



Judicial Candidate Seminar 2023-2024

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GETTING STARTED

- Pick a Treasurer and File a Designation of Treasurer
 - Accept and deposit contributions
 - Monitor and record all activity
 - File reports and gather/retain records (6 years)
 - Understand the liability



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Next Steps

- Open a Bank Account
 - Separate from any personal or business account
 - Checking with debit card is acceptable
 - Interest reported as Other Income
 - Restrict signing authority
 - IRS Tax ID number – sometimes required
 - Retain all statements (6 years)



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REPORTING: WHEN TO FILE FILING DATES & COVERAGE

- Election Related Filings (Primary, General, Special)
 - Pre-Election Report
 - Filed 12th day before, covers activity through the 20th day before
 - Post-Election Report
 - Filed 38th day after, covers activity through the 31st day after
- Non-Election Related Filings
 - Semiannual – Judicial Candidates do NOT need to file this
 - Filed the last business day of July, covers activity through the end of June
 - Annual – filed for years when the candidate was not on the ballot
 - Filed the last business day of January, covers activity through the end of December

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OHIO CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING CALENDAR 2024

See [Ohio Revised Code §3517.10](#) for complete details of the timing and requirements for most campaign finance reporting.

2023 Annual ¹	Jan. 31, 2024 to report activity through Dec. 31, 2023
Pre-Primary	March 7, 2024 to report activity through Feb. 28, 2024
Post-Primary	April 26, 2024 to report activity through April 19, 2024
Semiannual ²	July 31, 2024 to report activity through June 30, 2024
Pre-General	Oct. 24, 2024 to report activity through Oct. 16, 2024
Post-General	Dec. 13, 2024 to report activity through Dec. 6, 2024
2024 Annual	Jan. 31, 2025 to report activity through Dec. 31, 2024

This is based on the following 2024 election dates:
2024 Primary - March 19, 2024 | 2024 General - Nov. 5, 2024
Activity related to special elections may require reporting on different dates. Filing entities submitting reports to a county board of elections should contact the board for special election dates and filing deadlines not included on this calendar.

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REPORTING: WHERE TO FILE

- Filing location varies based on office being sought
 - File at Secretary of State for:
 - Supreme Court
 - Court of Appeals
 - File at Local Board of Elections for:
 - County Office – Common Pleas
 - Municipal Office – Municipal Court

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REPORTING: HOW TO FILE

- Filers with a Board of Elections
 - **Permissive** electronic filing for all local filing entities
 - See BOefile.OhioSoS.gov
- Filers with the Secretary of State
 - **Required*** electronic filing if total contributions or expenditures exceed \$10,000 during a reporting period
 - See www.OhioSoS.gov

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REPORTING: WHAT TO FILE

- Money in
 - Contributions, Other Income, Loan Activity
- Money out
 - Expenditures related to:
 - Influencing the results of an election, charitable donations, and duties of public office
- Non-monetary activity
 - In-kind contributions and debt activity

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CONTRIBUTIONS -

- Individuals 7 years and older – cannot be anonymous
- Political Action Committees and Political Contributing Entities
- Business entities
 - Corporations are NOT permitted to give directly
 - LLCs, LPs, LLPs, LPAs, PAs
 - Attribution not required for judicial candidates
- Fundraising Events use separate forms (Form 31-E & 31-F)
- Contribution Limits & Cash Contributions
 - Only \$100 in cash per contributor per election

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JUDICIAL CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

CONTRIBUTION LIMITS
Effective for 2021 Election Cycle and
Subsequent Election Cycles

CANDIDATE FOR:	INDIVIDUAL		ORGANIZATION		POLITICAL PARTY	
	Primary*	General	Primary*	General	Primary*	General
Supreme Court Chief Justice and Justice	\$4,100	\$4,100	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$203,900	\$373,900
Court of Appeals	\$1,400	\$1,400	\$4,100	\$4,100	\$40,800	\$81,700
Common Municipal, and County Court more than 750,000	Pleas, \$650	\$650	\$4,100	\$4,100	\$40,800	\$81,700
750,000 or less	\$650	\$650	\$4,100	\$4,100	\$34,000	\$67,900

*Primary limits apply only if the judicial candidate has a contested primary. If there is no contested primary, the general election limits apply throughout the permissible fundraising period.

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REPORTING CONTRIBUTIONS

- Each Contribution Entry must have the following details:
 - Complete name of Contributor
 - Address
 - Date Received
 - Amount Received
 - Employer (or if self-employed, Occupation & Business Name)
 - For Supreme Court candidates, required for contributions over \$100 by individual
 - Form (cash, check, credit card)
- Loans are reported on a separate form that is filed with each report until the loan is forgiven or paid off

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EXPENDITURES

- Verification required for any expenditure over \$25
 - Cancelled checks, paid receipts/invoices, or bank statements showing vendor, date, and amount paid
- Reimbursements are allowable for candidates and any volunteers for permissible prior expenses incurred
 - Submit mileage log and copy of reimbursed receipts along with the cancelled check

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REPORTING EXPENDITURES

- Each expenditure entry must include:
 - Complete Name of Payee
 - Street Address (except for banks & post offices)
 - Date
 - Amount
 - Detailed Purpose

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NON-MONETARY ACTIVITY: IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

- An In-Kind Contribution is a non-monetary contribution of goods or services
- Made in coordination or cooperation with the candidate committee
- Reported on Form 31-J-1 (In-Kind Contributions Received)
- Value of item or service should be fair market value
- Counts toward Contribution Limits

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AFTER FILING A REPORT

- Examined by Secretary of State or Board of Elections
 - Examined for compliance
 - Any issues are communicated in writing – 21 days to respond
- Responding to an Examination
 - Providing additional documentation
 - Amending original report
 - When incomplete or inaccurate
 - Reporting in current period
 - Voided expenditures, NSF returned contributions, refunds for contributions that should not have been accepted

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TOP 10 REPORTING ERRORS

- Missing Data – addresses, dates, other empty fields
- Missing Expenditure verification – canceled checks or paid receipts
- Direct corporate contributions
- Cover page balances not calculated correctly
- Cash Contributions over \$100
- Improper use of fund-raiser itemization exemption
- Vague purpose reported for expenditures
- Reporting in the wrong period
- Failure to use correct balance brought forward
- Unverified reimbursements

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DISCLAIMERS

- Must include "Paid for by [Committee Name]"
- Must be conspicuously placed
- Must be included on all items unless an exemption exists or is granted in writing by the Secretary of State
 - OAC 111:2-4-18 has a list of automatically exempted items; all other exemption requests can be made to the Secretary of State
- Social Media

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QUESTIONS?

- SOS Campaign Finance Division
 - (614) 466-3111
 - CFinance@OhioSoS.gov (for questions and disclaimer exemption requests)
 - CFforms@OhioSoS.gov (to submit forms)
- Contact Alexis Palumbo- Campaign Finance Administrator & Counsel
 - (614) 466-3111
 - APalumbo@OhioSoS.gov
- Contact Heather Moore-Kester- Campaign Finance Deputy Administrator
 - (614) 696-8759
 - HMooreke@OhioSoS.gov

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