

# Candidate “Quick Guide” on Campaign Finance Reporting in Oregon



Secretary of State Elections Division

## **Where and how do I start?**

Congratulations on your decision to run for office! We hope this guide provides tips and answers to frequently asked questions by first-time candidates. More detailed information is available in the Campaign Finance Manual and the ORESTAR User’s Manual.

## **Who files disclosure reports?**

<b>IF YOU</b>	<b>THEN</b>
Serve as your own treasurer <b>and</b> Do not have an existing candidate committee <b>and</b> Do not expect to spend or receive more than \$300 during the entire calendar year (including personal funds)	Relax. No action is necessary.
Do not expect to receive a total of more than \$2,000 or spend a total of more than \$2,000 for the entire calendar year	File a Statement of Organization using ORESTAR or by paper Establish a dedicated campaign account and file a Campaign Account Information form File a Certificate of Limited Contributions and Expenditures
Expect to spend or receive more than \$2,000	Register the committee in the Secretary of State’s ORESTAR System File a Statement of Organization Establish a dedicated campaign account and file a Campaign Account Information form

## **Important Information if Filing a Statement of Organization**

**What starts the whole process?** The decision to run for an office, spending money on your candidacy and accepting campaign contributions.

**Once I become a candidate, then what?** You must register your committee with the Secretary of State:

- within 3 business days of first receiving a contribution or making an expenditure;
- and**
- no later than the deadline for filing a nominating petition, declaration of candidacy or certificate of nomination.

**Keeping Books** The key to complying with campaign contribution and expenditure disclosure requirements is to keep detailed records and file your transactions on time.

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<b>Electronic Filing</b>	<p>Oregon law requires that campaign finance activities be filed electronically. The Secretary of State’s Office provides an electronic filing system, ORESTAR, free of charge. There is a terminal located in the Elections’ Division office for the public to use free of charge.</p> <p>Obtain the ORESTAR User’s Manual for instructions on creating a committee. The manual is also available online at <a href="http://www.oregonvotes.org">www.oregonvotes.org</a> under the heading <i>Publications and Forms</i>.</p>
<b>What if I don’t own a computer?</b>	<p>A Statement of Organization (SEL 220), Campaign Account Information (SEL 223) and Certificates of Limited Contributions and Expenditures (PC 7) may be filed via paper forms.</p> <p>Contributions and expenditures must be reported electronically. You may want to check with your local library or other public facilities in your area to see if they provide a computer terminal for public use.</p>
<b>Must I have a dedicated campaign account?</b>	<p>Oregon law requires that you establish a dedicated campaign account if you expect to spend or receive more than \$300 during the calendar year. The account must be established in a financial institution located in Oregon that ordinarily conducts business with the general public in Oregon.</p> <p><b>One important reminder</b>—when establishing your campaign account, the name of the committee and the name of the account must be the same.</p>
<b>Are there limits on campaign contributions and expenditures?</b>	<p>Oregon does not have contribution and expenditure limits.</p>
<b>When do I report contributions and expenditures?</b>	<p>Contributions and expenditures are reported on a transaction-basis. Generally, a transaction is due no later than 30 calendar days after the date of the transaction. For committees active in an election, these dates will change. The campaign finance reporting requirements and additional transaction deadlines are available in the Campaign Finance Manual. Information on how to electronically file transactions is detailed in the ORESTAR User’s Manual.</p>
<b>Are my campaign finance activities public record?</b>	<p>Yes. Most transactions are public record and available on our website, except transactions when the contributor or payee’s calendar year aggregate is \$100 or under.</p>
<b>May I serve as my own treasurer?</b>	<p>Yes, you may serve as your own treasurer. The Campaign Finance Manual provides committees with information on candidate/treasurer responsibilities.</p>
<b>How do I discontinue my committee?</b>	<p>In order to discontinue your committee, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ File all transactions to achieve a zero balance</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li>→ file a Statement of Organization discontinuing the committee</li> </ul>
<b>Where do I get copies of forms and instruction manuals?</b>	<p>All publications are available online at <a href="http://www.oregonvotes.org">www.oregonvotes.org</a>, or may be requested from the Secretary of State’s Office at <b>503 986 1518</b>.</p>
<b>Need additional help?</b>	<p>The Elections Division staff is available to answer any questions. You may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ email your questions to <a href="mailto:elections.sos@state.or.us">elections.sos@state.or.us</a></li> <li>→ call us at <b>503 986 1518</b> or at <b>866 ORE VOTES</b></li> <li>→ visit our web site at <a href="http://www.oregonvotes.org">www.oregonvotes.org</a></li> </ul>

