures of the candidate . . . during the election year."

The amounts and dates will change across the states, but every one of them follows a similar pattern.

Disclosure and Reports of Independent Expenditures

U.S. Supreme Court rulings in *Buckley v. Valeo* and *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* protect independent political communications, like television or radio ads, as valid exercises of First Amendment free speech rights, on the basis that fear of corruption is not great enough with independent groups to warrant limiting their freedom of speech. This means that states are unable to limit how much an individual or group (like a PAC) can raise if they are not directly associated with a campaign. States can require these groups to report where the money is going. Forty seven states

require that groups or individuals report where their money is spent, with the timing of reports dependent on the amount of money spent and the proximity, in time, to the election. (For more information on the U.S. Supreme Court and Campaign Finance, see this link)

As an example, Connecticut C.G.S.A. § 9-601d outlines reporting of independent expenditures for any person who makes independent expenditures of more than \$1,000. They must disclose these reports to the state's election commission on Jan. 10, April 10, July 10, Oct. 10, seven days before the election, and 30 days after any primary election.

NCSL has compiled a comprehensive outline of independent expenditure reporting for all 50 states.

Additional Resources

- NCSL's 50-State Chart on Disclosure and Reporting Requirements
 - For more information on other ways states regulate campaign finance, see the page on Public Financing and the page on Contribution Limits.
 - Campaign Finance Helpful Links
 - NCSL's 2015 Database of Campaign Finance Legislation
- NCSL blog on What's an Election Cycle?

About This NCSL Project

The content for this webpage was created by Brian Cruikshank from William and Mary Law School, in coordination with NCSL's staff.

If you don't find the information you need, please contact our elections team at 303-364-7700 or elections-info@ncsl.org. NCSL staff can do specialized searches for legislators and legislative staff.

NCSL Member Toolbox

Members Resources

- Get Involved With NCSL
- Jobs Clearinghouse
- Legislative Careers
- NCSL Staff Directories
- Staff Directories
- StateConnect Directory

Policy & Research Resources

- Bill Information Service
- Legislative Websites
- NCSL Bookstore
- State Legislatures Magazine

Accessibility Support

- Tel: 1-800-659-2656 or 711
- Accessibility Support
- Accessibility Policy

Meeting Resources

- Calendar
- Online Registration

Press Room

- Media Contact
- NCSL In the News
- Press Releases

Denver

7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Tel: 303-364-7700 | Fax: 303-364-7800

Washington

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 516
Washington, D.C. 20001
Tel: 202-624-6400 | Fax: 202-737-1089



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES
The Forum for America's Ideas

State Campaign Finance Disclosure Requirements 2015-2016 Election Cycle

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
Alabama Ala. Code 1975 § 17-5-8	Candidates (Annually, Monthly, Weekly, Daily). PAC (annually)	Contributions, Expenditures, Debts	Monthly, starting a year before the election. Weekly, four weeks before the election. Daily, starting 8 days before the election	Yes
Alaska ASS 15.13.110	Candidates, Parties, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures, Debts	Month before Election, Week before Election, 105 days after special election, 24 Hours after receiving contribution of \$250 or more, Feb. 15 for everything not previously reported	Yes
Arizona A.R.S § 16-913	Candidate, PAC	Contributions, Expenditures	June 30 (covering Jan. 1-May 31), 4 days before election, 30 days after election, Annually	Yes
Arkansas A.C.A. § 7-6- 207	Candidate, PAC	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, Monthly (Beginning year before the election), 7 days before the election, 30 days after election,	No
California West's Ann. Cal. Elec. Code § 20440	Candidates, PACs Independent Expenditure Committees, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	Semi-annually (Jan. 31, July 31), pre-election reports on March 22 and May 26, within 10 days of receiving a contribution of \$5,000 or more (only for electronic filing), and within 24 hours for every contribution of more than \$1,000 from a single source	Yes

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
 Last updated July 17, 2015
 This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
Colorado CRSA, § 1-45-108	Candidates, PACs, Issue Committees, Small Donor Committees, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly in non-election years, First Monday in May during Election year, then every two weeks before primary, Monthly six months before election, First Monday in September then every two weeks before general, 30 days after election, 14 days before and 30 days after special election	Yes
Connecticut C.G.S.A. § 9-608	Committees (Candidate and Issue)	Contributions, Expenditures, Expenses	January, April, July, October, Week before election, 30 days after primary,	No
Delaware 15 Del. C §8030	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	Every year on Dec. 31, 30 days before election, 8 days before election	No
Florida West's F.S.A §106.07	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	Monthly, 60 days before primary then weekly, 10 days before general then daily	No
Georgia Ga. Code Ann., § 21-5-34	Candidate Committees	Contributions, Expenditures, Loans	Biannually in non-election year, Every other month in election year, 6 days before election, 24 hours if receiving \$1,000 or more, 15 days before special election	Yes
Hawaii HRS § 11-334	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures, Loans	30 days before primary, 10 days before primary, 10 days before general, 20 days after primary, 30 days after general, January 31 after election year, July 31 after election year	Yes
Idaho I.C. § 67-6607	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	Week before primary, 30 days after primary, October 10 before general, week before general, 30 days after general	No
Illinois 10 ILCS 5/9-10	Political Committees	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, within 5 days of receiving contribution of \$1,000 or more,	Yes

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures

Last updated July 17, 2015

This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
Indiana IC3-9-5-6	Candidates, Parties, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	Annually, 25 days before nomination, 25 days before general election	No
Iowa I.C.A. § 68A.401	Candidates, PACs, Issue committees	Contributions, Expenditures	May 19, July 19, October 19, January 19	No
Kansas K.S.A. 25-4148	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	8 days before primary, 8 days before general, January 10 after election, annually when candidate is not participating in an election	No
Kentucky KRS § 121.180	Candidate, Political Issue Committee	Contributions, Expenditures, Fundraising sales	Quarterly, 32 days before an election, 15 days before election, 30 days after election	No
Louisiana LSA-RS 18:1491.6	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures, Loans	180, 90, 30, 10 days before primary, 10 days before general, 40 days after general	No
Maine 21-A.M.R.S.A. § 1017	Candidates, PACs, Political Issues Committees, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	Biannually in non election year when candidate raises \$500 or more, 11 days before election, daily if contribution is \$1,000 or more, 42 days before general election, 42 days after election	Yes
Maryland MD Code, Election Law, §13-304	Candidates	Contributions (Employer) and expenditures	Third Tuesday in April, Fifth Tuesday before primary, last Tuesday in August before general, second Friday before general, Second Tuesday after general	Yes
Massachusetts M.G.L.A. 55 §18	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	8 days before primary, 8 days before general, January 20 after election	Yes
Michigan M.C.L.A. 169.216	Candidates, PACs, Parties, Ballot Initiative Committees	Contributions, Expenditures	Annually, Quarterly, 16 days before election, 20 days after election	Yes

