

Title 21-A M.R.S.
Chapter 13: Campaign Finance Reports and Finances

Subchapter I
General Provisions

§ 1001. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

1. Commission. “Commission” means the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices established under Title 1, section 1002.

1-A. Caucus political action committee. “Caucus political action committee” means a political action committee designated under section 1053-C to promote the election of nominees of a political party to the Senate or the House of Representatives.

2. Election. “Election” means any primary, general or special election for state or county office or municipal office in a municipality subject to Title 30-A, section 2502, subsection 1 and any referendum, including a municipal referendum in a municipality subject to Title 30-A, section 2502, subsection 2.

3. Person. “Person” means an individual, committee, firm, partnership, corporation, association or organization.

4. Public communication. “Public communication” means a communication to the public by means of 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 general public political advertising. For the purposes of this subsection, “general public political advertising” does not include communication over the Internet, except for communications placed or promoted for a fee on another person's website, digital device, application or advertising platform.

§ 1002. Meetings of commission

1. Meeting schedule. The commission shall meet in Augusta for the purposes of this chapter at least once per month in any year in which primary and general elections are held. In the 28 days preceding an election, the commission shall meet in Augusta within 2 business days of the filing of any complaint with the commission, unless the complainant and respondent agree otherwise. Regardless of whether the complainant or respondent agree, the commission may defer until after the election considering complaints determined by the chair to involve allegations of minor violations of this

chapter or chapter 14, such as disclaimer statements omitted from campaign signs or transactions of less than \$100 omitted from campaign finance reports.

2. Telephone meetings. [Repealed]

3. Other meetings. The commission shall meet at other times on the call of the Secretary of State, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House or the chair or a majority of the members of the commission, as long as all members are notified of the time, place and purpose of the meeting at least 24 hours in advance.

4. Office hours before election. [Repealed]

§ 1003. Investigations by commission

1. Investigations. The commission may undertake audits and investigations to determine whether a person has violated this chapter, chapter 14 or the rules of the commission. For this purpose, the commission may subpoena witnesses and records whether located within or without the State and take evidence under oath. A person or entity that fails to obey the lawful subpoena of the commission or to testify before it under oath must be punished by the Superior Court for contempt upon application by the Attorney General on behalf of the commission. The Attorney General may apply on behalf of the commission to the Superior Court or to a court of another state to enforce compliance with a subpoena issued to a nonresident person. Service of any subpoena issued by the commission may be accomplished by:

A. Delivering a duly executed copy of the notice to the person to be served or to a partner or to any officer or agent authorized by appointment or by law to receive service of process on behalf of that person;

B. Delivering a duly executed copy of the notice to the principal place of business in this State of the person to be served; or

C. Mailing by registered or certified mail a duly executed copy of the notice, addressed to the person to be served, to the person's principal place of business.

2. Investigations requested. A person may apply in writing to the commission requesting an investigation as described in subsection 1. The commission shall review the application and shall make the investigation if the reasons stated for the request show sufficient grounds for believing that a violation may have occurred.

2-A. Confidentiality. [Repealed]

3. State Auditor. The State Auditor shall assist the commission in making investigations and in other phases of the commission's duties under this chapter, as requested by the commission, and has all necessary powers to carry out these responsibilities.

3-A. Confidential records. Investigative working papers of the commission are confidential, except that the commission may disclose them to the subject of the audit or investigation, other entities as necessary for the conduct of an audit or investigation and law enforcement and other agencies for purposes of reporting, investigating or prosecuting a criminal or civil violation. For purposes of this subsection, “investigative working papers” means documents, records and other printed or electronic information in the following limited categories that are acquired, prepared or maintained by the commission during the conduct of an audit, investigation or other enforcement matter:

- A. Financial information not normally available to the public;
- B. Information that, if disclosed, would reveal sensitive political or campaign information belonging to a party committee, political action committee, ballot question committee, candidate or candidate’s political committee, or other person who is the subject of an audit, investigation or other enforcement matter, even if the information is in the possession of a vendor or 3rd party;
- C. Information or records subject to a privilege against discovery or use as evidence; and
- D. Intra-agency or interagency communications related to an audit or investigation, including any record of an interview, meeting or examination.

The commission may disclose investigative working papers or discuss them at a public meeting, except for the information or records subject to a privilege against discovery or use as evidence, if the information or record is relevant to a memorandum or interim or final report by the commission staff or a decision by the commission concerning an audit, investigation or other enforcement matter. A memorandum or report on the audit or investigation prepared by staff for the commission may be disclosed at the time it is submitted to the commission, as long as the subject of the audit or investigation has an opportunity to review it first to identify material that the subject of the audit or investigation considers privileged or confidential under some other provision of law.

4. Attorney General. Upon the request of the commission, the Attorney General shall aid in any investigation, provide advice, examine any witnesses before the commission or otherwise assist the commission in the performance of its duties. The commission shall refer any apparent violations of this chapter to the Attorney General for prosecution.

§ 1004. Violations

The violation of any of the following subsections is a Class E crime.

1. Contributions and expenditures. A person, candidate, treasurer, political committee or political action committee may not knowingly make or accept any contribution or make any expenditure in violation of this chapter.

- 2. False statements.** A person, candidate, treasurer or political action committee may not make a false statement in a report required by this chapter.
- 3. Contributions in another's name.** A person may not knowingly:
 - A. Make a contribution in the name of another person;
 - B. Permit the person's name to be used to accomplish a contribution in violation of paragraph A; or
 - C. Accept a contribution made by one person in the name of another person.
- 4. Registration; political action committees.** A political action committee or ballot question committee required to be registered under section 1052-A may not operate in this State unless it is so registered.

§ 1004-A. Penalties

The commission may assess the following penalties in addition to the other monetary sanctions authorized in this chapter.

- 1. Late campaign finance report.** A person that files a late campaign finance report containing no contributions or expenditures may be assessed a penalty of no more than \$100.
- 2. Contribution in excess of limitations.** A person that accepts or makes a contribution that exceeds the limitations set out in section 1015, subsections 1 and 2-B may be assessed a penalty of no more than the amount by which the contribution exceeded the limitation.
- 3. Contribution in name of another person.** A person that makes a contribution in the name of another person, that knowingly permits that person's name to be used to effect such a contribution or that knowingly accepts a contribution made by one person in the name of another person may be assessed a penalty not to exceed 500% of the amount of the contribution.
- 4. Substantial misreporting.** A person that files a campaign finance report that substantially misreports contributions, expenditures or other campaign activity may be assessed a penalty not to exceed \$5,000.
- 5. Material false statements.** A person that makes a material false statement or that makes a statement that includes a material misrepresentation in a document that is required to be submitted to the commission, or that is submitted in response to a request by the commission, may be assessed a penalty not to exceed \$5,000.

When the commission has reason to believe that a violation has occurred, the commission shall provide written notice to the candidate, party committee, political action committee, committee treasurer or other respondent and shall afford them an

opportunity to appear before the commission before assessing any penalty. In determining any penalty under subsections 3, 4 and 5, the commission shall consider, among other things, the level of intent to mislead, the penalty necessary to deter similar misconduct in the future and the harm suffered by the public from the incorrect disclosure. A final determination by the commission may be appealed to the Superior Court in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 7 and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 80C.

Penalties assessed pursuant to this section that have not been paid in full within 30 days after issuance of a notice of the final determination may be enforced in accordance with section 1004-B.

§ 1004-B. Enforcement of penalties assessed by the commission

The commission staff shall collect the full amount of any penalty and the return of Maine Clean Election Act funds required by the commission to be returned for a violation of the statutes or rules administered by the commission and has all necessary powers to carry out these duties. Failure to pay the full amount of any penalty assessed by the commission or return of Maine Clean Election Act funds is a civil violation by the candidate, treasurer, party committee, political action committee or other person. Thirty days after issuing the notice of penalty or order for the return of funds, the commission shall report to the Attorney General the name of any person who has failed to pay the full amount of any penalty or to return Maine Clean Election Act funds unless the commission has provided an extended deadline for payment. The Attorney General shall enforce the violation in a civil action to collect up to 3 times the outstanding amount of the penalty or unreturned Maine Clean Election Act funds. This action must be brought in the Superior Court for Kennebec County or the District Court, 7th District, Division of Southern Kennebec.

§ 1004-C. Enhanced penalties for violations with aggravating circumstances

Notwithstanding any maximum penalty otherwise set forth in this chapter, when assessing a penalty or monetary sanction, the commission may double the authorized penalty or monetary sanction for a violation occurring less than 28 days prior to an election day and may triple the authorized penalty or monetary sanction for a violation occurring less than 14 days prior to an election day.

§ 1005. Restrictions on commercial use of contributor information

Information concerning contributors contained in campaign finance reports filed by candidates, political action committees, party committees and ballot question committees may not be used for any commercial purpose, including, but not limited to, the sales and marketing of products and services, or for solicitations of any kind not directly related to activities of a political party, so-called “get out the vote” efforts or activities directly related

to a campaign as defined in section 1052. Any person obtaining contributor information from the reports is prohibited from selling or distributing it to others to use for commercial purposes and also is prohibited from making publicly available the mailing addresses of contributors. This section does not prohibit a political party, party committee, candidate committee, political action committee or any other organization that has obtained contributor information from the commission from providing access to such information to its members for purposes directly related to party activities, so-called “get out the vote” efforts or a campaign as defined in section 1052. A person who violates this section is subject to a fine of up to \$5,000. A person who knowingly violates this section commits a Class E crime.

§ 1006. Proceeds of game night

A party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee registered under this chapter that conducts a game night pursuant to Title 17, section 1832, subsection 2-B shall report to the commission all proceeds from the game night in a manner prescribed by rule by the commission. Rules adopted under this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

§ 1007. Public communication placed or promoted for a fee

A public communication is considered placed or promoted for a fee when a payment is made to a website, digital device, application or advertising platform in order to increase the circulation, prominence or availability of the public communication on that website, digital device, application or advertising platform.

Subchapter II

Reports on Campaigns for Office

§ 1011. Application

This subchapter applies to candidates for all state and county offices and to campaigns for their nomination and election. Candidates for municipal office as described in Title 30-A, section 2502, subsection 1 are also governed by this subchapter. The commission does not have jurisdiction over financial activities to influence the nomination or election of candidates for federal office.

1. [Repealed]

2. **Exemptions.** [Repealed]

3. **Role of the Municipal Clerk; Commission.** For candidates for municipal office, the municipal clerk is responsible for any duty assigned to the commission in this subchapter related to the registration of candidates, receipt of reports and distribution of information or forms, unless otherwise provided. Notwithstanding any other deadline set forth in this chapter, candidates shall file their reports by the close of business on the day of the filing deadline established for the office of the municipal clerk. The commission retains the sole authority to prescribe the content of all reporting forms. The commission does not have responsibility to oversee the filing of registrations or campaign finance reports relating to municipal campaigns, except that the commission has the discretion to conduct investigations and assess penalties under subsection 3-A.

3-A. Enforcement by the Commission. If a clerk of a town or city that is governed by this chapter pursuant to Title 30-A, section 2502 becomes aware of a potential violation of this chapter that the clerk considers to be substantial, the clerk may refer the matter to the commission for enforcement. Substantial violations include, but are not limited to, accepting contributions in excess of the limitations of section 1015 and failing to file a report that substantially complies with the disclosure requirements of section 1017. The commission has the discretion to conduct an investigation if the information referred by the municipal clerk shows sufficient grounds for believing that a violation may have occurred. After conducting the investigation, if the commission determines that a violation of this chapter has occurred, the commission may assess penalties provided in this chapter.

