



STATE OF MAINE
COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS
AND ELECTION PRACTICES
135 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0135

To: Interested Parties
From: Commission Staff
Date: July 29, 2025
Re: 2025 Summary of Enacted Legislation

This is a summary of the campaign finance and lobbying disclosure laws enacted by the First Special Session of the 132nd Legislature. These laws will go into effect on Wednesday, September 24, 2025 unless otherwise noted.

CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATIONS

Definition of Public Communication: The term “public communication” defines the types of paid communications to voters that are covered by disclaimer and independent expenditure requirements to promote consistency and eliminate vagueness. These communications can be distributed by broadcast, cable or satellite communication; newspapers, direct mail, handbills or other printed literature; campaign signs or other outdoor advertising facilities; and prerecorded automated telephone calls or other types of public political advertising. It does not include communications over the internet, except for those placed or promoted for a fee on a website, digital device, application or advertising platform. Robocalls are covered in the definition of “public communication” while scripted live telephone calls are not. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

Definition of Placed or Promoted for a Fee: The term “placed or promoted for a fee” refers to internet or digital communications when a payment has been made to increase the circulation, prominence, or availability of the communication. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

BALLOT QUESTION COMMITTEES

Websites by BQCs: Websites established by BQCs required to register with the Commission that expressly advocate for or against an initiative or referendum must state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the website. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

Text Messages from BQCs: A transmission of text messages that cost more than \$500 expressly advocating for or against an initiative or referendum must state the name of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the messages. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

CANDIDATES

Unenrolled Contribution Limit Increase: Unenrolled candidates may now solicit campaign contributions for the primary and general election periods, which provides equity with their enrolled counterparts to collect double the amount previously allowed. ([2025 P.L. c. 181](#))

Prohibition from Collecting Contributions and Signatures at Polling Places: Neither candidates nor their representatives can collect or solicit voter signatures for a petition for office, campaign contributions, or qualifying contributions for a publicly financed campaign within 250 feet of the entrance to a voting place when the candidate is seeking office in that election year. ([2025 P.L. 331](#)) *Effective June 17, 2025.*

CONTRIBUTIONS

Promises to Contribute - Repealed: The requirement to report a promise of a contribution has been repealed. The contribution will be reported when it is received. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

Top 3 Funders: Broadcast, cable, or satellite television communications or internet video communications of 60 seconds or less no longer need to include any audible statement of the top funders of the committee that paid for the communication, although the communication needs to contain a written statement of the top 3 funders. This replaces a previous exception that applied to video communications of 30 seconds or less. Public communication consisting of an audio broadcast of 60 seconds or less or a print communication of 20 square inches or less no longer need to include any statement of top funders. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

Websites Launched Before Election Day: Websites or internet applications available to the general public by a party committee, political action committee, or candidate expressly advocating for the election or defeat of a candidate, or clearly identifying them launched in the 28 days before a primary election, or 35 days before a special election, or between Labor Day and election day for a general election must state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the website, and whether it was or was not authorized by the candidate. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

LOBBYISTS

Lobbying by Former Legislative Employees: Effective January 1, 2026, former legislative branch employees whether partisan or nonpartisan, committee clerks, or employed by the Office of the Secretary of the Senate or Clerk of the House, are prohibited from engaging in compensated lobbying until one year after the termination of their legislative branch employment. ([2025 P.L. c. 185](#))

MAINE CLEAN ELECTION ACT (MCEA) CANDIDATES

Seed Money Contribution Increase: Gubernatorial candidates seeking MCEA funding may collect up to \$250 from individuals in seed money contributions. ([2025 P.L. 296](#))

PENALTIES

Straw Donor Contributions: A straw donor contribution is made when a donor gives money to an intermediary to be donated to a candidate or committee with the intent that their information as the original source will be hidden. The assessed penalty may not exceed 500% of the amount of the contribution. The previous limit was \$5,000. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))

RECORD KEEPING

Record Keeping for PACs and BQCs: PACs and BQCs are required to have bank statements that reflect all financial activity of the committee, not just deposits into the account. ([2025 P.L. c. 224](#))