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
Last updated July 17, 2015
This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When Is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
Minnesota M.S.A. §211A.02	Candidate, PAC	Contributions	Annually, 10 days before primary, 10 days before general, 30 days after general	No
Mississippi Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-807	Candidates, PAOs	Contributions, Expenditures	Annually, 7 days before election	Yes
Missouri V.A.M.S. 130.046	Candidates, PAOs	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, 40 days before election, 8 days before election, 30 days after election	Yes
Montana MCA 13-37-226	Candidates, PAOs, Parties, Ballot Initiative Committees	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, March 10, April 10, June 10, Aug. 10, September 10 and 15 and 5 days before election, within 24 hours of receiving \$200 or more, 20 days after election	Yes
Nebraska Neb. Rev. St. §49-1445	Candidates, PAOs, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	March 9 and 30, May 18 for the primary; April 27, June 15 for general	No
Nevada N.R.S. 294A.140	Candidate, PAC, Party, Ballot Initiative Committee	Contributions, Expenditures	21 days before primary, 4 days before primary, 21 days before general, 4 days before general	No
New Hampshire 664:6	Candidate, Political Issue Committee	Contributions, Expenditures	3 Wednesdays before election, Wednesday before election, 2nd Wednesday after election	No
New Jersey N.J.S.A. 19:44A-1	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, 29 days before election, 11 days before election, 20 days after election	Yes
New Mexico N.M.S.A. 1978, § 1-19-27	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	Biannually, 2nd Monday in April; 2nd Monday in May, 2nd Monday in September, 2nd Monday in October, Thursday before election, 30 days after election	Yes

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
Last updated July 17, 2015
This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
New York McKinney's Election Law §14-102	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures, Transfers	30 days before election, 11 days before election, biannually	Yes
North Carolina N.C.G.S.A. §163-278.9	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures, Transfers	Within 48 hours if receiving contribution of \$1,000 or more, Quarterly, Semiannually	No
North Dakota § 16-1-08.1	Candidates, PACs, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	May 9 before primary, Oct. 3 before general, Jan. 31 for preceding year, 48 hours if receiving contribution of \$500 or more	No
Ohio R.C. § 3517.10	Candidates, PACs, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	12 days before election, 38 days after election, last business day of every January, last business day of every July	Yes
Oklahoma T. 74, Ch. 62, App. 257:10-1- 13	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, 8 days before election	Yes
Oregon O.R.S. § 260.083	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	Report every transaction as it comes in, with dates dependent on statute	Yes
Pennsylvania 25 P.S. § 3246	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	Sixth Tuesday and second Friday before election, 30 days after election	No
Rhode Island Gen. Laws 1956, §17-25-7	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	Annual, every 90 days after registering, 28th and 7th days before primary, 28 days before general, 28 days after election	Yes
South Carolina Code 1976 § 8- 13-1308	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, 15 days before election	Yes

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
Last updated July 17, 2015
This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
South Dakota SDCL §12-27-24	Candidates, PACS	Contributions, Expenditures	July 5, 15 days before election, 30 days after election	No
Tennessee T. C. A. §2-10-105	Candidates, PACS	Contributions, Expenditures	Quarterly, 7 days before election, Jan. 31 after election	Yes
Texas V.T.C.A., Election Code §254.031	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures, Loans	July 15, Jan. 15, 30 days before election, 8th day before election	Yes
Utah U.C.A. 1953 §20A-11-301	Candidates, PACs, Party, Corporation	Contributions, Expenditures, In Kind Donations	April 15, Aug. 31 7 days before election, Every year on Jan. 10	No
Vermont 17 V.S.A. §2964	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	Year before election- July 15, Year of election: March 15, July 15, August 15, Sept. 1, Oct. 1, Oct. 15, Friday before election, two weeks after election	No
Virginia VA Code Ann. §24.2-945	Candidates, PACs, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures	For May Elections- 8 days before election, June 15 after election, July 15 after election; For November Elections- biannually in off election years, April 15, July 15, Sept. 15, 8 days before election, 30 days after election, Jan. 15 after election	Yes
Washington WAC390-16-125	Candidates	Contributions	June 1, Monthly until May of election year, 21 days before election, 7 days before election, 10th of the month of month after election	Yes
West Virginia WV Code §3-8-5	Candidates, PACs, Parties	Contributions, Expenditures, Loans, Expenses	April 4, May 2, June 23, Sept. 26, October 24, December 15, Every April	No

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
Last updated July 17, 2015
This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State/ Statute	Who Needs to Disclose	What Needs to be Disclosed	When is it Disclosed	Electronic Filing Required?
Wisconsin W.S.A. 11.20	Candidates, PACs	Contributions, Expenditures	8 days before election, 30 days after election	Yes
Wyoming W.S.1977 §22-25-106	Candidates	Contributions, Expenditures	7 days before election, 10 days after election	Yes

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
 Last updated July 17, 2015
 This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.



NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

CONTRIBUTION LIMITS OVERVIEW



The 2014 election cycle saw candidates for state office across the country raise over three billion dollars in campaign contributions. This number was only attained by reaching out to a variety of sources, such as state political parties, corporations, unions, political action committees, and individuals. To help ensure that these groups have no corruptive influence on election and campaigns, many states impose contribution limits on candidates, dictating how much any one entity can give a campaign

This page provides an overview of the types of restrictions states place on contribution limits, and gives examples of certain statutory restrictions. For information on other types of campaign finance restrictions, please visit our pages on disclosure and public financing of elections.

Individual Contribution Limits

Only twelve states- Alabama, Indiana, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Virginia impose no contribution limits on individual donors. The other 38 states restrict the amount of money that any one individual can contribute to a state campaign. These limits are typically dependent upon the office the candidate seeks. For example, Connecticut restricts individual spending to \$1,000 for a candidate in a state senate race and \$250 for a candidate for a state house seat.

This chart shows the wide range of contribution limits across states:

	Governor	State Senate	State House
National Average	\$5,619	\$2507.69	\$2,375
National Median	\$3,800	\$1,000	\$1,000
Highest Limit	\$50,000 (New York)	\$12,532 (Ohio)	\$12,532 (Ohio)
Lowest Limit	\$500 (Alaska)	\$170 (Montana)	\$170 (Montana)

Following the Supreme Court's decision in *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission*, 134 S.Ct. 1434 (2014), limits on the total amount of money an individual can contribute during an election cycle violate the First Amendment, and are therefore unconstitutional. *McCutcheon* dealt with federal election spending, but the ruling trickled down to state statutes dealing with aggregate contribution limits. Before the ruling, nine states imposed aggregate contribution limits on the overall amount individuals and groups could contribute to candidates. Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New York's election law agencies have announced they will no longer enforce their states' aggregate contribution limits, and Wisconsin's was struck down by the courts in response to *McCutcheon*. While limitations on the amount of money an individual can contribute to a specific campaign can remain in place, states more than likely will not be able to impose an aggregate limit on campaign contributions from individuals.