4. **Exemptions.** Exemptions for municipal candidates from the reporting requirements of this subchapter are governed by this subsection.

A. At the time a municipal candidate registers under section 1013-A, the candidate may notify the municipal clerk in writing that the candidate will not accept contributions, make expenditures or incur financial obligations associated with that

person's candidacy. A candidate who provides this written notice is not required to appoint a treasurer or to meet the filing requirements of this section as long as the candidate complies with the commitment.

B. The notice provided to the municipal clerk in paragraph A may be revoked. A written revocation must be presented to the municipal clerk before the candidate may accept contributions, make expenditures or incur obligations associated with that person's candidacy. A candidate who has filed a notice with the municipal clerk under paragraph A and accepts contributions, makes expenditures or incurs obligations associated with that person's candidacy prior to filing a revocation may be assessed a penalty of \$10 for each business day that the revocation is late, up to a maximum of \$500. This penalty may be imposed in addition to the penalties assessed under other sections of this Title.

§ 1012. Definitions

As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

1. Clearly identified. "Clearly identified," with respect to a candidate, means that:

- A.** The name of the candidate appears;
- B.** A photograph or drawing of the candidate appears; or
- C.** The identity of the candidate is apparent by unambiguous reference.

2. Contribution. The term "contribution:"

A. Includes:

(1) A gift, subscription, loan, advance or deposit of money or anything of value made for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of any person to state, county or municipal office or for the purpose of liquidating any campaign deficit of a candidate, except that a loan of money to a candidate by a financial institution in this State made in accordance with applicable banking laws and regulations and in the ordinary course of business is not included;

(2) [Repealed]

(3) Funds received by a candidate or a political committee that are transferred to the candidate or committee from another political committee or other source; and

(4) The payment, by any person other than a candidate or a political committee, of compensation for the personal services of other persons that are provided to the candidate or political committee without charge for any such purpose; and

B. Does not include:

- (1)** The value of services provided without compensation by individuals who volunteer a portion or all of their time on behalf of a candidate or political committee;
- (2)** The use of real or personal property and the cost of invitations, food and beverages, voluntarily provided by an individual to a candidate in rendering voluntary personal services for candidate-related activities, if the cumulative value of these activities by the individual on behalf of any candidate does not exceed \$250 with respect to any election;
- (3)** The sale of any food or beverage by a vendor for use in a candidate's campaign at a charge less than the normal comparable charge, if the charge to the candidate is at least equal to the cost of the food or beverages to the vendor and if the cumulative value of the food or beverages does not exceed \$100 with respect to any election;
- (4)** Any unreimbursed travel expenses incurred by an individual in the course of providing voluntary personal services to a candidate and paid for by that individual, if the cumulative amount of these expenses does not exceed \$350 with respect to any election;
- (4-A)** Any unreimbursed campaign-related travel expenses incurred and paid for by the candidate or the candidate's spouse or domestic partner;
- (5)** The payment by a party's state, district, county or municipal committee of the costs of preparation, display or mailing or other distribution of a party candidate listing;
- (6)** Documents, in printed or electronic form, including party platforms, single copies of issue papers, information pertaining to the requirements of this Title, lists of registered voters and voter identification information, created, obtained or maintained by a political party for the general purpose of party building and provided to a candidate who is a member of that party;
- (7)** Compensation paid by a state party committee to its employees for the following purposes:
 - (a)** Providing no more than a total of 40 hours of assistance from its employees to a candidate in any election;
 - (b)** Recruiting and overseeing volunteers for campaign activities involving 3 or more candidates; or
 - (c)** Coordinating campaign events involving 3 or more candidates;

- (8) Campaign training sessions provided to 3 or more candidates;
- (8-A) Costs paid for by a party committee in connection with a campaign event at which 3 or more candidates are present;
- (8-B) Wood or other materials used for political signs that are found or contributed if not originally obtained by the candidate or contributor for campaign purposes;
- (8-C) The use or distribution of any communication, as described in section 1014, obtained by the candidate for a previous election and fully paid for during that election;
- (9) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar equipment when that use does not result in additional cost to the provider;
- (10) Activity or communication designed to encourage individuals to register to vote or to vote if that activity or communication does not mention a clearly identified candidate; or
- (11) A purchase of apparel from a commercial vendor with a total cost of \$25 or less by an individual when the vendor has received a graphic or design from the candidate or the candidate's authorized committee.

3. Expenditure. The term “expenditure:”

A. Includes:

- (1) A purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit or gift of money or anything of value made for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of any person to state, county or municipal office, except that a loan of money to a candidate by a financial institution in this State made in accordance with applicable banking laws and regulations and in the ordinary course of business is not included;
- (2) A contract, promise or agreement, expressed or implied, whether or not legally enforceable, to make any expenditure;
- (3) The transfer of funds by a candidate or a political committee to another candidate or political committee; and
- (4) A payment or promise of payment to a person contracted with for the purpose of influencing any campaign as defined in section 1052, subsection 1; and

B. Does not include:

(1) Any news story, commentary or editorial distributed through the facilities of any broadcasting station, cable television system, newspaper, magazine or other periodical publication, unless the facilities are owned or controlled by any political party, political committee, candidate or spouse or domestic partner of a candidate;

(1-A) Any communication distributed through a public access television channel on a cable television system if the communication complies with the laws and rules governing the channel and all candidates in the race have an equal opportunity to promote their candidacies through the channel;

(2) Activity or communication designed to encourage individuals to register to vote or to vote if that activity or communication does not mention a clearly identified candidate;

(3) Any communication by any membership organization or corporation to its members or stockholders, if that membership organization or corporation is not organized primarily for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of any person to state or county office;

(4) The use of real or personal property and the cost of invitations, food and beverages, voluntarily provided by an individual to a candidate in rendering voluntary personal services for candidate-related activities, if the cumulative value of these activities does not exceed \$250 with respect to any election;

(5) Any unreimbursed travel expenses incurred by an individual in the course of providing voluntary personal services to a candidate and paid for by that individual, if the cumulative amount of these expenses does not exceed \$350 with respect to any election;

(5-A) Any unreimbursed campaign-related travel expenses incurred and paid for by the candidate or the candidate's spouse or domestic partner;

(6) Any communication by any person that is not made for the purpose of influencing the nomination for election, or election, of any person to state, county or municipal office;

(7) The payment by a party's state, district, county or municipal committee of the costs of preparation, display or mailing or other distribution of a party candidate listing;

(8) The use or distribution of any communication, as described in section 1014, obtained by the candidate for a previous election and fully paid for during that election campaign;

(9) Documents, in printed or electronic form, including party platforms, single copies of issue papers, information pertaining to the requirements of this Title, lists of registered voters and voter identification information, created or maintained by a political party for the general purpose of party building and provided to a candidate who is a member of that party;

(10) Compensation paid by a state party committee to its employees for the following purposes:

(a) Providing no more than a total of 40 hours of assistance from its employees to a candidate in any election;

(b) Recruiting and overseeing volunteers for campaign activities involving 3 or more candidates; or

(c) Coordinating campaign events involving 3 or more candidates;

(10-A) Costs paid for by a party committee in connection with a campaign event at which 3 or more candidates are present;

(11) Campaign training sessions provided to 3 or more candidates;

(11-A) Wood or other materials used for political signs that are found or contributed if not originally obtained by the candidate or contributor for campaign purposes;

(12) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar equipment when that use does not result in additional cost to the provider; or

(13) A purchase of apparel from a commercial vendor with a total cost of \$25 or less by an individual when the vendor has received a graphic or design from the candidate or the candidate's authorized committee.

4. Exploratory committee. [Repealed]

4-A. Influence. "Influence" means to promote, support, oppose or defeat.

4-B. Leadership political action committee. [Repealed]

5. Party candidate listing. "Party candidate listing" means any communication that meets the following criteria.

A. The communication lists the names of at least 3 candidates for election to public office.

B. The communication is distributed through public advertising such as broadcast stations, cable television, newspapers and similar media, and through direct mail, telephone, electronic mail, publicly accessible sites on the Internet or personal delivery.

C. The treatment of all candidates in the communication is substantially similar, except for any requirement under federal law applicable to communications regarding federal candidates.

D. The content of the communication is limited to:

- (1) The identification of each candidate, with which pictures may be used;
- (2) The offices sought;
- (3) The offices currently held by the candidates;
- (4) The party affiliation of the candidates and a brief statement, including campaign slogans, about the party's or the candidates' positions, philosophy, goals, accomplishments or biographies;
- (5) Encouragement to vote for the candidates identified;
- (6) Information about voting, such as voting hours and locations; and
- (7) Campaign or party logos.

If the communication contains language outside the categories of this paragraph, it does not qualify as a party candidate listing.

6. Separate segregated fund committee. [Repealed]

§ 1013. Treasurer; political committees (Repealed)

§ 1013-A. Registration

1. Candidates, their treasurers and political committees. A candidate shall register the candidate's name and the name of a treasurer with the commission at least once in each legislative biennium, as provided in this section. A candidate may have only one treasurer, who must be appointed pursuant to paragraph A or B. For purposes of this section, "legislative biennium" means the term of office a person is elected to serve in the Legislature.

A. No later than 10 days after becoming a candidate and before accepting contributions, making expenditures or incurring obligations, a candidate for state or county office or a candidate for municipal office who has not filed a written notice in accordance with section 1011, subsection 4, paragraph A shall appoint a treasurer. The candidate may serve as treasurer, except that a participating candidate, as defined in section 1122, subsection 6, or a candidate certified in accordance with section 1125 may not serve as treasurer, except that the candidate may serve as treasurer or deputy treasurer for up to 14 days after declaring an intention to qualify for campaign financing under chapter 14 until the candidate

identifies another person to serve as treasurer. The candidate may have only one treasurer, who is responsible for the filing of campaign finance reports under this chapter. A candidate shall register the candidate's name and address and the name and address of the treasurer appointed under this section no later than 10 days after the appointment of the treasurer. A candidate may accept contributions personally or make or authorize expenditures personally, as long as the candidate reports all contributions and expenditures to the treasurer. The treasurer shall make a consolidated report of all income and expenditures and provide this report to the commission.

(1) A candidate may appoint a deputy treasurer to act in the absence of the treasurer. The deputy treasurer, when acting in the absence of the treasurer, has the same powers and responsibilities as the treasurer. A candidate certified in accordance with section 1125 may not serve as deputy treasurer. When a treasurer dies or resigns, the deputy treasurer may not assume the position of treasurer unless the candidate appoints the deputy treasurer to the position of treasurer. The candidate shall report the name and address of the deputy treasurer to the commission no later than 10 days after the deputy treasurer has been appointed.

B. A candidate may authorize one political committee to promote the candidate's election. No later than 10 days after appointing a political committee and before accepting contributions, making expenditures or incurring obligations, a candidate for state, county or municipal office shall appoint a treasurer of the political committee. The treasurer of the political committee is responsible for filing campaign finance reports under this chapter. No later than 10 days after appointing a political committee, the candidate shall register with the commission the following information regarding the political committee:

- (1)** The name of the committee;
- (2)** The name and address of the committee's treasurer;
- (3)** The name of the candidate who authorized the committee; and
- (4)** The names and addresses of the committee's officers.

C. No later than 10 days after becoming a candidate, as defined in section 1, subsection 5, a candidate for the office of State House of Representatives or Senate may file in writing a statement declaring that the candidate agrees to accept voluntary limits on political expenditures or that the candidate does not agree to accept voluntary limits on political expenditures, as specified in section 1015, subsections 7 to 9. A candidate who has filed a declaration of intent to become certified as a candidate under the Maine Clean Election Act is not required to file the written statement described in this paragraph.

