Campaign Finance Reporting in Oregon

Candidate "Quick Guide"

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 Manuals** available at www.oregonvotes.gov. The Campaign Finance Manual explains what information is disclosed when reporting campaign finance transactions. The ORESTAR User's Manual: Statement of Organization and ORESTAR User's Manual: Transaction Filing explains how to file a statement of organization and campaign finance transactions electronically using ORESTAR.

Who Must File a Candidate Committee?

If you	Then
→ Serve as your own treasurer **and** → Do not have an existing candidate committee **and** → Do not expect to spend or receive more than $750 during the entire calendar year (including in-kind contributions and personal funds)	✓ Relax. No action is necessary because under Oregon Election Law you are not required to establish a candidate committee if you meet all of the criteria. **However, you must keep track of all contributions and expenditures because if you exceed the $750 threshold you must establish a committee and open a dedicated bank account not later than three business days after exceeding the threshold. NOTE: Any fee paid for filing a candidate's statement for inclusion in the state voters' pamphlet is not included for the purpose of calculating the $750 threshold. Additionally, you must either file a Certificate of Limited Contributions and Expenditures (PC 7) or all transactions that have occurred in the calendar year. See information below to determine if you are eligible to file a Certificate.**
→ Do not expect to receive a total of more than $3,500 or spend a total of more than $3,500 for the entire calendar year	✓ File a Statement of Organization and establish a dedicated bank account – either by using ORESTAR or by submitting the paper form Statement of Organization for Candidate Committee (SEL 220) ✓ File a Certificate of Limited Contributions and Expenditures either by using ORESTAR or by submitting the paper form (PC 7) not later than seven days after first receiving a contribution or making an expenditure
→ Expect to spend or receive more than $3,500	✓ File a Statement of Organization and establish a dedicated bank account – either by using ORESTAR or by submitting the paper form Statement of Organization for Candidate Committee (SEL 220) ✓ File campaign finance transactions using ORESTAR

What starts the whole process?

The decision to run for a public office (even if the office is not known), accepting contributions and making expenditures, whether from personal funds, campaign funds, or another person's funds to support your candidacy.

Once I become a candidate, then what?

You must register your committee with the Secretary of State not later than 3 business days of first receiving a contribution or making an expenditure if you are not exempt under the $750 threshold law.

May I serve as my own treasurer?

Yes, you may serve as your own treasurer. The Campaign Finance Manual provides committees with information on candidate/treasurer responsibilities.

Must I have a dedicated campaign account?

Oregon law requires you to establish a dedicated campaign account if you are required to file a Statement of Organization. The account must be established in a financial institution located in Oregon that ordinarily conducts business in Oregon. One important reminder—when establishing your campaign account, the name of the committee and the name of the account must be the same.

Campaign Finance Reporting in Oregon (cont.)

Candidate "Quick Guide"

How do I file?

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

Electronic Filing

Oregon Election law requires that campaign finance transactions 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 Election's Division office for public use.

What if I don't own a computer?

A Statement of Organization (SEL 220) and Certificate of Limited Contributions and Expenditures (PC 7) may be filed using the paper forms. If you are not eligible to file a Certificate, contribution and expenditure transactions must be reported electronically using ORESTAR. 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.

When do I report contribution and expenditures?

Generally, the deadline for filing a transaction is not later than 30 calendar days after the date of the transaction. For committees active in an election, beginning on the 42nd day before the date of the election and through the date of the election, a transaction is due not later than 7 calendar days after the date of the transaction. 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: Transaction Filing.

Are my campaign finance transactions public record?

Yes, after the transactions are filed in ORESTAR they are immediately available to the public by accessing the Public Search link for ORESTAR.

Are there campaign contribution and expenditure limits?

No, Oregon does not have contribution and expenditure limits.

How do I discontinue my committee?

In order to discontinue your committee, you must: (1) Achieve a zero balance and (2) File a Statement of Organization discontinuing the committee.

Where do I get copies of forms and instructional manuals?

All publications and forms are available online at www.oregonvotes.gov, or may be requested from the Elections Division at 503 986 1518 or via email at orestar-support.sos@oregon.gov

Need additional help?

The Elections Division staff is available to answer any questions. You may:

- → email your questions to elections.sos@oregon.gov
- → call us at 503 986 1518 or at 866 ORE VOTE
- → visit our website at www.oregonvotes.gov