For a complete list of contribution limits from individuals, please see NCSL's chart on State by State Contribution Limits for the 2015-2016 Election Cycle.

State Party Contribution Limits

18 states impose no restrictions on the ability of state party committees to contribute money to a candidate's campaign. Illinois, Kansas, New Hampshire, and New York allow state parties to donate unlimited sums if the candidate meets certain qualifications, such as running uncontested or agreeing by certain spending limits. The remaining 28 states have some sort of restriction on funds from political parties, falling into two camps. Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, Nevada, and West Virginia require parties to follow the same contribution limits established for individuals. The other 23 states outline separate limits for political parties.

NCSL's chart on [State by State Contribution Limits for the 2015-2016 Election Cycle](#) provides further information on contribution limits for state political parties.

Corporation Contribution Limits

22 states completely prohibit corporations from contributing to political campaigns. Another six—Alabama, Missouri, Nebraska, Oregon, Utah, and Virginia—allow corporations to contribute an unlimited amount of money to state campaigns. Of the remaining 22 states, 19 impose the same restrictions on corporation contributions as they do for individual contributions. The other three set different limits.

Again, please refer to NCSL's chart on [State by State Contribution Limits for the 2015-2016 Election Cycle](#) for more information on corporate contribution limits.

Political Action Committee Contribution Limits

PACs, or political action committees, are organizations that pool campaign contributions from its members to support or oppose candidates, ballot initiatives, or legislation. Oftentimes formed in support of a specific candidate or ballot measure, PACs represent one way a corporation can contribute to a candidate's campaign without violating restrictions on corporate influence in elections. If a corporation desired to form a PAC, pooling contributions from its employees or outside sources into a distinct bank account, the PAC can spend money to influence elections in a way the corporation cannot by itself. 13 states allow PACs to contribute unlimited amounts of money to state campaigns. The remaining 37 either impose the same limitations as the ones on individuals, or provide a separate contribution limit. After the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010), PACs can spend unlimited amounts of money on broadcasts and communications related to an election, provided they act independently of any one candidate. (Follow this [link](#) to learn more about campaign finance and the Supreme Court.)

To see current and pending legislation dealing with campaign finance, please visit the [2015 Campaign Finance Legislation Database](#), which hosts bill dealing with contribution limits.

For further questions about contribution limits, and campaign finance generally, please feel free to contact the Elections Team at NCSL.

Additional Resources

[NCSL's 50-state chart on Contribution Limits for the 2015-2016 Election Cycle](#)

For more information on other ways states regulate campaign finance, see the page on [Disclosure and Reporting Requirements](#) and the page on [Public Financing](#).

[Campaign Finance Helpful Links](#)

[NCSL's 2015 Database of Campaign Finance Legislation](#)

About This Project

The content for this webpage was created by Brian Cruikshank from William and Mary Law School, in coordination with NCSL's staff.

If you don't find the information you need, please contact our elections team at 303-364-7700 or elections-info@ncsl.org. NCSL staff can do specialized searches for legislators and legislative staff.

NCSL Member Toolbox

Members Resources

- [Get Involved With NCSL](#)
- [Jobs Clearinghouse](#)
- [Legislative Careers](#)
- [NCSL Staff Directories](#)
- [Staff Directories](#)
- [StateConnect Directory](#)

Policy & Research Resources

- [Bill Information Service](#)
- [Legislative Websites](#)
- [NCSL Bookstore](#)
- [State Legislatures Magazine](#)

Accessibility Support

- [Tel: 1-800-659-2856 or 711](#)
- [Accessibility Support](#)
- [Accessibility Policy](#)

Meeting Resources

- [Calendar](#)
- [Online Registration](#)

Press Room

- [Media Contact](#)
- [NCSL in the News](#)
- [Press Releases](#)

Denver

7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Tel: 303-364-7700 | Fax: 303-364-7800

Washington

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
Tel: 202-624-6400 | Fax: 202-737-1069

State Limits on Contributions to Candidates 2015-2016 Election Cycle

One of the most common means of regulating money in elections is through the imposition of limits on the amount of money any group or individual can contribute to a campaign. This chart provides details on state campaign contribution limits to candidates.

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
Alabama Ala. Code § 17-5-1 et seq.	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Alaska § 15.13.070 and 15.13.074(f)	\$500/candidate/year Aggregate amounts candidates may accept from nonresidents: \$20,000/year/gubernatorial candidate \$5,000/year/Senate candidate \$3,000/year/House candidate	\$100,000/year/gubernatorial candidate \$15,000/year/Senate candidate \$10,000/year/House candidate \$5,000 municipal	\$1,000/office/year Contributions from out-of-state PACs prohibited	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
Arizona ^{a, e, 1} A.R.S. § 16-905 and 16-919	\$5,000/statewide or legislative candidate	Aggregate contributions accepted from all political parties and organizations cannot exceed: \$80,000 – statewide candidate \$8,000 – legislative candidate	“Super” PACs ² : \$10,000/statewide or legislative candidate/year Regular PACs: \$5,000/statewide or legislative candidate/year <i>Amounts are per election cycle</i>	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
Arkansas A.C.A. § 7-6-203	\$2,700/candidate/election ^a	\$2,700/candidate/election ^a	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits

¹ The Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Commission has filed suit in Maricopa County Superior Court to block the increased limits, claiming that the legislation establishing them (HB 2593, 2013) violated the Voter Protection Act, which bars the legislature from making changes to any voter-approved laws without a second popular vote or a 3/4ths vote of the legislature. This litigation could result in an injunction that prevents the new limits from going into effect. Candidates are responsible for accepting only up to the legal maximum pursuant to law and candidates should check with their election official as to the law's status. The pre-HB 2593 limits would be \$912/statewide candidate and \$440/legislative candidate per election cycle.