The statement filed by a candidate who voluntarily agrees to limit spending must state that the candidate knows the voluntary expenditure limitations as set out in section 1015, subsection 8 and that the candidate is voluntarily agreeing to limit the candidate's political expenditures and those made on behalf of the candidate by the candidate's political committee or committees, the candidate's party and the candidate's immediate family to the amount set by law. The statement must further state that the candidate does not condone and will not solicit any independent expenditures made on behalf of the candidate.

The statement filed by a candidate who does not agree to voluntarily limit political expenditures must state that the candidate does not accept the voluntary expenditure limits as set out in section 1015, subsection 8.

2. Authorized political committees. [Repealed]

3. Party committees. The district, county and municipal committees of parties shall submit to their state party committees the names, mailing addresses and e-mail addresses of all their officers and of their treasurers and the name and address of the principal paid employee, if any, within 10 days after the appointment, election or hiring of these persons. Municipal committees shall file copies of the same information with the municipal clerk. No later than June 15th of each year, the state party committee shall submit to the commission a consolidated report of the names, mailing addresses and e-mail addresses of the chair and treasurer of the district, county and municipal committees of that party or of another officer if a chair or treasurer has not been appointed.

4. Reporting by registered treasurers. Any contribution accepted and any expenditure made or authorized by or on behalf of a candidate registered under this section or qualified under sections 335 and 336 or sections 354 and 355 must be recorded and reported as provided in sections 1016 and 1017.

5. Changes in registration information. Every change in information required by this section to be reported to the commission shall be reported within 10 days of the date of the change.

§ 1013-B. Removal of treasurer; filling vacancy of treasurer; substantiation of records of treasurer; notification to commission

A candidate may remove any treasurer that the candidate has appointed. In case of a vacancy in the position of treasurer of a candidate or treasurer of a political committee before the obligations of the treasurer have been performed, the candidate shall serve as treasurer from the date of the vacancy until the candidate appoints a successor and reports the name and address of the successor to the commission. The candidate shall file a written statement of resignation of a treasurer of a candidate or a treasurer of a political committee and until that statement has been filed, the resignation is not effective. An individual who

vacates the position of treasurer by reason of removal or resignation shall certify in writing the accuracy of the treasurer's records to the succeeding treasurer. A succeeding treasurer may not be held responsible for the accuracy of the predecessor's records.

§ 1014. Publication or distribution of political public communications

1. Authorized by candidate. Whenever a person makes an expenditure to finance a public communication expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate, the public communication, if authorized by a candidate, a candidate's authorized political committee or a candidate's or a candidate's authorized political committee's agents, must clearly and conspicuously state that the public communication has been so authorized and must clearly state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the public communication. A public communication financed by a candidate or the candidate's committee is not required to state the address of the candidate or committee that financed the public communication. If a public communication that is financed by someone other than the candidate or the candidate's authorized committee is broadcast by radio, only the city and state of the address of the person who financed the public communication must be stated.

2. Not authorized by candidate. If a public communication described in subsection 1 is not authorized by a candidate, a candidate's authorized political committee or a candidate's or a candidate's authorized political committee's agents, the public communication must clearly and conspicuously state that the public communication is not authorized by any candidate and state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the public communication, except that a public communication broadcast by radio is only required to state the city and state of the address of the person that financed the public communication. If the public communication is in written form, the public communication must contain at the bottom of the public communication in print that is no smaller in size than 12-point bold print, Times New Roman font, the words "NOT PAID FOR OR AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE."

2-A. Other public communications. Whenever a person makes an expenditure to finance a public communication that names or depicts a clearly identified candidate and that is disseminated during the 28 days, including election day, before a primary election, during the 35 days, including election day, before a special election or during the period of time from Labor Day to the election day for a general election, the public communication must state the name and address of the person who made or financed the public communication and a statement that the public communication was or was not authorized by the candidate, except that a public communication broadcast by radio is only required to state the city and state of the address of the person that financed the public communication. The disclosure is not required if the public communication was

not made for the purpose of influencing the candidate's nomination for election or election.

2–B. Top 3 funders; independent expenditures. A public communication that is funded by an entity making an independent expenditure as defined in section 1019-B, subsection 1 must conspicuously include the following statement:

“The top 3 funders of (name of entity that made the independent expenditure) are (names of top 3 funders).”

The information required by this subsection may appear simultaneously with any statement required by subsection 2 or 2-A. A public communication that contains a visual aspect must include the statement in written text. A public communication that does not contain a visual aspect must include an audible statement. This statement is required only for public communications made through broadcast, cable or satellite systems; Internet audio and video programming; direct mail; or newspaper or other periodical publications.

A broadcast, cable or satellite television communication or Internet video communication must include both an audible and a written statement. For a broadcast, cable or satellite television communication or Internet video communication 60 seconds or less in duration, the audible statement may be omitted.

The top funders named in the required statement consist of the funders providing the highest dollar amount of funding to the entity making the independent expenditure since the day following the most recent general election day.

A. For purposes of this subsection, “funder” includes:

(1). Any entity that has made a contribution as defined in section 1052, subsection 3 to the entity making the independent expenditure since the day following the most recent general election day; and

(2) Any entity that has given a gift, subscription, loan, advance or deposit of money or anything of value, except for transactions in which a fair value is given in return, since the day following the most recent general election day.

B. If funders have given equal amounts, creating a tie in the ranking of the top 3 funders, the tie must be broken by naming the tying funders in chronological order of the receipt of funding until 3 funders are included in the statement. If the chronological order cannot be discerned, the entity making the independent expenditure may choose which of the tying funders to include in the statement. A public communication may not be required to include the names of more than 3 funders.

C. The statement required under this subsection is not required to include the name of any funder who has provided less than \$1,000 to the entity making the

independent expenditure since the day following the most recent general election day.

D. If only one or 2 funders must be included pursuant to this subsection, the public communication must identify the number of funders as “top funder” or “top 2 funders” as appropriate. If there are no funders required to be included under this subsection, no statement is required.

E. When compiling the list of top funders, an entity making an independent expenditure may disregard any funds that the entity can show were used for purposes unrelated to the candidate mentioned in the public communication on the basis that funds were either spent in the order received or were strictly segregated in other accounts.

F. The statement required under this subsection is not required in any public communication consisting of an audio broadcast of 60 seconds or less or a print communication of 20 square inches or less.

G. If the list of funders changes during the period in which a recurring public communication is aired or published, the statement appearing in the public communication must be updated at the time that any additional payments are made for that public communication.

H. The commission may establish by routine technical rule, adopted in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A, forms and procedures for ensuring compliance with this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to this paragraph must ensure that the information required by this subsection is effectively conveyed for a sufficient duration and in a sufficient font size or screen size when applicable without undue burden on the ability of the entity to make the public communication. The rules must also provide an exemption for types of public communications for which the required statement would be impossible or impose an unusual hardship due to the unique format or medium of the public communication.

3. Broadcasting prohibited without disclosure. Except as provided in subsection 5-C, paragraph C, a person operating a broadcast, cable or satellite system within this State may not broadcast any public communication, as described in subsections 1 to 2-A, without an oral or written visual announcement of each disclosure required by this section.

3-A. In-kind contributions of printed materials. A candidate, political committee or political action committee shall report on the campaign finance report as a contribution to the candidate, political committee or political action committee any contributions of in-kind printed materials to be used in the support of a candidate or in the support or defeat of a ballot question. Any in-kind contributions of printed materials used or distributed by a candidate, political committee or political action committee must include the name or title of that candidate, political committee or political action

committee as the authorizing agent for the printing and distribution of the in-kind contribution.

3-B. Newspapers. Except as provided in subsection 5-C, paragraph C, a newspaper may not publish a public communication described in subsections 1 to 2-A without including each disclosure required by this section. For purposes of this subsection, “newspaper” includes any printed material intended for general circulation or to be read by the general public, including a version of the newspaper displayed on a website owned or operated by the newspaper. When necessary, a newspaper may seek the advice of the commission regarding whether or not a communication requires the disclosure.

4. Enforcement. A violation of this section may result in a civil penalty of no more than 100% of the amount of the expenditure in violation, except that a violation of subsection 5-C may result in a civil penalty of no more than 500% of the amount of the expenditure in violation and except that an expenditure for yard signs lacking the required information may result in a maximum civil penalty of \$200. In assessing a civil penalty, the commission shall consider, among other things, how widely the public communication was disseminated, whether the violation was intentional, whether the violation occurred as the result of an error by a printer or other paid vendor and whether the public communication conceals or misrepresents the identity of the person who financed it. If the person who financed the public communication or who committed the violation corrects the violation within 10 days after receiving notification of the violation from the commission by adding the missing information to the public communication, the commission may, except for a violation of subsection 5-C, decide to assess no civil penalty.

5. Telephone calls. [Repealed]

5-A. Text messages. Text messages sent with the assistance of mass distribution technology that is paid for by a person must clearly and conspicuously state the name of the person who made or financed the expenditure if:

- A. The text message expressly advocates the election or defeat of a candidate; or
- B. The text message contains a link to a website that expressly advocates the election or defeat of a candidate.

5-B. Websites of candidate or political committee. A website or other Internet application available to the general public that is established by a party committee or a person that is required to register with the commission as a candidate or political action committee and that expressly advocates for the election or defeat of a candidate or that names a clearly identified candidate during the 28 days, including election day, before a primary election, during the 35 days, including election day, before a special election or during the period of time from Labor Day to the election day for a general election must state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure

for the website or other Internet application and state that the website or other Internet application was or was not authorized by the candidate.

5-C. Use of synthetic media. Whenever a public communication that requires a disclosure under subsections 1, 2, 2-A or 2-B contains synthetic media, the public communication must include, in addition to any other required disclosure, the words "THIS COMMUNICATION CONTAINS AUDIO, VIDEO AND/OR IMAGES THAT HAVE BEEN MANIPULATED OR ALTERED." The commission shall adopt rules regarding the manner, size and placement of the disclosure required under this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

A. For purposes of this subsection, "synthetic media" means an image, an audio recording or a video recording depicting a candidate's appearance, speech or conduct that:

- (1) In a manner that is likely to deceive a reasonable person, depicts the candidate saying or doing something that the candidate did not say or do; or
- (2) Has been manipulated or altered in a manner that is likely to provide a reasonable person with a materially different understanding or impression of the candidate's appearance, action or speech than a reasonable person would have from an unaltered, original version of the image, audio recording or video recording.

B. For purposes of this subsection, "synthetic media" does not include:

- (1) An image, an audio recording or a video recording depicting a candidate's appearance, speech or conduct that has been modified to improve audio, video or image clarity, to add captions or to highlight a specific section of the image, audio recording or video recording as long as the modification does not create a materially different understanding or impression of the candidate's appearance, action or speech than a reasonable person would have from an unaltered, original version of the image, audio recording or video recording; or
- (2) Satire or parody.

C. A person operating a broadcast, cable or satellite system within the State that broadcasts a public communication does not violate this subsection and a newspaper that publishes a public communication does not violate this subsection unless the broadcaster broadcasts or newspaper publishes a paid public communication with actual knowledge that the public communication contains synthetic media. The broadcaster's or newspaper's receipt of an allegation made by a 3rd party that a public communication contains synthetic media does not, by itself, constitute actual knowledge by the broadcaster or newspaper that the public

communication contains synthetic media. For purposes of this paragraph, "newspaper" has the same meaning as in subsection 3-B.

