

What are campaign finance reports?

Campaign finance reports list any contributions you collect and expenditures you make as a candidate. You must submit these reports on a continuing basis from the time you file to run for office until your candidacy ends. Campaign finance reports are public records and available to view on LeonVotes.gov.

When are reports due?

State law sets a strict schedule of due dates for campaign finance reports. Initially, reports are due monthly. Closer to the election, reports are due biweekly after the qualifying period, and then weekly just before the election. When your campaign ends, you must file a final termination report. This report shows how you disposed of any remaining campaign funds. It is due 90 days after the date your candidacy ends. The full schedule of due dates can be found at LeonVotes.gov.

What happens if I file reports late?

You may be fined if you file a late report. Fines must be paid using your personal funds, not campaign funds. These fines can become expensive. The amounts are based on how late the report was filed and the amount of funds reported.

How do I file my reports?

You must file campaign finance reports through the online system on LeonVotes.gov. Our office will issue your credentials to access the online system after you file to run for office.

You must enter any contributions or expenditures that fall within the reporting period. You must submit a waiver if you have no contributions or expenditures during a reporting period.

What if my reports are incomplete or contain errors?

You are responsible for filing complete and accurate campaign finance reports in compliance with all election laws. If your campaign finance report is incomplete, or contains errors, our office will notify you of the issue. You will then need to file an amended report fixing any issues.

How can I avoid reporting errors?

If you have any questions, contact our office to ask for assistance.

- File reports on time. Begin working on reports early and keep track of deadlines.
- Gather required information from all contributors, including name, address, and occupation. List accurate descriptions of the occupation when required.
- List each individual contributor separately.
- Know the contribution limit per contributor per election. Do not accept contributions which exceed the limit.
- Maintain a positive campaign account balance. Total contributions must exceed total expenditures.
- Use campaign funds directly from the campaign account to make purchases. Be careful when using petty cash or reimbursements.



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How to Run for Local Office



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Running for Local Office

The following information is provided for general reference and does not constitute legal advice. Interested parties should refer to the Florida Statutes and applicable case law.

Who is a candidate?

A candidate is anyone interested in running for office who seeks to appear on the ballot or to receive write-in votes. Candidates collect campaign contributions to pay for campaign expenditures and appoint a person or themselves to serve as their treasurer of campaign funds. Candidates must first file to run for office, then qualify to seek nomination or election to office.

Can I announce that I want to run for office before filing any paperwork?

You may announce your intention to become a candidate before filing any paperwork. However, you cannot open a campaign bank account, collect contributions, make expenditures, or collect petitions until you officially file to run for office.

How do I file to become a candidate?

First, you must file the Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository (Form DS-DE 9). This form lists your candidate information, including the office you seek, your political party affiliation (as appropriate), the bank that will hold your campaign account, and the name of your campaign treasurer. Upon filing this form, you become a filed candidate. You may then open a campaign account, collect contributions, make expenditures, and collect petitions.

Next, you must file the Statement of Candidate (Form DS-DE 84) within 10 days of filing Form DS-DE 9. This form affirms you have read and understand Florida campaign finance laws and rules.