² In Arizona, a PAC that has received contributions from 500 or more individuals in amounts of \$10 or more in a one-year period may qualify as a “Super PAC.” Qualification is valid for two years. (Ariz. Rev. Stat. §16-905(i))

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
<p>California^e Gov. Code § 85300 et seq.</p>	<p>For elections held on or after Jan. 1, 2013: \$28,200/gubernatorial candidate \$7,000/other statewide candidate \$4,200/legislative candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p>	<p>Unlimited</p>	<p>For elections held on or after Jan. 1, 2013: "Small Contributor" Crites³: \$28,200/gubernatorial candidate \$14,100/statewide candidate \$8,500/legislative candidate Regular PACs: Same as individual limits <i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>
<p>Colorado^e Constitution Art. XXVIII</p>	<p>Effective 3/15/11 - 2015: \$575/statewide candidate \$200/legislative candidate Limits double for a candidate who accepts voluntary spending limits if his/her opponent has not accepted the limits <i>and</i> has raised more than 10% of the limit. <i>Amounts per election^a</i></p>	<p>Effective 3/15/11 - 2015: \$615,075/gubernatorial candidate \$123,000/other statewide candidate \$22,125/Senate candidate \$15,975/House candidate Note: Contributions by a candidate to his/her own campaign, and unexpended contributions carried forward to a subsequent election cycle, are treated as contributions from a political party and are subject to the political party limits. Party limits cannot be doubled for candidates who accept voluntary limits. <i>Amounts are per applicable election cycle.</i></p>	<p>Limits effective 3/15/11 - 2015: "Small Donor" Committees:⁴ \$6,125/gubernatorial and statewide candidate \$2,425/legislative candidate Regular PACs and Federal PACs: Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Prohibited⁵</p>	<p>Can contribute through PAC's established by the organization</p>

³ In California, a "small contributor committee" is a committee which has been in existence for at least six months, receives contributions from 100 or more persons in amounts of not more than \$200 per person, and makes contributions to five or more candidates. (Cal. Govt. Code §85203)

⁴ In Colorado, a "small donor committee" means any political committee that has accepted contributions only from natural persons who each contributed no more than \$50 in the aggregate per year.

⁵ Corporations are prohibited from donating money from their treasury, but are permitted to establish independent expenditure committees or political committees with the same contribution limits as PACs

<p>Connecticut^e Ct.Gen.Stat. § 9-611, 9-613 and 9-615 Update July 2013</p>	<p>Individual → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>\$3,500/gubernatorial candidate \$2,000/other statewide candidate \$1,000/Senate candidate \$250/House candidate</p>	<p>State Party → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>\$50,000/gubernatorial candidate \$35,000/other statewide candidate \$10,000/Senate candidate \$5,000/House candidate</p>	<p>PAC → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>\$5,000/gubernatorial candidate \$3,000/other statewide candidate \$1,500/Senate candidate \$750/House candidate</p> <p>Aggregate limits on contributions by PACs to candidates: \$100,000/election by a PAC established by a business entity \$50,000/election by a PAC established by an organization <i>All amounts are per election^a</i></p>	<p>Corporate → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Prohibited^d</p>	<p>Union → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Prohibited^d</p>
<p>Delaware 15 Del. Code §8010 to 8013</p>	<p>\$1,200/statewide candidate \$600/other candidate <i>All amounts per election cycle</i></p>	<p>\$75,000/gubernatorial candidate \$25,000/other statewide candidate \$5,000/Senate candidate \$3,000/House candidate <i>All amounts per election cycle</i></p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>

Continued on next page

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
<p>Florida Fla. Stat. § 106.08</p>	<p>\$3,000/statewide candidate \$1,000/legislative</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election^a</i> (Effective 11/1/2013)</p>	<p>A candidate for statewide office may not accept contributions from parties that in the aggregate exceed \$250,000, and no more than \$125,000 of that amount may be received during the 28 days preceding an election.</p> <p>A legislative candidate can accept up to \$50,000 each from the national or state executive committee of a party, or up to \$50,000 from the county executive committee of a party.</p>	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
<p>Georgia^a O.C.G.A. § 21-5-41 to 43</p>	<p>Limits last adjusted 12/2010</p> <p>Regular primary or general: \$6,300/statewide candidate \$2,500/legislative candidate</p> <p>Run-off: \$3,700/statewide candidate \$1,300/legislative candidate</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p>	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
<p>Hawaii H.R.S. §2: 11-357, 11-359</p>	<p>\$6,000/statewide candidate \$4,000/Senate candidate \$2,000/House candidate</p> <p>Contributions from a candidate's immediate family are limited to \$50,000 in an election cycle, including loans.</p> <p><i>All amounts are per election cycle</i></p>	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits

Continued on next page

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
<p>Idaho \$ 67-6610A</p>	<p>\$5,000/statewide candidate \$1,000/legislative candidate</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p>	<p>\$10,000/statewide candidate \$2,000/legislative candidate</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p>	<p>Same as Individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>
<p>Illinois^e 10 ILCS 5/9-8.5</p>	<p>\$5,400/candidate/election cycle</p> <p>Any candidate who receives benefit or detriment from independent expenditures in excess of the amounts below is exempted from all contribution limits: \$250,000/statewide candidate \$100,000/candidate for any other office</p> <p>A candidate and their immediate family members (spouse, parent, or child) can make unlimited contributions to that candidate's campaign.</p> <p>Any candidate whose opponent is self-funded is exempted from contribution limits. A self-funded candidate is an individual who contributes \$250,000 to his or her own statewide campaign in an election cycle, or \$100,000 for all other elective offices. Contributions made to a candidate by immediate family members are also considered "self-funding."</p>	<p>Unlimited if candidate is not seeking nomination in a primary election. For candidates running in a primary: \$215,800/statewide candidate \$134,900/Senate candidate 134,900 \$80,900/House candidate</p> <p>Unlimited from a political party during General or Consolidated Election</p> <p>Unlimited during Primary Election Cycle when candidate is not seeking nomination</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election cycle.</i></p>	<p>\$53,900 per election cycle</p> <p>Same limit applies to a contribution from one candidate committee to another</p>	<p>\$10,800per election cycle</p>	<p>\$10,800 per election cycle</p>

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
Indiana Ind. Code § 3-9-2-4 et seq.	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	\$5,000 in the aggregate to statewide candidates \$2,000 in the aggregate to Senate candidates \$2,000 in the aggregate to House candidates <i>All amounts are per year</i>	Same as corporate limits
Iowa Iowa Code § 68A.503	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Prohibited ^d	Unlimited
Kansas K.S.A. § 25-4153	\$2,000/statewide candidate \$1,000/Senate candidate \$500/House candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i>	For a contested primary election, same as individual limits. Unlimited in uncontested primaries and general elections	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
Kentucky K.R.S. § 121.025, 121.035, and 121.150	\$1,000/candidate/election ^a	Unlimited Aggregate Limits: No candidate can retain party contributions which in the aggregate exceed 50% of total contributions or \$10,000 (whichever is greater) in an election cycle.	Same as individual limits Aggregate Limits: No candidate can retain PAC contributions which in the aggregate exceed 50% of total contributions or \$10,000 (whichever is greater) in an election cycle. 121.150(23)(a)	Prohibited ^d	Same as individual limits