D. The commission shall notify the Office of the Attorney General if a person who is in violation of this subsection does not cease violating this subsection after being notified of the violation by the commission or if the commission is unable for any reason to notify a person that the person is in violation of this subsection. The Attorney General may bring a civil action in the Superior Court of Kennebec County for injunctive or other appropriate equitable relief requiring the person to comply with this subsection. An action under this paragraph may be combined with an action under section 1004-B for the purposes of the enforcement of penalties assessed by the commission. If the Attorney General prevails in an action under this paragraph, the court may award to the Attorney General the costs of the action together with reasonable attorney's fees as determined by the court.

E. This subsection may not be construed to prohibit or limit any other cause of action that a person may have against a person who violates this subsection.

6. Exclusions. The requirements of this section do not apply to:

A. Handbills or other literature produced and distributed at a cost not exceeding \$100 and prepared by one or more individuals who are not required to register or file campaign finance reports with the commission and who are acting independently of and without authorization by a candidate, candidate's authorized campaign committee, party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee or an agent of a candidate, candidate's authorized campaign committee, party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee;

B. Campaign signs produced and distributed at a cost not exceeding \$100, paid for by one or more individuals who are not required to register or file campaign finance reports with the commission and who are acting independently of and without authorization by a candidate, candidate's authorized campaign committee, party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee or an agent of a candidate, candidate's authorized campaign committee, party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee;

C. Internet and e-mail activities costing less than \$100, as excluded by rule of the commission, paid for by one or more individuals who are not required to register or file campaign finance reports with the commission and who are acting independently of and without authorization by a candidate, candidate's authorized campaign committee, party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee or an agent of a candidate, candidate's authorized campaign committee, party committee, political action committee or ballot question committee;

D. Public communications in which the name or address of the person who made or authorized the expenditure for the public communication would be so small as to be illegible or infeasible, including public communications on items such as ashtrays, badges and badge holders, balloons, campaign buttons, clothing, coasters, combs, emery boards, envelopes, erasers, glasses, key rings, letter openers, matchbooks, nail files, noisemakers, paper and plastic cups, pencils, pens, plastic tableware, 12-inch or shorter rulers, swizzle sticks, tickets to fundraisers and similar items determined by the commission to be too small and unnecessary for the disclosures required by this section and in electronic media advertisements where compliance with this section would be impractical due to size or character limitations;

E. Campaign signs that are financed by the candidate or candidate's authorized committee and that clearly identify the name of the candidate and are lettered or printed individually by hand;

F. Prerecorded automated telephone calls paid for by the candidate that use the candidate's voice in the telephone call and that are made in support of that candidate; and

G. Telephone surveys that meet generally accepted standards for polling research and that are not conducted for the purpose of influencing the voting position of call recipients.

§ 1014-A. Endorsements of political candidates (Repealed)

§ 1014-B. Push polling

1. Push poll defined. For purposes of this section, “push poll” means any paid telephone survey or series of telephone surveys that are similar in nature that reference a candidate or group of candidates other than in a basic preference question, and when:

A. A list or directory is used, exclusively or in part, to select respondents belonging to a particular subset or combination of subsets of the population, based on demographic or political characteristics such as race, sex, age, ethnicity, party affiliation or like characteristics;

B. The survey fails to make demographic inquiries on factors such as age, household income or status as a likely voter sufficient to allow for the tabulation of results based on a relevant subset of the population consistent with standard polling industry practices;

C. The pollster or polling organization does not collect or tabulate survey results;

D. The survey prefates a question regarding support for a candidate on the basis of an untrue statement; and

E. The survey is primarily for the purpose of suppressing or changing the voting position of the call recipient.

“Push poll” does not include any survey supporting a particular candidate that fails to reference another candidate or candidates other than in a basic preference question.

2. Push polls; political telephone solicitations; requirements. Push polling must be conducted in accordance with this subsection.

A. A person may not authorize, commission, conduct or administer a push poll by telephone or telephonic device unless, during each call, the caller identifies the person or organization sponsoring or authorizing the call by stating “This is a paid political advertisement by (name of persons or organizations),” and identifies the organization making the call, if different from the sponsor, by stating “This call is conducted by (name of organization).”

B. If any person identified as either sponsoring or authorizing the call is not required to file any document with election officials pursuant to this Title, a valid, current, publicly listed telephone number and address for the person or organization must be disclosed during each call.

C. If any person sponsoring or authorizing the call is affiliated with a candidate, the candidate’s name and the office sought by that candidate must be disclosed during each call.

D. If the call is an independent expenditure, as defined in section 1019-B, that a candidate has not approved the call must be disclosed during each call.

It is not a violation of this subsection if the respondent voluntarily terminates the call or asks to be called back before the required disclosures are made, unless the respondent is in any way encouraged to do so by the person initiating the call.

A person may not state or imply false or fictitious names or telephone numbers when providing the disclosures required under this subsection.

All oral disclosures required by this subsection must be made in a clear and intelligible manner and must be repeated in that fashion upon request of the call respondent. Disclosures made by any telephonic device must offer respondents a procedure to have the disclosures repeated.

This subsection does not apply to a push poll or political telephone solicitation or contact if the individuals participating in the call know each other prior to the call.

A person who violates this subsection may be assessed a forfeiture of \$500 by the commission.

3. Registered agents; requirements; registration. Persons conducting push polling shall register and comply with the requirements of this subsection.

A. A person who conducts a paid push poll or political telephone solicitation or contact, prior to conducting that poll, solicitation or contact, must have and continuously maintain for at least 180 days following the cessation of business activities in this State a designated agent for the purpose of service of process, notice or demand required or permitted by law, and shall file with the commission identification of that designated agent. Conducting business in this State includes both placing telephone calls from a location in this State and calls from other states or nations to individuals located within this State. The designated agent must be an individual resident of this State, a domestic corporation or a foreign corporation authorized to do business in this State. This paragraph does not apply to any entity already lawfully registered to conduct business in this State.

B. The commission shall create and maintain forms for the designation of agents required pursuant to paragraph A and require, at a minimum, the following information:

- (1) The name, address and telephone number of the designated agent; and
- (2) The name, address and telephone number of the person conducting business in this State.

C. The person conducting push polling shall notify the commission of any changes in the designated agent and the information required by paragraph B.

D. A person who violates this subsection may be assessed a forfeiture of \$500 by the commission.

4. Permitted practices. This section does not prohibit legitimate election practices, including but not limited to:

- A.** Voter identification;
- B.** Voter facilitation activities; or
- C.** Generally accepted scientific polling research.

§ 1015. Limitations on contributions and expenditures

1. Contributions by individuals. An individual may not make contributions to a candidate in support of the candidacy of one person aggregating more than \$1,950 in any election for a gubernatorial candidate, more than \$475 for a legislative candidate, more than \$575 for a candidate for municipal office and more than \$975 in any election for any other candidate. This limitation does not apply to contributions in support of a candidate by that candidate or that candidate's spouse or domestic partner. Beginning

December 1, 2024, contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

2. Contributions by party committees, ballot question committees and political action committees. [Repealed]

2-A. Contributions by business entities. [Repealed]

2-B. Committees; corporations; associations. A political committee, political action committee, ballot question committee or other committee, firm, partnership, corporation, association or organization may not make contributions to a candidate in support of the candidacy of one person aggregating more than \$1,950 in any election for a gubernatorial candidate, more than \$475 for a legislative candidate, more than \$575 for a candidate for municipal office and more than \$975 in any election for any other candidate. Beginning December 1, 2024, contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

2-C. Contributions by individuals to political action committees making independent expenditures. An individual may not make contributions aggregating more than \$5,000 in any calendar year to a political action committee for the purpose of making independent expenditures under section 1019-B, subsection 1. Beginning December 1, 2024, contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates.

2-D. Contributions by political action committees and business entities to political action committees making independent expenditures. A leadership political action committee, a separate segregated fund committee, a caucus political action committee, any other political action committee or any business entity may not make contributions aggregating more than \$5,000 in any calendar year to a political action committee for the purpose of making independent expenditures under section 1019-B, subsection 1.

Beginning December 1, 2024, contribution limits in accordance with this subsection are adjusted every 2 years based on the Consumer Price Index as reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and rounded to the nearest amount divisible by \$25. The commission shall post the current contribution limit and the amount of the next adjustment and the date that it will become effective on its publicly accessible website and include this information with any publication to be used as a guide for candidates. For purposes of this subsection, "business entity" includes a firm, partnership, corporation, incorporated association, labor organization or other organization, whether organized as a for-profit or a nonprofit entity.

3. Aggregate contributions. [Repealed]

3-A. Contributions to candidate seeking nomination by petition; primary election period. For the purposes of contribution limits under subsections 1 and 2-B applicable to a candidate seeking nomination by petition, "any election," when referring to a primary election, includes the period beginning on the day after the most recent general election for the office that candidate is seeking and ending on the day of the primary election for that office.

4. Political committees; intermediaries. For the purpose of the limitations imposed by this section, contributions made to any political committee authorized by a candidate to accept contributions on the candidate's behalf are considered to be contributions made to that candidate. If the campaign activities of a political action committee within a calendar year primarily promote or support the nomination or election of a single candidate, contributions to the committee that were solicited by the candidate are considered to be contributions made to the candidate for purposes of the limitations in this section. For purposes of this subsection, solicitation of contributions includes but is not limited to the candidate's appearing at a fundraising event organized by or on behalf of the political action committee or suggesting that a donor make a contribution to that committee.

For the purposes of the limitations imposed by this section, all contributions made by a person, either directly or indirectly, on behalf of a particular candidate, that are in any way earmarked or otherwise directed through an intermediary or conduit to the candidate are considered to be contributions from that person to the candidate. The intermediary or conduit shall report the original source and the intended recipient of the contribution to the commission and to the intended recipient.

5. Other contributions and expenditures. Any expenditure made by any person in cooperation, consultation or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, a candidate, a candidate's political committee or their agents is considered to be a contribution to that candidate.

The financing by any person of the dissemination, distribution or republication, in whole or in part, of any broadcast or any written or other campaign materials prepared by the

candidate, the candidate's political committee or committees or their authorized agents is considered to be a contribution to that candidate.

6. Prohibited expenditures. A candidate, a treasurer, a political committee, a party or party committee, a person required to file a report under this subchapter or their authorized agents may not make any expenditures for liquor to be distributed to or consumed by voters while the polls are open on election day.

7. Voluntary limitations on political expenditures. A candidate may voluntarily agree to limit the total expenditures made on behalf of that candidate's campaign as specified in section 1013-A, subsection 1, paragraph C and subsections 8 and 9.

8. Political expenditure limitation amounts. Total expenditures in any election for legislative office by a candidate who voluntarily agrees to limit campaign expenditures as provided in subsection 7 are as follows:

A. For State Senator, \$25,000; and

B. For State Representative, \$5,000.

C. [Repealed]

Expenditure limits are per election and may not be carried forward from one election to another. For calculation and reporting purposes, the reporting periods established in section 1017 apply.

9. Publication of list. The commission shall publish a list of the candidates for State Representative and State Senator who have agreed to voluntarily limit total expenditures for their campaigns as provided in section 1013-A, subsection 1, paragraph C.

For the purposes of subsections 7 and 8 and this subsection, "total expenditures" means the sum of all expenditures made to influence a single election that are made by a candidate or made on the candidate's behalf by the candidate's political committee or committees, the candidate's party or the candidate's immediate family.

10. Business entity defined. [Repealed]

§ 1015-A. Corporate contributions

Contributions made by a for-profit or a nonprofit corporation including a parent, subsidiary, branch, division, department or local unit of a corporation, and contributions made by a political committee or political action committee whose contribution or expenditure activities are financed, maintained or controlled by a corporation are considered to be made by that corporation, political committee or political action committee.

