



STATE OF MICHIGAN
RUTH JOHNSON, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

Michigan Campaign Finance Act Getting Started as a Candidate

December 16, 2011

If you are running for a federal office (President, US Senate, US Congress) you must file with the Federal Elections Commission for campaign finance requirements; Go to: www.fec.gov for more information.

If you are running for a State Level Office or Local Office, you are required to file under Michigan's Campaign Finance Act. (Exceptions: Precinct Delegate and certain school board offices)

1. Determine your filing official:
 - If you are running for a State Level or Judicial office, you file with the [Bureau of Elections](#).
 - If you are running for a local office, you file with your local [County Clerk's Office](#).
2. State filers: Read the [memorandum](#) sent by the Bureau of Elections covering the requirements for 2012
3. Regardless of whom you will file with, fill out and file the [Statement of Organization](#) to register the committee. You will receive a committee ID number to use on all of your filings and documents; make sure your mailing address is kept up to date so you receive all of the mail sent to you. File on time as late fees apply.
4. Pick a responsible and detail oriented treasurer; the duties of the Treasurer are substantial and are covered in [Appendix A](#).
5. Read the [Candidate Committee Manual and Appendices](#).
6. Learn about [contributions](#) and [expenditures](#) and what you will be required to report for contributors and vendors used during the campaign
7. Apply for the [Reporting Waiver](#) if you do not expect to spend or receive in excess of \$1000.00 per election.
8. Know what you are required to file the [filing deadlines](#); avoid late filing fees, file on time!
9. Understand the Electronic Filing requirements for State Level Filers. Go to www.mertsplus.com and the [Bureau Web Site](#) for more information.
10. Review and understand the [paper Campaign Statement Forms](#) if you are not required to file electronically.
11. Be aware of [Late Contribution Reporting](#) as late filing fees are substantial.
12. Know the Contribution Limits for your committee.
13. Know what contributions are prohibited as listed in [Appendix O](#) and [Appendix I](#).

14. Monitor your records [on line](#) if you file with the Bureau of Elections: Enter your Committee ID to track your activity. If you file with the County Clerk, contact their offices for information on your committee records.
15. Don't forget to put Identifiers on your publications as explained in [Appendix J](#).
16. Attend Trainings: The Bureau of Elections will be conducting [trainings](#) in Lansing on the Michigan Campaign Finance Act and MERTS Electronic Filing Program. Go to www.mertplus.com to sign up for [MERTS Trainings](#) in Lansing, take [online training](#) and view the [User Guide](#).
17. Book mark these two web pages and read the material on them: [Candidate Committee Information](#) and [General Information on the MCFA](#).
18. Read the notices sent and check your PO and mail boxes daily – contact us is you have any questions or concerns: Disclosure@michigan.gov or 517-373-2540 or if appropriate, contact your [County Clerk's Office](#). Follow us on Twitter @MichCFR.
19. Successful candidates may be required to file the [Post Election Campaign Finance Compliance Affidavit](#).
20. Dissolve the committee when the campaign is over. If you are not successful in your bid, you must gain a [Reporting Waiver](#), continue to file campaign statements or [dissolve](#) the committee. Don't let fees accrue; work with us to wrap up the committee.

If you have any questions, please phone us at (517) 373-2540 or write us at the address indicated below. The address below should also be used to mail your filing by first class mail, registered mail or certified mail.

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Follow us on Twitter @MichCFR

If you would like to visit our office or use an overnight delivery service, the address below is provided.

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