Continued on next page

<p>Louisiana La. R.S. § 18:1505.2</p>	<p>Individual → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>\$5,000/statewide candidate \$2,500/legislative candidate</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election⁶</i></p>	<p>State Party → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Unlimited</p>	<p>PAC → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Regular PACs: Same as individual limits</p> <p>"Big" PACs⁶: Double the amount of individual limits</p> <p>Candidates subject to following aggregate limits on all PAC contributions accepted for the primary and general elections combined: \$80,000/statewide candidate \$60,000/legislative candidate</p>	<p>Corporate → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Union → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Same as individual limits</p>
<p>Maine^{b,c} 21-A M.R.S.A. §1015</p>	<p>Individual → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>\$1,575/gubernatorial candidate \$375/legislative candidate⁷</p> <p>Individual contribution limits do not apply to contributions in support of a candidate by that candidate, or that candidate's spouse or domestic partner.</p> <p>Individuals limited to \$25,000 aggregate contributions to all campaign finance entities per calendar year. This limitation does not apply to contributions in support of a candidate by that candidate or that candidate's spouse or domestic partner. <i>Amounts are per election⁶</i></p>	<p>State Party → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>PAC → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Corporate → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Union → Candidate Contributions</p> <p>Same as individual limits</p>
	<p>Individual → Candidate Contributions</p>	<p>State Party → Candidate Contributions</p>	<p>PAC → Candidate Contributions</p>	<p>Corporate → Candidate Contributions</p>	<p>Union → Candidate Contributions</p>

⁶ In Louisiana, a "Big PAC" is a PAC with over 250 members who contributed over \$50 to the PAC during the preceding calendar year and has been certified as meeting that membership requirement.

⁷ In Maine, candidates who are enrolled in a political party may contribute up to \$375 from an individual. Individual contributions to unenrolled candidates are unlimited for primary elections.

<p>Maryland Md. Code § 13-226 and 13-227</p>	<p>Effective Jan. 1, 2015 \$6,000/candidate \$24,000 aggregate to all candidates <i>Amounts are per 4-year election cycle</i></p>	<p>Transfer limit: \$6,000/4-year election cycle In-Kind Contributions: Limited to an amount equal to \$1 for every two registered voters in the state, regardless of political affiliation, to a single candidate. Limit is per 4-year election cycle.</p>	<p>\$6,000/candidate/4-year election cycle</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>
<p>Massachusetts G.L. Ch. 55, § 6, 6A, 7A and 8</p>	<p>\$1000/candidate \$12,500/individual aggregate limit on contributions to all candidates Registered lobbyists may only contribute up to \$200/candidate <i>Amounts are per calendar year.</i></p>	<p>\$3,000/candidate/year No limit on in-kind contributions</p>	<p>Regular PAC or People's Committee:⁸ \$500/candidate Candidates cannot accept aggregate contributions from regular PACs that exceed the following amounts (People's Committees are exempt from the aggregate limits): \$150,000/gubernatorial candidate \$18,750/Senate candidate \$7,500/House candidate <i>Amounts per calendar year.</i></p>	<p>Prohibited⁸</p>	<p>Same as PAC limits</p>

Continued on next page

⁸ In Massachusetts, a "People's Committee" is a PAC that has been in existence for six months, has received contributions from individuals of \$156 (adjusted biennially; this amount is for 2013-2014) or less per year, and has contributed to five candidates.

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
Michigan M.C.L. § 169.246, 169.252 and 169.254	\$6,800/statewide candidate \$2,000/Senate candidate \$1,000/House candidate <i>All amounts are per election cycle</i>	\$750,000/governor or lieutenant governor state with public funding \$136,000/governor or lieutenant governor state without public funding \$136,000/other statewide candidate \$20,000/Senate candidate \$10,000/House candidate <i>All amounts are per election cycle</i>	Political Committees: Same as individual limits. Independent PACs ⁹ : \$68,000/statewide candidate \$20,000/Senate candidate \$10,000/House candidate <i>All amounts are per election cycle</i>	Prohibited ⁴	Prohibited ⁴

Continued on next page

⁹ In Michigan, an "independent committee" must have filed a statement of organization at least 6 months before the election in which the committee wishes to make contributions; must have supported or opposed 3 or more candidates for nomination or election; and must have received contributions from at least 25 persons.

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
Minnesota Minn. Stat. § 10A.27 and 211B.15	Election segment limits: ¹⁰ \$4,000/governor – lieutenant governor state \$2,500/AG candidate \$2,000/SOS or auditor candidate \$1,000/legislative candidate Nonelection segment limits: \$2,000/governor-lieutenant governor state \$1,500/attorney general candidate \$1,000/secretary of state or auditor candidate \$1,000/Senate candidate n/a for House candidates	Party committees may contribute up to 10 times the limits imposed on individuals Candidates are subject to the following aggregate limits on contributions received in the 2013-14 election cycle from party committees and terminating principal campaign committees: \$40,000/governor-lieutenant governor state \$25,000/attorney general candidate \$20,000/secretary of state or auditor candidate \$10,000/legislative candidate	Same as individual limits Aggregate contributions from political committees or political funds, lobbyists, and individuals who contribute or loan more than ½ the yearly contribution limit cannot exceed the following amounts: \$700,000/governor-lieutenant governor state \$120,000/attorney general candidate \$80,000/secretary of state or auditor candidate \$6,000/Senate candidate \$12,000/House candidate	Prohibited ⁶	Same as individual limits
Mississippi Miss. Code § 97-13-15	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	\$1,000/candidate/year	Unlimited
Missouri Mo. Rev Stat § 130.031	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited

Continued on next page

¹⁰ Minnesota's SF 991 (2013) divided election cycles into two-year periods, and made limits applicable to a two-year period rather than a single year. The limit is higher for the two-year period during which an election is held for the office, and lower during a non-election two-year period for candidates that serve a four- or six-year term.

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
Montana^e M.C.A. § 13-35-227 and 13-37-216	\$650/gubernatorial state candidate \$320/other statewide candidate \$170/legislative candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i>	\$23,350/gubernatorial state candidate \$8,450/other statewide candidate \$3,350/Senate candidate \$850/House candidate <i>All amounts are per election^a</i>	Same as individual limits Candidates limited to total contributions from all PACs: \$2,750 Senate candidates \$1,650 House candidates <i>Amounts are per election^a</i>	Prohibited ^d	Same as individual limits
Nebraska N.R.S. § 32-1604 and 32-1608	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Nevada § 294A.100 and Const. Art. 2 §10	\$5,000/candidate/election ^a	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
New Hampshire R.S.A. § 664:4	To candidates not agreeing to abide by spending limits: \$1,000/election ^a To candidates agreeing to abide by spending limits: \$5,000/election ^a	To candidates not agreeing to abide by spending limits: \$1,000/election ^a Unlimited to candidates who agree to expenditure limits	Same as party limits	Same as individual limits ¹¹	Prohibited ^d
New Jersey^e N.J.S.A. § 19:44A-11.3	\$3,800/gubernatorial candidate \$2,600/legislative candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i>	No limit on contributions by state, county, municipal and legislative leadership committees National party committee: \$8,200/election ^a	\$8,200/candidate/election ^a	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
New Mexico^e N.M.S.A. § 1-19-34.7	\$5,400/statewide candidate \$2,500/nonstatewide candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i>	\$5,400/election ^a	Same as party limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits

¹¹ Corporations are no longer prohibited from making political contributions under New Hampshire law despite the language of NH RSA 664:4. That ban was declared unconstitutional by a federal district court in 1999. A June 6, 2000 letter from Deputy Attorney General Steven M. Houran indicates that the limits on individual contributions now apply to corporate contributions as well.