1. Single entities. Two or more entities are treated as a single entity if the entities:

- A. Share the majority of members of their boards of directors;
 - B. Share 2 or more officers;
 - C. Are owned or controlled by the same majority shareholder or shareholders;
 - C-1. Are limited liability companies that are owned or controlled by the same majority member or members; or
 - D. Are in a parent-subsidary relationship.
2. **Sole proprietorships.** A sole proprietorship and its owner are treated as a single entity.

§ 1015-B. Donations to an individual considering whether to become a candidate

If an individual receives funds, goods or services for the purpose of deciding whether to become a candidate, the funds, goods or services may not exceed the limitations in section 1015, subsections 1 and 2-B. The individual shall keep an account of such funds, goods or services received and all payments and obligations incurred in deciding whether to become a candidate. If the individual becomes a candidate, the funds, goods and services received are contributions and the payments and obligations are expenditures. The candidate shall disclose the contributions and expenditures in the first report filed by the candidate or the candidate's authorized campaign committee, in accordance with the commission's procedures.

§ 1016. Records

The candidate or treasurer shall keep detailed records of all contributions received and of each expenditure that the treasurer or candidate makes or authorizes, as provided in this section. The treasurer shall certify the completeness and accuracy of the information in any report of contributions and expenditures filed with the commission as required by section 1017.

1. **Segregated funds.** All funds of a political committee and campaign funds of a candidate must be segregated from, and may not be commingled with, any personal funds of the candidate, treasurer or other officers, members or associates of the committee. Personal funds of the candidate used to support the candidacy must be recorded and reported to the treasurer as contributions to the political committee, or the candidate if the candidate has not authorized a political committee.
2. **Report of contributions and expenditures.** A person who receives a contribution or makes an expenditure for a candidate or political committee shall report the contribution or expenditure to the candidate or treasurer within 5 days of the receipt of the contribution or the making of the expenditure. A person who receives a contribution

in excess of \$10 for a candidate or a political committee shall report to the candidate or treasurer the amount of the contribution, the name and address of the person making the contribution and the date on which the contribution was received.

3. Record keeping. The candidate or treasurer shall keep a detailed and exact account of:

A. All contributions made to or for the candidate or committee, including any contributions by the candidate;

B. The name and address of every person making a contribution in excess of \$10, the date and amount of that contribution and, if a person's contributions in any report filing period aggregate more than \$50, the account must include the contributor's occupation and principal place of business, if any. If the contributor is the candidate or a member of the candidate's immediate family, the account must also state the relationship. For purposes of this paragraph, "filing period" is as provided in section 1017, subsections 2 and 3-A;

C. All expenditures made by or on behalf of the committee or candidate; and

D. The name and address of every person to whom any expenditure is made and the date and amount of the expenditure.

4. Receipts preservation. The candidate or treasurer shall obtain and keep a receipted bill, stating the particulars, for every expenditure in excess of \$50 made by or on behalf of a political committee or a candidate and for any such expenditure in a lesser amount if the aggregate amount of those expenditures to the same person in any election exceeds \$50. The candidate or treasurer shall preserve all receipted bills and accounts required to be kept by this section for 2 years following the final report required to be filed for the election to which they pertain, unless otherwise ordered by the commission or a court.

§ 1016-A. Duties and liability of the candidate and treasurer

1. Keeping required records. The candidate or treasurer shall keep records of contributions and expenditures as required by section 1016, chapter 14 and the commission's rules. If the candidate keeps the records, the candidate shall provide the treasurer or deputy treasurer with access to the records for the purpose of filing complete and accurate campaign finance reports. The candidate and treasurer are jointly responsible for ensuring that the campaign keeps all records required by law.

2. Filing campaign finance reports. The treasurer shall file complete and accurate campaign finance reports as required by section 1017. The treasurer may delegate the filing of the reports to the deputy treasurer.

3. Liability for violations. The commission may hold the candidate and treasurer jointly and severally liable for any penalties assessed for violations of the financial reporting or record-keeping requirements of this chapter, chapter 14 and the commission's rules. If the deputy treasurer files reports for the campaign, the commission may hold the deputy treasurer jointly and severally liable for any penalties related to reports filed by the deputy treasurer.

§ 1017. Reports by candidates

1. Federal candidates. [Repealed]

2. Gubernatorial candidates. A treasurer of a candidate for the office of Governor shall file reports with the commission as follows. Once the first required report has been filed, each subsequent report must cover the period from the end date of the prior report filed.

A. In any calendar year, other than a gubernatorial election year, in which the candidate or the candidate's political committee has received contributions in excess of \$1,000 or made or authorized expenditures in excess of \$1,000, reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on July 15th of that year and January 15th of the following calendar year. These reports must include all contributions made to and all expenditures made or authorized by or on behalf of the candidate or the candidate's treasurer as of the end of the preceding month, except those covered by a previous report.

B. Reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 42nd day before the date on which an election is held and must be complete as of the 49th day before that date. If a report was not filed under paragraph A, the report required under this paragraph must cover all contributions and expenditures through the 49th day before the election.

C. Reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 11th day before the date on which an election is held and must be complete as of the 14th day before that date.

D. If the candidate has an opponent who is on the ballot or who is a declared write-in candidate, any single contribution of \$10,000 or more received or any single expenditure of \$10,000 or more made after the 14th day before the election and more than 48 hours before 11:59 p.m. on the day of the election must be reported within 48 hours of that contribution or expenditure. The candidate or treasurer is not required to include in this report expenditures for overhead expenses or compensation paid to an employee or other member of the campaign staff who has received payments at regular intervals that have been disclosed in previously filed campaign finance reports. As used in this paragraph, "overhead expenses" includes,

but is not limited to, rent, utility payments, taxes, insurance premiums or similar administrative expenses.

E. Reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 42nd day after the date on which an election is held and must be complete for the filing period as of the 35th day after that date.

F. Unless further reports will be filed in relation to a later election in the same calendar year, the disposition of any surplus or deficit in excess of \$100 shown in the reports described in paragraph E must be reported as provided in this paragraph. The treasurer of a candidate or political committee with a surplus or deficit in excess of \$100 shall file reports semiannually with the commission within 15 days following the end of the 2nd and 4th quarters of the State's fiscal year, complete as of the last day of the quarter, until the surplus is disposed of or the deficit is liquidated. The first report under this paragraph is not required until the 15th day of the period beginning at least 90 days from the date of the election. The reports will be considered timely if filed electronically or in person with the commission on that date or postmarked on that date. The reports must set forth any contributions for the purpose of liquidating the deficit, in the same manner as contributions are set forth in other reports required in this section.

G. Unless otherwise specified in this subsection, reports must be complete back to the end date of the previous report filing period. The reports described in paragraph E, if filed with respect to a primary election, are considered previous reports in relation to reports concerning a general election.

H. Reports with respect to a candidate who seeks nomination by petition for the office of Governor must be filed on the same dates that reports must be filed with respect to a candidate who seeks that nomination by primary election.

3. Other candidates. [Repealed]

3-A. Other candidates. A treasurer of a candidate for state or county office other than the office of Governor shall file reports with the commission and municipal candidates shall file reports with the municipal clerk as follows. Once the first required report has been filed, each subsequent report must cover the period from the end date of the prior report filed.

A. In any calendar year in which an election for the candidate's particular office is not scheduled, when any candidate or candidate's political committee has received contributions in excess of \$500 or made or authorized expenditures in excess of \$500, reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on July 15th of that year and January 15th of the following calendar year. These reports must include all contributions made to and all expenditures made or authorized by or on behalf of the candidate or the treasurer of the candidate as of the end of the preceding month, except those covered by a previous report.

B. Reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 11th day before the date on which an election is held and must be complete as of the 14th day before that date. If a report was not filed under paragraph A, the report required under this paragraph must cover all contributions and expenditures through the 14th day before the election.

C. [Repealed]

C. If the candidate has an opponent who is on the ballot or who is a declared write-in candidate, any single contribution received or any single expenditure made after the 14th day before any election and more than 48 hours before 11:59 p.m. on the day of any election that is equal to or greater than the following thresholds must be reported within 48 hours of that contribution or expenditure:

- (1) For a candidate for State Senator, \$5,000;
- (2) For a candidate for county office, \$2,500;
- (3) For a candidate for State Representative, \$1,500; and
- (4) For a candidate for municipal office, \$1,500.

The candidate or treasurer is not required to include in this report expenditures for overhead expenses or compensation paid to an employee or other member of the campaign staff who has received payments at regular intervals that have been disclosed in previously filed campaign finance reports. As used in this paragraph, "overhead expenses" includes, but is not limited to, rent, utility payments, taxes, insurance premiums or similar administrative expenses.

D. Reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 42nd day after the date on which an election is held and must be complete for the filing period as of the 35th day after that date.

D-1. Reports must be filed no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 42nd day before the date on which an election is held and must be complete as of the 49th day before that date, except that this report is not required for candidates for municipal office, unless required by the municipality. Certified candidates and participating candidates, as defined under section 1122, subsections 1 and 6, respectively, are not required to file a report on the 42nd day before a primary election pursuant to this section.

E. Unless further reports will be filed in relation to a later election in the same calendar year, the disposition of any surplus or deficit in excess of \$100 shown in the reports described in paragraph D must be reported as provided by this paragraph. The treasurer of a candidate with a surplus or deficit in excess of \$100 shall file reports semiannually with the commission within 15 days following the end of the 2nd and 4th quarters of the State's fiscal year, complete as of the last day

of the quarter, until the surplus is disposed of or the deficit is liquidated. The first report under this paragraph is not required until the 15th day of the period beginning at least 90 days from the date of the election. The reports will be considered timely if filed electronically or in person with the commission on that date or postmarked on that date. The reports must set forth any contributions for the purpose of liquidating the deficit, in the same manner as contributions are set forth in other reports required in this section.

F. Reports with respect to a candidate who seeks nomination by petition must be filed on the same dates that reports must be filed by a candidate for the same office who seeks that nomination by primary election.

3-B. Accelerated reporting schedule. [Repealed]

4. New candidate or nominee. A candidate for nomination or a nominee chosen to fill a vacancy under chapter 5, subchapter 3 is subject to section 1013-A, subsection 1, except that the candidate shall register the name of a treasurer or political committee and all other information required in section 1013-A, subsection 1, paragraphs A and B within 7 days after the candidate's appointment or at least 6 days before the election, whichever is earlier. The commission shall send notification of this registration requirement and report forms and schedules to the candidate and the candidate's treasurer immediately upon notice of the candidate's and treasurer's appointments.

5. Content. A report required under this section must contain the itemized accounts of contributions received during that report filing period, including the date a contribution was received, and the name, address, occupation, principal place of business, if any, and the amount of the contribution of each person who has made a contribution or contributions aggregating in excess of \$50. The report must contain the itemized expenditures made or authorized during the report filing period, the date and purpose of each expenditure and the name and address of each payee and creditor and any refund that a payee has made to the candidate or an agent of the candidate. If the payee is a member of the candidate's household or immediate family, the candidate shall disclose the candidate's relationship to the payee in a manner prescribed by the commission. The report must contain a statement of any loan to a candidate by a financial institution in connection with that candidate's candidacy that is made during the period covered by the report, whether or not the loan is defined as a contribution under section 1012, subsection 2, paragraph A. The candidate and the treasurer are jointly and severally responsible for the timely and accurate filing of each required report.

5-A. Valuation of contributions sold at auction. Any contribution received by a candidate that is later sold at auction must be reported in the following manner.

