

## Reportable Ballot Question Activity

Any person or group not defined as a political action committee that solicits and receives contributions or makes expenditures, other than by contribution to a political action committee, aggregating more than \$5,000 for the purpose of initiating, promoting, defeating, or influencing in any way a ballot question must file a report with the Commission.

This pamphlet outlines the definitions and reporting requirements that persons participating in the 2008 referendum election should know about.

This material is intended to be a guide only and not a replacement for the law. Persons with questions should review the law and are encouraged to contact the Commission staff prior to taking action.

## Legal References

Ballot Question Reporting Requirements:

- 21-A M.R.S.A. §1056-B

Definition of a Political Action Committee:

- 21-A M.R.S.A. §1052(5)

### Mailing Address

135 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

### Office Location

45 Memorial Circle, Augusta, ME

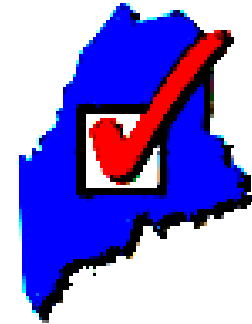
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August 2009

## Maine Ethics Commission



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*How to Report  
Ballot Question  
Expenditures*

*2009*

## Understanding the Basics

If your group does not meet the definition of a political action committee (PAC) as defined in 21-A M.R.S.A. §1052(5), but receives or spends more than \$5,000 to influence the outcome of a statewide ballot measure, then your group may be considered a ballot question committee and you may have to register and file campaign finance reports with the Commission

The report must list each ballot question supported or opposed, the amount spent on each ballot measure, and detailed information such as names and addresses of contributors giving more than \$100 in cash or in-kind, and expenditures in excess of \$100.

If your only financial activity is to make a contribution to a PAC that will disclose your contribution on a campaign finance report, you do not have to file a report with the Commission.

## Municipal Referenda

In the case of a municipal ballot question, a copy of the same information may need to be filed with the clerk of the municipality. Please contact your town clerk to find out if this applies to you.

## When to File a Report

**Once the total spent or received for the ballot measure exceeds \$5,000**, your group is required to file a ballot question committee report with the Commission. Currently these reports can only be filed on paper, but soon online filing will be available. Faxed copies are acceptable provided that the original is filed within 5 calendar days.

*All campaign activity leading up the \$5,000 threshold must be reported on the initial report.* The reporting schedule is outlined below. The start date for the initial report is the date of your first contribution or expenditure, whichever is earlier, even if it is not in the same calendar year as the election.

July 15, 2009	April 1, 2009—July 5, 2009
Oct. 13, 2009	July 5, 2009—Sept. 30, 2009
Oct. 23, 2009	Oct 1, 2009— Oct. 20, 2009
Dec. 15, 2009	Oct. 21, 2009—Dec. 8, 2009
Jan. 19, 2010	Dec. 9, 2009—Dec. 31, 2009

**Election laws, blank forms and other information can be found at:**

**[www.maine.gov/ethics](http://www.maine.gov/ethics)**

## 24-Hour Filing Requirement

Once your group registers with the Commission, if it makes an expenditure of more than \$500 during the 13-day period before an election (primary and general), you must file a 24-Hour Report within 24 hours of making the expenditure.

## Reporting Contributions and Expenditures

You are required to report only those contributions and expenditures that have been made for the purpose of influencing the outcome of a ballot question. If your organization uses funds from its general treasury, those amounts must be reported as contributions.

If your organization uses paid staff to work on its ballot question activities, the amount of compensation for staff time must be reported as an expenditure. If your organization received goods or services, including donated staff time, from other organizations or individuals, you must report those as in-kind contributions.

**To get more information about Ballot Question Committees and reporting requirements, please contact Commission staff.**

**287-4179**