New York Election Law, § 14-114 and 14-116	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
<p>Regular Limits, Primary: \$6,500-\$19,700/statewide¹² \$6,500/Senate candidate \$4,100/Assembly candidate</p> <p>Family Limits, Primary¹³: \$523-\$137,978/statewide \$20,000-\$41,577/Senate candidate \$12,500-\$17,061/Assembly candidate</p> <p>Regular Limits, General: \$41,100/statewide candidate \$10,300/Senate candidate \$4,100/Assembly candidate</p> <p>Family Limits, General: \$278,609/statewide candidate \$30,079-\$57,304/Senate candidate \$12,500-\$24,871/Assembly candidate</p> <p><i>Amounts are per election cycle.</i></p> <p>Maximum contributions by an individual limited to \$150,000 in the aggregate per calendar year.</p>	<p>Prohibited in primary election Unlimited in general election</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	<p>Same as individual limits, with exceptions (see below)</p> <p>Corporations are limited to \$5,000 per year in aggregate contributions to N.Y. state candidates and committees.</p> <p>Candidates may accept corporate contributions of up to \$5,000 annually during each year of an election cycle, so long as the total contributions from the corporation do not exceed the election cycle's regular limits on individual contributions, and the corporation does not exceed its aggregate limit of \$5,000/ year to all candidates and committees.</p>	<p>Same as individual limits</p>	

Continued on next page

¹² Limit is based on a formula: product of number of enrolled voters in candidate's party in state (excluding voters on inactive status) x \$.005, but not less than \$6,500 or more than \$19,700

¹³ Separate limits apply for contributions from all family members in the aggregate. Limit is based on a formula: total # of enrolled voters on active status in candidate's party in the state/district x \$0.025. "Family" is defined as a child, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, and the spouses of those persons. Contributions from the candidate and the candidate's spouse are not limited.

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
North Carolina^e N.C.G.S. § 163-278.13, 163-278.15 and 163-278.19	\$5,000/candidate/election ^a	Unlimited	Same as individual limits	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
North Dakota § 16.1-08.1	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
Ohio^e O.R.C. § 3517.102, 3517.104 and 3599.03	\$12,532.52/candidate/election ^a	\$706,823.95/statewide candidate \$140,988.82/Senate candidate \$70,181.10/House candidate In-kind contributions unlimited <i>All amounts are per election^a</i>	Same as individual limits	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
Oklahoma 21 OS § 187.1 et seq. and Ethics Commission Rules §257.1-1-1 et seq. and §257.10-1-2 et seq.	\$2,700/candidate/campaign	\$50,000/gubernatorial candidate ^{l4} \$25,000/other statewide candidate ^m \$1,000/legislative candidate <i>All amounts per calendar year</i>	\$5,000/candidate/campaign	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
Oregon O.R.S. § 260.160 to 174	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Pennsylvania 25 Pa. Stat. §3253	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Prohibited ^d	Prohibited ^d
Rhode Island R.I.G.L. § 17-25-10.1	\$1,000/candidate/year Individuals limited to \$10,000 in aggregate contributions to candidates, PACs and party committees per year	\$25,000/candidate/year In-kind contributions unlimited	\$1,000/candidate/year Annual aggregate limit of \$25,000 to all recipients	Prohibited	Prohibited

Continued on next page

¹⁴ While these limits are specified in Oklahoma's Ethics Rules, statutes have not been changed to reflect this limit. According to the statutes, any contribution in excess of \$5,000 would constitute a criminal violation.

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
South Carolina S.C. Code § 8-13-1300(10), 8-13-1314 and 8-13-1316	\$3,500/statewide candidate \$1,000/legislative candidate <i>Amounts are per election^o in each primary, runoff, or special election in which a candidate has opposition and for each general election; if a candidate remains unopposed during an election cycle, one contribution limit shall apply.</i>	\$50,000/statewide candidate \$5,000/other candidate <i>Amounts are per election^o subject to the same exceptions described at left.</i>	\$11,500/statewide candidate \$7,600/legislative candidate	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
South Dakota S.D.C.L. § 12-27-7	\$4,000/statewide candidate \$1,000/legislative candidate <i>Amounts are per calendar year</i>	Unlimited	Unlimited	Prohibited ^o	Prohibited ^o
Tennessee^e Tenn. Code § 2-10-302	\$3,800/statewide candidate \$1,500/legislative candidate <i>Both amounts are per election^o</i>	Candidates limited to aggregate amount from all political party committees: \$374,300/statewide candidate \$59,900/Senate candidate \$30,000/House candidate <i>All amounts are per election^o</i>	\$11,200/statewide candidate \$11,200/Senate candidate \$7,400/other candidates No more than 50% of a statewide candidate's or \$112,300 of a legislative candidate's total contributions may come from PACs <i>All amounts are per election^o</i>	Same as PAC limits if a corporation gives more than \$250 in the aggregate to candidates, it must register as a PAC and make all further contributions through the PAC. It may transfer unlimited amounts from its corporate treasury to the PAC.	Same as PAC limits A union must register as a PAC before making contributions to candidates.
Texas Election Code: § 253	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Prohibited ^o	Prohibited ^o
Utah Utah Code § 20A-11-101	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited

Continued on next page

	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
Vermont ^b 17 VSA §2805	\$4,000/statewide candidate \$1,500/State Senate \$1,000/State House	Unlimited	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits
Virginia Va. Code § 24.2-945	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Washington ^c RCW § 42.17.610 et seq. WAC § 390-05-400	\$1,900/gubernatorial candidate \$950/legislative candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i> During the 21 days before the general election, no contributor may donate more than \$50,000 in the aggregate to a statewide candidate or \$5,000 in the aggregate to any other candidate or a political committee, including political party committees. This includes a candidate's personal contributions to his/her campaign. The state committees of political parties are exempted from this limit.	Aggregate contributions from a state party central committee to a statewide or legislative candidate may not exceed \$.80 x number of registered voters in candidate's district. This limit applies to the entire election cycle.	Same as individual limits A PAC that has not received contributions of \$10 or more from 10 or more WA registered voters during the past 180 days is prohibited from making contributions.	Prohibited for corporations not doing business in Washington state. Same as individual limits for Washington corporations.	Prohibited for unions that have fewer than 10 members who reside in Washington. Same as individual limits for Washington unions.
West Virginia § 3-8-8 to 12	\$1,000/candidate/election ^a	Same as individual limits	Same as individual limits	Prohibited ^d	Same as individual limits