A. If the contribution is sold at auction before the commencement of the appropriate reporting period specified in subsections 2 to 4, or during that period,

the value of the contribution is deemed to be the amount of the purchase price paid at auction.

B. If the contribution is sold after the termination of the appropriate reporting period specified in subsections 2 to 4, the value of the contribution is the difference between the value of the contribution as originally reported by the treasurer and the amount of the purchase price paid at auction. Unless further reports are filed in relation to a later election in the same calendar year, the disposition of any net surplus or deficit in excess of \$100 resulting from the difference between the auction price and the original contribution value must be reported in the same manner as provided in subsection 2, paragraph F or subsection 3-A, paragraph E, as appropriate.

6. Forms. Reports required by this section not filed electronically must be on forms prescribed, prepared and sent by the commission to the treasurer of each registered candidate at least 7 days before the filing date for the report. Establishment of or amendments to the campaign report filing forms required by this section must be by rule. Persons filing reports may use additional pages if necessary, but the pages must be the same size as the pages of the form. Although the commission mails the forms for required reports to candidates who are exempt from filing electronically, failure to receive forms by mail does not excuse treasurers, committees and other persons who must file reports from otherwise obtaining the forms or from late filing penalties.

Rules of the commission establishing campaign report filing forms for candidates are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

7. Reporting exemption. [Repealed]

7-A. Reporting exemption. A candidate seeking election to a county or municipal office or a legislative candidate seeking the nomination of a party in an uncontested primary election is exempt from reporting as provided by this subsection.

A. A candidate seeking election to a county or municipal office may, at the time the candidate registers under section 1013-A, notify the commission that the candidate and the candidate's agents, if any, will not personally accept contributions, make expenditures or incur obligations associated with that candidate's candidacy. The notification must be made through an online or written form prescribed by the commission. A candidate who provides this notice to the commission is not required to appoint a treasurer and is not subject to the filing requirements of this subchapter if the statement is true.

A-1. A legislative candidate seeking the nomination of a party in an uncontested primary election may, at the time the candidate registers under section 1013-A, notify the commission that the candidate and the candidate's agents, if any, will not personally accept contributions, make expenditures or incur obligations associated with that candidate's candidacy through the 35th day after the primary election. The

notification must be made through an online or written form prescribed by the commission. A candidate who provides this notice to the commission is not required to appoint a treasurer or to file the campaign finance reports under subsection 3-A, paragraphs B and D with respect to the primary election.

B. The notice provided to the commission under paragraph A or A-1 may be revoked. Prior to revocation, the candidate must appoint a treasurer. The candidate may not accept contributions, make expenditures or incur obligations before the appointment of a treasurer and the filing of a revocation notice are accomplished. A revocation notice must be in the form of an amended registration, which must be filed with the commission no later than 10 days after the appointment of a treasurer. The candidate and the candidate's treasurer, as of the date the revocation notice is filed with the commission, may accept contributions, make expenditures and incur obligations associated with the candidate's candidacy. Any candidate who fails to file a timely revocation notice is subject to the penalties prescribed in section 1020-A, subsection 4-A, up to a maximum of \$5,000. Lateness is calculated from the day a contribution is received, an expenditure is made or an obligation is incurred, whichever is earliest.

8. Disposition of surplus. A candidate or treasurer of a candidate registered under section 1013-A or qualified under sections 335 and 336 or sections 354 and 355 shall dispose of a surplus exceeding \$100 within 4 years of the election for which the contributions were received by:

A. Returning contributions to the candidate's or candidate's authorized political committee's contributors, as long as no contributor receives more than the amount contributed;

B. A gift to a qualified political party within the State, including any county or municipal subdivision of such a party;

C. An unrestricted gift to the State. A candidate for municipal office may dispose of a surplus by making a restricted or unrestricted gift to the municipality;

D. Carrying forward the surplus balance to a political committee established to promote the same candidate for a subsequent election;

D-1. Carrying forward the surplus balance for use by the candidate for a subsequent election;

E. Transferring the surplus balance to one or more other candidates registered under section 1013-A or qualified under sections 335 and 336 or sections 354 and 355, or to political committees established to promote the election of those candidates, provided that the amount transferred does not exceed the contribution limits established by section 1015;

F. Repaying any loans or retiring any other debts incurred in the course of the candidate's campaign activity;

G. Paying for any expense incurred in the proper performance of the office to which the candidate is elected, as long as each expenditure is itemized on expenditure reports; and

H. A gift to a charitable or educational organization that is not prohibited, for tax reasons, from receiving such a gift.

The choice must be made by the candidate for whose benefit the contributions were made.

9. Campaign termination report forms. The commission shall provide each candidate required to report campaign contributions and expenditures with a campaign termination report form. A candidate shall file the campaign termination report with the commission as required in this subsection. The campaign termination report must be complete as of June 30th of the year following the campaign of the previous year. This form must show any deficits or surpluses to be carried over to the next campaign. Funds not carried forward to the next campaign must be disposed of as provided in subsection 8. Campaign reporting is as follows.

A. Candidates with surplus campaign funds following an election shall file termination reports no later than July 15th of the year following the campaign of the previous year.

B. Candidates with a campaign deficit following an election shall file termination reports no later than July 15th of the year following the campaign of the previous year.

C. Candidates with a deficit who will not participate in the next election for the same office shall file semiannual reports until the deficit is liquidated.

D. Candidates who collect funds subsequent to an election for purposes other than retiring campaign debt shall register with the commission pursuant to section 1013-A.

10. Electronic filing. The treasurer of a candidate or committee that has receipts or expects to have receipts of more than \$1,500 shall file each report required by this section through an electronic filing system developed by the commission. The commission may make an exception to this electronic filing requirement if a candidate or committee submits a written request that states that the candidate or committee lacks access to the technology or the technological ability to file reports electronically. The request for an exception must be submitted by April 15th of the election year, except that a candidate registered according to subsection 4 has 10 business days from the date of registration to submit a request to the commission. The commission shall grant all reasonable requests for exceptions.

§ 1017-A. Reports of contributions and expenditures by party committees

1. Contributions. A party committee shall report all contributions in cash or in kind from a single contributor that in the aggregate total more than \$200. The party committee shall report the name, mailing address, occupation and place of business of each contributor. Contributions of \$200 or less must be reported, and these contributions may be reported as a lump sum.

2. Expenditures to influence a campaign. [Repealed]

2. Expenditures to influence campaign. A party committee shall report all expenditures made to influence a campaign, as defined in section 1052, subsection 1. For each expenditure, the party committee shall report:

- A. The candidate or ballot measure for which the expenditure was made;
- B. For a candidate, the office sought by the candidate and the district that the candidate seeks to represent;
- C. The date and amount of each expenditure;
- D. The purpose of each expenditure, including whether the expenditure was made to support or oppose the candidate or ballot measure; and
- E. The name and address of each payee.

3. Other expenditures. Operational expenses and other expenditures that are not made to influence a campaign, as defined in section 1052, subsection 1 must be reported separately. The party committee shall report:

- A. The name and address of each payee;
- B. The purpose for the expenditure; and
- C. The date and amount of each expenditure.

4. Filing schedule. [Repealed]

4-A. Filing schedule. A state party committee shall file its reports according to the following schedule. All reports required under paragraphs A, B and C must be filed by 11:59 p.m. on the day of the filing deadline.

- A. A state party committee shall file quarterly reports:
 - (1) On January 15th, which must be complete up to December 31st;
 - (2) On April 10th, which must be complete up to March 31st;
 - (3) On July 15th, which must be complete up to June 30th; and
 - (4) On October 5th, which must be complete up to September 30th.

B. During any year in which primary and general elections are held, a state party committee shall file primary and general election reports in addition to the reports required under paragraph A:

- (1) On the 11th day before the date on which the election is held, which must be complete up to the 14th day before that date; and
- (2) On the 42nd day after the date on which the election is held, which must be complete up to the 35th day after that date.

C. In an election year other than a year described in paragraph B, if a state party committee has received contributions or made expenditures for the purpose of influencing a ballot question election, a special election or a municipal candidate or referendum election subject to Title 30-A, section 2502, the committee shall file preelection and post-election reports:

- (1) On the 11th day before the date on which the election is held, which must be complete up to the 14th day before that date; and
- (2) On the 42nd day after the date on which the election is held, which must be complete up to the 35th day after that date.

D. A state party committee that files an election report under paragraph B or C is not required to file a quarterly report under paragraph A when the deadline for that quarterly report falls within 10 days of the filing deadline established in paragraph B or C.

E. If a state party committee is required to file a report 11 days before an election pursuant to paragraph B or C, the committee shall report any single contribution of \$10,000 or more received or any single expenditure of \$2,500 or more made after the 14th day before the election and more than 24 hours before 5:00 p.m. on the day of the election within 24 hours of that contribution or expenditure. The committee is not required to include in this report expenditures for overhead expenses or compensation paid to an employee or other member of the campaign staff who has received payments at regular intervals that have been disclosed in previously filed campaign finance reports. As used in this paragraph, “overhead expenses” includes, but is not limited to, rent, utility payments, taxes, insurance premiums or similar administrative expenses.

4-B. Filing schedule for municipal, district and county party committees. Municipal, district and county party committees shall file reports according to the following schedule.

A. Reports filed during an election year must be filed with the commission by 11:59 p.m. on:

- (1) July 15th and be complete as of June 30th;

(2) The 11th day before the date on which the general election is held and must be complete up to the 14th day before that date; and

(3) January 15th and be complete as of December 31st.

B. Reports filed during a nonelection year must be filed by 11:59 p. m. on:

(1) July 15th and be complete as of June 30th; and

(2) January 15th and be complete as of December 31st.

C. A committee shall report any single contribution of \$10,000 or more received or any expenditure of \$2,500 or more made after the 14th day before a general or special election and more than 24 hours before 11:59 p.m. on the day of the election within 24 hours of that contribution or expenditure. The committee is not required to include in this report expenditures for overhead expenses or compensation paid to an employee or other member of the campaign staff who has received payments at regular intervals that have been disclosed in previously filed campaign finance reports. As used in this paragraph, “overhead expenses” includes, but is not limited to, rent, utility payments, taxes, insurance premiums or similar administrative expenses.

4-C. Electronic filing. State party committees shall file each report required by this section through an electronic filing system developed by the commission. The commission may make an exception to this electronic filing requirement if a party committee submits a written request that states that the party committee lacks access to the technology or the technological ability to file reports electronically. The request for an exception must be submitted by March 1st of the election year. The commission shall grant all reasonable requests for exceptions.

5. Penalties. A party committee is subject to the penalties in section 1020-A, subsection 4-A.

6. Notice; forms. A state party committee shall notify all county, district and municipal party committees of the same political party of the party committee reporting requirements. The party committees shall obtain the necessary forms from the commission to complete the filing requirements.

7. Exemption. Any party committee receiving and expending less than \$1,500 in one calendar year is exempt from the reporting requirements of this section for that year.

8. Municipal elections. When a party committee makes contributions or expenditures on behalf of a candidate for municipal office subject to this subchapter, it shall file a copy of the reports required by this section with the clerk in that candidate’s municipality.

§ 1017-B. Records

Any party committee that makes expenditures that aggregate in excess of \$50 to any one or more candidates, committees or campaigns in this State shall keep records as provided in this section. Records required to be kept under this section must be retained by the party committee until 10 days after the next election following the election to which the records pertain.

1. Details of records. The treasurer of a party committee shall record a detailed account of:

- A. All expenditures made to or on behalf of a candidate, campaign or committee;
- B. The identity and address of each candidate, campaign or committee;
- C. The office sought by a candidate and the district the candidate seeks to represent, for candidates that a party committee has made an expenditure to or on behalf of; and
- D. The date of each expenditure.

2. Receipts. The treasurer of a party committee shall retain a vendor invoice or receipt stating the particular goods or services purchased for every expenditure in excess of \$50.

3. Record of contributions. The treasurer of a party committee shall keep a record of all contributions to the committee, by name and mailing address, of each donor and the amount and date of the contribution. This subsection does not apply to aggregate contributions from a single donor of \$50 or less in an election. When any donor's contributions to a party committee exceed \$50, the record must include the aggregate amount of all contributions from that donor.

§ 1018. Reports by party committees (Repealed)

§ 1018-B. Recounts of elections

1. Reporting. Candidates who are involved in a recount of an election shall file a report 90 days after the election containing itemized accounts of cash, goods and services received for the recount and payments made by the candidate for the recount. The reports must be made on forms prepared and sent by the commission. Persons donating services to the candidate are required to provide the candidate with an estimate of the value of the services donated. Political action committees and party committees making expenditures for a candidate's recount shall identify on their regularly filed reports that the expenditures were made for the purposes of a recount.

2. Limitations. After an election, candidates may receive donations for purposes of a recount. The donations must be within the limitations of section 1015, except that no limitation applies to donations from party committees and caucus political action committees and from attorneys, consultants and their firms that are donating their services without reimbursement. Candidates may not spend revenues received under chapter 14 for recount expenditures.

§ 1019. Reports of independent expenditures (Repealed)

§ 1019-A. Reports of membership communications

Any membership organization or corporation that makes a communication to its members or stockholders expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate shall report any expenses related to such communications aggregating in excess of \$100 in any one candidate's election race, notwithstanding the fact that such communications are not expenditures under section 1012, subsection 3, paragraph A. Reports required by this section must be filed with the commission on forms prescribed and prepared by the commission and according to a reporting schedule that the commission shall establish by rule.

§ 1019-B. Reports of independent expenditures

1. Independent expenditures; definition. For the purposes of this section, an "independent expenditure" means any expenditure made by a person, party committee or political action committee that is not made in cooperation, consultation or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, a candidate, a candidate's authorized political committee or an agent of either and that:

A. Is made to design, produce or disseminate any public communication that expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate; or

B. Unless the person, party committee or political action committee making the expenditure demonstrates under subsection 2 that the expenditure did not have a purpose or effect of influencing the nomination, election or defeat of the candidate, is made to design, produce or disseminate a public communication that names or depicts a clearly identified candidate and is disseminated during the 28 days, including election day, before a primary election; during the 35 days, including election day, before a special election; or from Labor Day to a general election day.

2. Commission determination. A person, party committee or political action committee may request a determination that an expenditure that otherwise meets the definition of an independent expenditure under subsection 1, paragraph B is not an independent expenditure by filing a signed written statement with the commission

within 7 days of disseminating the communication stating that the cost was not incurred with a purpose of influencing the nomination, election or defeat of a candidate, supported by any additional evidence the person, party committee or political action committee chooses to submit. The commission may gather any additional evidence it determines relevant and material. The commission shall determine by a preponderance of the evidence whether the cost was incurred with a purpose of, or had the effect of, influencing the nomination, election or defeat of a candidate. In order to make this determination, the commission shall consider whether the language and other elements of the communication would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the communication had a purpose of, or had the effect of, influencing an election. The commission may consider other factors, including, but not limited to, the timing of the communication, the recipients of the communication or, if the communication is a digital communication, any links to publicly accessible websites related to the nomination, election or defeat of a candidate. The commission's executive director shall make an initial determination on the request, which must be posted on the commission's publicly accessible website. Any person may appeal the initial determination, which must be considered by the commission at the next public meeting that is feasible.

3. Report required; content; rules. [Repealed]

4. Report required; content; rules. A person, party committee or political action committee that makes any independent expenditure in excess of \$1,000 during any one candidate's election shall file a report with the commission. In the case of a municipal election, the report must be filed with the municipal clerk.

A. A report required by this subsection must be filed with the commission according to a reporting schedule that the commission shall establish by rule that takes into consideration existing campaign finance reporting requirements. Rules adopted pursuant to this paragraph are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

B. A report required by this subsection must contain an itemized account of the total contributions from each contributor, each expenditure in excess of \$1,000 in any one candidate's election, the date and purpose of each expenditure and the name of each payee or creditor. The report must state whether the expenditure is in support of or in opposition to the candidate and must include, under penalty of unsworn falsification, as provided in Title 17-A, section 453, a statement whether the expenditure is made in cooperation, consultation or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, the candidate or an authorized committee or agent of the candidate.

C. A report required by this subsection must be on a form prescribed and prepared by the commission. A person filing this report may use additional pages if necessary, but the pages must be the same size as the pages of the form. The

commission may adopt procedures requiring the electronic filing of an independent expenditure report, as long as the commission adopts an exception for persons who lack access to the required technology or the technological ability to file reports electronically.

5. Exclusions. An independent expenditure does not include:

A. [Repealed]

B. A telephone survey that meets generally accepted standards for polling research and that is not conducted for the purpose of changing the voting position of the call recipients or discouraging them from voting;

C. A telephone call naming a clearly identified candidate that identifies an individual's position on a candidate, ballot question or political party for the purpose of encouraging the individual to vote, as long as the call contains no advocacy for or against any candidate; and

D. A voter guide that consists primarily of candidates' responses to surveys and questionnaires and that contains no advocacy for or against any candidate.

6. Segregated contributions required. A political action committee may use only funds received in compliance with section 1015, subsection 2-C or 2-D when making independent expenditures. A political action committee that makes independent expenditures shall keep an account of any contributions received for the purpose of making those expenditures.

§ 1020. Failure to file on time (Repealed)

§ 1020-A. Failure to file on time

1. Registration. A candidate that fails to register the name of a candidate, treasurer or political committee with the commission within the time allowed by section 1013-A, subsection 1 may be assessed a forfeiture of \$100. The commission shall determine whether a registration satisfies the requirements for timely filing under section 1013-A, subsection 1.

2. Campaign finance reports. A campaign finance report is not timely filed unless a properly signed or electronically submitted copy of the report, substantially conforming to the disclosure requirements of this subchapter, is received by the commission by 11:59 p.m. on the date it is due. Except as provided in subsection 7, the commission shall determine whether a report satisfies the requirements for timely filing. The commission may waive a penalty in whole or in part if the commission determines that the penalty is disproportionate to the size of the candidate's campaign, the level of

experience of the candidate, treasurer or campaign staff or the harm suffered by the public from the late disclosure. The commission may waive the penalty in whole or in part if the commission determines the failure to file a timely report was due to mitigating circumstances. For purposes of this section, “mitigating circumstances” means:

- A. A valid emergency determined by the commission, in the interest of the sound administration of justice, to warrant the waiver of the penalty in whole or in part;
- B. An error by the commission staff;
- C. Failure to receive notice of the filing deadline; or
- D. Other circumstances determined by the commission that warrant mitigation of the penalty, based upon relevant evidence presented that a bona fide effort was made to file the report in accordance with the statutory requirements, including, but not limited to, unexplained delays in postal service or interruptions in Internet service.

3. Municipal campaign finance reports. Municipal campaign finance reports must be filed, subject to all the provisions of this subchapter, with the municipal clerk on forms prescribed by the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices. The municipal clerk shall send any notice of lateness required by subsection 6 and shall notify the commission of any late reports subject to a penalty.

4. Basis for penalties. [Repealed]

4-A. Basis for penalties. The penalty for late filing of a report required under this subchapter is a percentage of the total contributions or expenditures for the filing period, whichever is greater, multiplied by the number of calendar days late, as follows:

- A. For the first violation, 2%;
- B. For the 2nd violation, 4%; and
- C. For the 3rd and subsequent violations, 6%.

Any penalty of less than \$25 is waived.

Violations accumulate on reports with filing deadlines in a 2-year period that begins on January 1st of each even-numbered year. Waiver of a penalty does not nullify the finding of a violation.

A report required to be filed under this subchapter that is sent by certified or registered United States mail and postmarked at least 2 days before the deadline is not subject to penalty.

5. Maximum penalties. [Repealed]

5-A. Maximum penalties. Penalties assessed under this subchapter may not exceed:

A. Five thousand dollars for reports required under section 1017, subsection 2, paragraph B, C, D, E or H; section 1017, subsection 3-A, paragraph B, C, D, D-1 or F; and section 1017, subsection 4, except that if the dollar amount of the financial activity that was not timely filed or did not substantially conform to the reporting requirements of this subchapter exceeds \$50,000, the maximum penalty is 100% of the dollar amount of that financial activity;

A-1. Five thousand dollars for reports required under section 1019-B, subsection 4, except that if the dollar amount of the financial activity that was not timely filed or did not substantially conform to the reporting requirements of this subchapter exceeds \$50,000, the maximum penalty is 100% of the dollar amount of that financial activity;

B. Five thousand dollars for state party committee reports required under section 1017-A, subsection 4-A, paragraphs A, B, C and E, except that if the dollar amount of the financial activity that was not timely filed or did not substantially conform to the reporting requirements of this subchapter exceeds \$50,000, the maximum penalty is 100% of the dollar amount of that financial activity;

C. One thousand dollars for reports required under section 1017, subsection 2, paragraphs A and F and section 1017, subsection 3-A, paragraphs A and E; or

D. Five hundred dollars for municipal, district and county committees for reports required under section 1017-A, subsection 4-B.

E. [Repealed]

6. Request for a commission determination. If a candidate or a political committee files a report required under this subchapter late, a notice of preliminary penalty must be sent to the candidate or political committee whose registration or campaign finance report was not received by 11:59 p.m. on the deadline date, informing the candidate or political committee of the staff finding of violation and preliminary penalty calculated under subsection 4-A and providing the candidate or political committee with an opportunity to request a determination by the commission. Any request for a determination must be made within 14 calendar days of receipt of the commission's notice. A candidate or political committee requesting a determination may either appear in person or designate a representative to appear on the candidate's or political committee's behalf or submit a sworn statement explaining the mitigating circumstances for consideration by the commission. A final determination by the commission may be appealed to the Superior Court in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 7 and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 80C.

7. Final notice of penalty. If a determination has been requested by the candidate or political committee and made by the commission, notice of the commission's final determination and the penalty, if any, imposed pursuant to this subchapter must be sent to the candidate and the political committee.

If a determination is not requested, the preliminary penalty calculated by the commission staff is final. The commission staff shall mail final notice of the penalty to the candidate and treasurer. A detailed summary of all notices must be provided to the commission.

8. Penalties for failure to file report. If the commission staff finds that a candidate, party committee or other person has failed to file a report required under this subchapter, the commission staff shall send by regular mail and e-mail a notice to the candidate, party committee or person within 3 business days following the filing deadline informing the candidate, party committee or person that the report has not been received. If the report remains unfiled after 10 days, the commission staff shall send another notice by regular mail and e-mail. If the candidate, party committee or person has not filed the report after these 2 notices, the commission staff may refer the violation to the commission, which may, after providing notice and an opportunity to be heard, determine whether a violation has occurred and, if so, the amount of any penalty. The penalty may not exceed the maximum penalties as provided in subsection 5-A. A candidate party committee or other person who fails to file a report as required by this subchapter after the commission has sent the first 2 notices required by this subsection is guilty of a Class E crime. As an alternative to assessing a penalty, the commission may refer the violation to the Office of the Attorney General for potential criminal prosecution.