Continued on next page

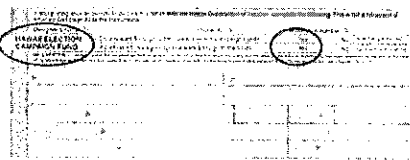
	Individual → Candidate Contributions	State Party → Candidate Contributions	PAC → Candidate Contributions	Corporate → Candidate Contributions	Union → Candidate Contributions
<p>Wisconsin § 11.01 et seq.</p>	<p>\$10,000/statewide candidate \$1,000/Senate candidate \$500/Assembly candidate <i>Amounts are per election cycle</i></p> <p>An individual may not contribute more than \$10,000 in a calendar year to any combination of Wisconsin candidates or political committees.</p>	<p>Aggregate limit on amount candidates may accept from all political party committees, including legislative campaign committees, in an election campaign :</p> <p>\$700,830/gubernatorial candidate \$22,425/Senate candidate \$11,213/House candidate</p> <p>Additionally, the maximum amount a legislative campaign committee can give without reducing committee contributions is: \$6,900/Senate candidate \$3,450/Assembly candidate <i>Amounts are per election cycle</i></p>	<p>\$43,128/gubernatorial candidate \$1,000/Senate candidate \$500/Assembly candidate</p> <p>Aggregate limit on amount candidates may accept from PACs and candidate committees (grants from the Wisconsin Election Campaign Fund also count against this limit):</p> <p>\$485,190/gubernatorial candidate \$15,525/Senate candidate \$7,763/House candidate <i>Amounts are per election cycle</i></p>	<p>Prohibited</p>	<p>Prohibited</p>
<p>Wyoming Wyo. Stat. § 22-25-102</p>	<p>Effective 2013-2014: \$1,000/candidate/election^a</p> <p>Effective Jan. 1, 2015: \$2,500/statewide candidate \$1,500/other candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p> <p>No individual may make more than \$25,000 (increases to \$50,000 eff. Jan. 1, 2015) in total contributions during a two-year election cycle.</p>	<p>Unlimited</p>	<p>Effective 2013-2014: Unlimited</p> <p>Effective Jan. 1, 2015: \$7,500/statewide candidate \$3,000/other candidate <i>Amounts are per election^a</i></p>	<p>Prohibited^d</p>	<p>Prohibited^d</p>

- (a) Primary and general are considered separate elections; stated amount may be contributed in each election.
- (b) Candidates participating in the public financing may not accept contributions after qualifying for public funds. Limits listed are for candidates not participating in public financing program.
- (c) Direct corporate and/or union contributions are prohibited and/or use of treasury funds and/or dues is prohibited. In these states, the law specifically says that nothing prevents the employees or officers of a corporation from making political contributions through a PAC, using funds from an account that is separate and segregated from corporate accounts. Such contributions are subject to the same limitations placed on other PACs.
- (d) Contribution limits are adjusted for inflation at the beginning of each campaign cycle.

OVERVIEW OF STATE LAWS ON PUBLIC FINANCING

During the 1907 State of the Union Address, President Theodore Roosevelt stated "The need for collecting large campaign funds would vanish if Congress provided an appropriation for the proper and legitimate expenses of each of the great national parties." Public financing of elections, he believed, would ensure that no particular donor has an outsized influence on the outcome of any election, and would "work a substantial improvement in our system of conducting a campaign."

Public financing of campaigns remains the least-used method of regulating money in elections, partly due to the result of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Buckley v. Valeo*. In that decision, the Court struck down a provision of the Federal Election Commission mandating public financing for presidential elections. States cannot require candidates to use public financing programs, and the financial advantages of private fundraising frequently prompt candidates to opt out of public financing programs, which often include expenditure limits for participants. Candidates who opt not to use public funds can solicit contributions from individuals, PACs, unions, parties, and corporations, without having to abide by state expenditure limits.



For states that elect to provide a public financing options, money is available for either individual candidates or political parties. This page provides information on both options, with examples of how the public financing option influenced a campaign.

Public Financing for Candidates

Today, 13 states provide some form of public financing option for campaigns. Each of these plans require the candidate to accept public money for his or her campaign in exchange for a promise to limit both how much the candidate spends on the election and how much they receive in donations from any one group or individual. This chart contains additional details on these 13 states.

These options are frequently limited, applying only to certain types of candidates.

Governor/Lieutenant Governor	State Legislative Offices	State Supreme Court/Other
Arizona	Arizona	New Mexico
Connecticut	Connecticut	West Virginia
Florida	Hawaii	
Hawaii	Maine	
Maine	Minnesota	
Maryland		
Massachusetts		
Michigan		
Minnesota		
Rhode Island		
Vermont		

The two main types of programs states offer for public financing of elections are the clean elections programs offered in states such as Maine and Arizona, and programs that provide a candidate with matching funds for each qualifying contribution they receive. The "clean election states" offer full funding for the campaign, and the matching funds programs provide a candidate with a portion of the funds needed to run the campaign.

Clean Elections Programs

In the clean elections programs offered only in Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, candidates are encouraged to collect small contributions (no more than \$5) from a number of individuals (depending on the position sought) to demonstrate that he or she has enough public support to warrant public funding of his or her campaign. In return, the commission established for the program gives the candidate a sum of money equal to the expenditure limit set for the election. New Mexico offers a similar program, but only for judicial candidates.

As an example of a clean elections program, a candidate for state office in Arizona must raise \$5 contributions from at least 200 people in order to qualify for the program. In return, the state provides the candidate with public money in an amount equal to the expenditure limit. In the 2014 election, the expenditure limit for gubernatorial candidates was \$1,130,424, and the limit for legislative positions was \$22,880.

Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, who declined participation in the clean elections program, raised \$2.4 million for his 2014 campaign, more than double the amount authorized for the program's participants.

The program is funded through a 10 percent surcharge on all civil penalties and criminal fees, civil penalties paid by the candidates, and the qualifying contributions the candidate raised.

Matching Funds Programs

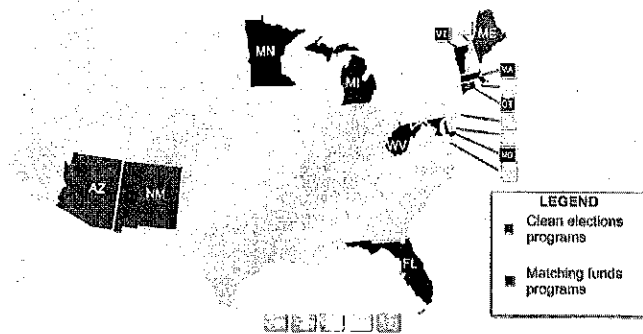
The other type of public financing program, offered in states such as Florida and Hawaii, provide matching funds for candidates up to a certain amount. In Hawaii, candidates are encouraged to limit their contributions and expenditures to an amount set by the legislature. For the 2014 election, the expenditure limit for the general election was \$1,597,208. The candidate who participates in the matching funds program is eligible to receive 10 percent of this limit in public funds, or \$159,721. A candidate must first receive \$100,000 in qualifying contributions during the primary season for the state to provide a matching \$100,000 during the general election. The candidate can then raise an additional \$59,721 in qualifying contributions that the state will match, for a total of \$319,442. The candidate can then raise additional money from other sources, like PACs, parties, or individuals, to reach the expenditure limit of \$1,597,208.

For example, Hawaii governor David Ige received \$105,164.73 in public funds for his 2014 gubernatorial campaign, and spent the maximum of \$1,597,208 during the general election. His challenger, Duke Aiona, who elected to not participate in the public financing program, spent \$1,532,306.65 on his unsuccessful election. Mr. Aiona, like all candidates, had to comply with the state's contribution limits, but did not have to worry about collecting the smaller qualifying contributions from many different sources.

The program is funded through a tax return checkoff, whereby citizens choose whether they want to contribute three dollars from their tax burden to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund.

The public financing method of regulating money in elections has been the subject of several U.S. Supreme Court cases. To see how judicial decisions impact public financing, go to NCSL's web page on the effect of the courts on campaign finance.

The map below shows the states that have a public financing system in place, and which kind is available.



Public Financing for Parties

Some states provide public monies for political parties, to help fund conventions and other party activities such as voter registration drives. Currently, Alabama, Arizona, Iowa, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina*, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Utah* allow taxpayers to “check-off” a box on their return indicating a desire to contribute to the state's political parties. The amounts range from \$1 to \$25.

Iowa statute I.C.A. § 68A.601 provides an example of a tax check-off plan for political parties, whereby any person whose tax liability for the year is \$1.50 or more can send \$1.50 to the Iowa election campaign fund when they submit their tax return.

*The House of Representatives in North Carolina (HB 589) and Utah (HB 50) have passed bills eliminating the checkoff provision. These bills have not yet been passed by the Senates. Kentucky recently eliminated a similar program.

Additional Resources

- NCSL's Chart on State Public Financing Options
 - For more information on other ways states regulate campaign finance, see the page on Disclosure and Reporting Requirements and the page on Contribution Limits.
- Campaign Finance Helpful Links
NCSL's 2015 Database of Campaign Finance Legislation

About This Project

The content for this webpage was created by Brian Cruikshank from William and Mary Law School, in coordination with NCSL's staff.

If you don't find the information you need, please contact our elections team at 303-364-7700 or elections-info@ncsl.org. NCSL staff can do specialized searches for legislators and legislative staff.

NCSL Member Toolbox

Members Resources

- Get Involved With NCSL
- Jobs Clearinghouse
- Legislative Careers
- NCSL Staff Directories
- Staff Directories
- StateConnect Directory

Policy & Research Resources

- Bill Information Service
- Legislative Websites
- NCSL Bookstore
- State Legislatures Magazine

Accessibility Support

- Tel: 1-800-659-2666 or 711
- Accessibility Support
- Accessibility Policy

Meeting Resources

- Calendar
- Online Registration

Press Room

- Media Contact
- NCSL in the News
- Press Releases

Denver

7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Tel: 303-364-7700 | Fax: 303-364-7800

Washington

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 516
Washington, D.C. 20001
Tel: 202-624-6400 | Fax: 202-737-1069



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES
The Forum for America's Ideas

State Public Financing Options 2015-2016 Election Cycle

State	Who qualifies?	Amount a Candidate Can Raise from a Single Source	Number of Contributions Needed to Qualify	Promise	Funding Level
Arizona 16 AZ ST Ch. 6, Art. 2	All statewide and legislative offices	\$5	200	No contributions from PACs, labor unions, corporations, or political parties	full
Connecticut C.G.S.A. § 9-157	All statewide and legislative offices	\$5-\$10	From 150 (state representative) to 900 (governor)	No contributions in excess of \$100 from any one source, give any excess contributions to the general fund	full
Florida West's F.S.A. §106.30	Governor and Cabinet members	\$250	600 (governor) to 400 (cabinet)	Limit expenditures to \$2/registered voter for governor and \$1/registered voter for cabinet, limit loans and contributions from political parties	partial
Hawaii HRS § 11-421	Governor, Mayor, Prosecutor, County Council, State legislative offices	\$100	From 15 (state representative) to 1,000 (governor)	Limit expenditures to numbers found in HRS § 11-423	partial
Maine 21-A.M.R.S.A. § 1121	Governor, State Senate, State House	\$5	60-3,250 individuals	After choosing to participate, candidates cannot receive private contributions	full

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
 Last updated July 17, 2015
 This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State	Who qualifies?	Amount a Candidate Can Raise from a Single Source	Number of Contributions Needed to Qualify	Promise	Funding Level
Maryland MD Code, Election Law, § 15-103	Governor, Lieutenant Governor	\$250	Must raise 10 percent of the maximum campaign expenditure limit	Must not exceed the maximum campaign expenditure limit; repay funds not used	partial
Massachusetts M.G.L.A. 55C § 1	Statewide offices	\$250	500	Must agree to spending limits, not solicit outside contributions	partial
Michigan M.C.L.A. 169.261	Governor	\$100	750	Spend no more than \$2 million on the election, can only make qualified expenditures	partial
Minnesota M.S.A. § 10A.31	Statewide and legislative offices	\$50	From 30 (state representative) to 70 (governor)	Agree to spend no more than a specific amount, listed in Minn. Stat. § 290.06, subd. 23	partial
New Mexico N. M. S. A. 1978, §1-19A-10	Public Regulation Commissioner, Supreme Court Justices	\$100	For statewide, need contributions from 1/10 of 1 percent of voters in state, for public regulation, need contributions from 1/10 of 1 percent of voters in the district	Agree to spending requirements and not to raise money from other sources	Full
Rhode Island Gen. Laws 1956, §17-25-18	Statewide Offices	\$500	1,500	Agrees to only spend the money raised through public matching, and agrees to expenditure limits	partial
Vermont 17 V.S.A. § 2981	Governor/Lieutenant Governor	\$50	750 (lieutenant governor) to 1,500 (governor)	Agrees to solicit no donations except qualifying contributions	partial

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
Last updated July 17, 2015
This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

State	Who qualifies?	Amount a Candidate Can Raise from a Single Source	Number of Contributions Needed to Qualify	Promise	Funding Level
West Virginia W. Va. Code, §3-12-1	Supreme Court Justices	\$100	350-500	Agrees to contribution and expenditure requirements, must not have raised more than \$20,000 before applying for public financing	partial

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures

Last updated July 17, 2015

This data is presented for information purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.