8-A. Penalties for failure to file report. [Repealed]

9. List of late-filing candidates. [Repealed]

10. Enforcement. A penalty assessed pursuant to this section that has not been paid in full within 30 days after issuance of a notice of the final determination may be enforced in accordance with section 1004-B.

Subchapter III
Reports on Referendum Campaigns

§ 1031. Application. (Repealed)

§ 1032. Definitions. (Repealed)

§ 1033. Committee. (Repealed)

§ 1034. Publication or distribution of statements. (Repealed)

§ 1035. Records. (Repealed)

§ 1036. Reports. (Repealed)

§ 1037. Failure to file report on time. (Repealed)

Title 21-A M.R.S.

Chapter 13: Campaign Finance Reports and Finances

Subchapter IV

Reports by Political Action Committees and Ballot Question Committees

§ 1051. Application

This subchapter applies to the activities of political action committees and ballot question committees organized in and outside this State that accept contributions, incur obligations or make expenditures to influence the nomination or election of a candidate to state, county or municipal office or to initiate or influence a campaign, as defined in this subchapter.

§ 1052. Definitions

As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

1. Campaign. “Campaign” means any course of activities to influence the nomination or election of a candidate or to initiate or influence any of the following ballot measures:

A. A people’s veto referendum under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 17;

B. A direct initiative of legislation under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 18;

C. An amendment to the Constitution of Maine under Article X, Section 4;

D. A referendum vote on a measure enacted by the Legislature and expressly conditioned upon ratification by a referendum vote under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 19;

E. The ratification of the issue of bonds by the State or any agency thereof; and

F. Any county or municipal referendum.

2. Committee. “Committee” means any political action committee or ballot question committee and includes any agent of a political action committee or ballot question committee.

2-A. Ballot question committee. “Ballot question committee” means a person that receives contributions or makes expenditures aggregating in excess of \$5,000 for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign, other than a campaign for the nomination or election of a candidate. The term “ballot question committee” does not

include a party committee, an exempt donor or a political action committee not required to register as a ballot question committee under section 1052-A, subsection 1-A, paragraph A..

3. Contribution. “Contribution” includes:

A. A gift, subscription, loan, advance or deposit of money or anything of value made to or received by a committee for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign, including but not limited to:

(1) Funds that the contributor specified were given, in whole or in part, in connection with a campaign;

(2) Funds provided in response to a solicitation that would lead the contributor to believe that the funds would be used specifically, in whole or in part, for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign; and

(3) Funds that can reasonably be determined to have been provided by the contributor for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign when viewed in the context of the contribution and the recipient committee’s activities regarding a campaign;

A-1. Any funds deposited or transferred into the campaign account described in section 1054;

B. [Repealed]

C. Any funds received by a committee that are to be transferred to any candidate, committee, campaign or organization for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign; or

D. The payment, by any person or organization, of compensation for the personal services of other persons provided to a committee that is used by the committee to initiate or influence a campaign.

“Contribution” does not include a loan of money by a financial institution made in accordance with applicable banking laws and regulations and in the ordinary course of business.

3-A. Exempt donor. “Exempt donor” means a person that has not received contributions for the purpose of influencing a campaign in the prior 2 years and whose only payments of money to influence a campaign in the prior 2 years are:

A. Contributions of money to candidates, party committees, political action committees or ballot question committees registered with the commission or a municipality; or

B. Payments for goods or services with an aggregate value of no more than \$100,000 contributed to candidates, party committees, political action committees or ballot question committees registered with the commission or a municipality.

4. Expenditure. The term “expenditure”:

A. Includes:

(1) A purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit or gift of money or anything of value, made for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign;

(1-A) Any purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit or gift of money made from the campaign account described in section 1054;

(2) A contract, promise or agreement, expressed or implied, whether or not legally enforceable, to make any expenditure for the purposes set forth in this paragraph; and

(3) The transfer of funds by a political action committee to another candidate or political committee; and

B. Does not include:

(1) Any news story, commentary or editorial distributed through the facilities of any broadcasting station, cable television system, newspaper, magazine or other periodical publication, unless these facilities are owned or controlled by any political party, political committee, candidate or the spouse or domestic partner of a candidate;

(2) Activity designed to encourage individuals to register to vote or to vote, if that activity or communication does not mention a clearly identified candidate;

(3) Any communication by any membership organization or corporation to its members or stockholders, if that membership organization or corporation is not organized primarily for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of any person to state or county office;

(4) The use of real or personal property and the cost of invitations, food and beverages, voluntarily provided by a political action committee in rendering voluntary personal services for candidate-related activities, if the cumulative value of these activities by the political action committee on behalf of any candidate does not exceed \$250 with respect to any election;

(5) Any unreimbursed travel expenses incurred and paid for by a political action committee that volunteers personal services to a candidate, if the cumulative amount of these expenses does not exceed \$100 with respect to any election;

(6) Any communication by a committee that is not made for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of any person to state or county office; and

(7) Any payments to initiate a people's veto referendum or the direct initiative of legislation made prior to the submission of an application to the Department of the Secretary of State as provided in section 901.

4-A. Influence. "Influence" means to promote, support, oppose or defeat.

4-B. Initiate. "Initiate" includes the collection of signatures on petitions and related activities to qualify a state or local initiative or referendum for the ballot.

4-C. Leadership political action committee. [Repealed]

5. Political action committee. The term "political action committee":

A. Includes:

(1) Any separate or segregated fund established by any corporation, membership organization, cooperative or labor or other organization that receives contributions or makes expenditures aggregating more than \$2,500 in a calendar year for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of a candidate to political office; and

(4) [Repealed]

(5) Any person, including any corporation or association, other than an individual, that receives contributions or makes expenditures aggregating more than \$2,500 in a calendar year for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of any candidate to political office; and

B. Does not include:

(1) A candidate or a candidate's treasurer under section 1013-A, subsection 1;

(2) A candidate's authorized political committee under section 1013-A, subsection 1, paragraph B;

(3) A party committee under section 1013-A, subsection 3; or

(4) An exempt donor.

6. Separate segregated fund committee. [Repealed]

§ 1052-A. Registration

A committee shall register with the commission and amend its registration as required by this section. A registration is not timely filed unless it contains all the information required in this section.

1. Deadlines to file and amend registrations. A committee shall register and file amendments with the commission according to the following schedule.

A. A political action committee as defined under section 1052, subsection 5, paragraph A, subparagraph (1) or (5) shall register with the commission within 7 days of receiving contributions or making expenditures in the aggregate in excess of \$2,500.

A-1. A ballot question committee shall register with the commission within 7 days of receiving contributions or making expenditures in the aggregate in excess of \$5,000.

A-2. A registered committee that does not qualify for an exception to registration pursuant to subsection 1-A shall register as a political action committee or ballot question committee, as applicable, within 7 days of exceeding the \$10,000 threshold specified in subsection 1-A.

B. A committee shall amend the registration within 10 days of a change in the information that committees are required to disclose under this section.

C. A committee shall file an updated registration form between January 1st and March 1st of each year in which a general election is held. The commission may waive the updated registration requirement for a newly registered political action committee or other registered committee if the commission determines that the requirement would cause an administrative burden disproportionate to the public benefit of the updated information.

1-A. Exceptions to registration. The following exceptions to the registration requirements in subsection 1 apply to registered committees.

A. A registered political action committee that receives contributions or makes expenditures of \$10,000 or less in the aggregate for the purpose of influencing one or more ballot question campaigns in a calendar year is not required to register as a ballot question committee. If a registered political action committee's only expenditures to influence ballot question campaigns in an election year are monetary contributions to registered ballot question committees, the political action committee is not required to register as a ballot question committee regardless of the aggregated amount of such contributions.

B. A registered ballot question committee that receives contributions or makes expenditures of \$10,000 or less in the aggregate for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of one or more candidates in a calendar year is not required to register as a political action committee. If a registered ballot question committee's only expenditures to influence candidate elections in an election year are monetary contributions to registered political action committees, party committees or candidates, the ballot question committee is not required to register

as a political action committee regardless of the aggregated amount of such contributions.

2. Disclosure of treasurer and officers. A committee must have a treasurer and a principal officer. The same individual may not serve in both positions, unless the committee is an individual registering as a ballot question committee. The committee's registration must contain the names and addresses of the following individuals:

- A. The treasurer of the committee;
- B. A principal officer of the committee;
- C. Any other individuals who are primarily responsible for making decisions for the committee;
- D. The individuals who are primarily responsible for raising contributions for the committee; and
- E. The names of any other candidates or Legislators who have a significant role in fund-raising or decision-making for the committee.

3. Other disclosure requirements. A committee's registration must also include the following information:

- A. A statement indicating the specific candidates, categories of candidates or campaigns or ballot questions that the committee expects to support or oppose;
- B. If the committee is formed to influence the election of a single candidate, the name of that candidate;
- C. The form or structure of the organization, such as a voluntary association, membership organization, corporation or any other structure by which the committee functions, and the date of origin or incorporation of the organization;
- D. If the committee has been formed by one or more for-profit or nonprofit corporations or other organizations for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign, the names and addresses of the corporations or organizations;
- E. The name of the account that the committee will use to deposit contributions and make expenditures pursuant to section 1054, and the name and address of the financial institution at which the account is established; and

E-1. [Repealed]

- F. Any additional information reasonably required by the commission to monitor the activities of committees in this State under this subchapter.

4. Acknowledgment of responsibilities. The treasurer, principal officer and any other individuals who are primarily responsible for making decisions for the committee shall submit a signed statement acknowledging their responsibilities on a form prescribed by

the commission within 10 days of registering the committee. The signed acknowledgment statement serves as notification of the responsibilities of the committee to comply with the financial reporting, record-keeping and other requirements of this chapter and the potential personal liability of the treasurer and principal officer for civil penalties assessed against the committee. The commission shall notify the committee of any individual who has failed to submit the acknowledgment statement. Failure to return the acknowledgment statement is a violation of this subchapter for which a fine of \$100 may be assessed against the committee. This section also applies to individuals named in an updated or amended registration required by this subsection who have not previously submitted an acknowledgment statement for the committee with the commission.

5. Resignation and removal. An individual who resigns as the treasurer, principal officer or primary decision maker of a committee shall submit a written resignation statement to the commission. An individual's resignation is not effective until the commission receives the written resignation statement from the individual. If an individual is involuntarily removed from the position of treasurer, principal officer or primary decision maker by the committee, the committee shall notify the commission in writing that the individual has been removed from the position. The commission may prescribe forms for these purposes.

6. Modified registration. The commission may adopt simplified registration procedures and forms for an individual registering as a ballot question committee to initiate or influence a ballot question.

§ 1053. Registration (Repealed)

§ 1053-A. Municipal elections

If an organization qualifies as a committee under section 1052, subsection 2 and that organization receives contributions or makes expenditures to influence a municipal election in towns or cities with a population of 15,000 or more, that organization shall register and file reports with the municipal clerk as required by Title 30-A, section 2502. If an organization qualifies as a ballot question committee under section 1052, subsection 2-A and that organization receives contributions or makes expenditures exceeding \$5,000 to influence a municipal referendum in a town or city with a population of less than 15,000, that organization shall register and file reports with the commission using the electronic filing system pursuant to section 1059, subsection 5. The reports must be filed in accordance with the reporting schedule in section 1059 and must contain the information listed in section 1060. A committee registered with the commission and that receives contributions or makes expenditures relating to a municipal election shall file a copy of the report containing such contributions or expenditures with the clerk in the subject municipality. The commission retains the sole authority to prescribe the content of all

reporting forms. The commission does not have responsibility to oversee the filing of registrations or campaign finance reports relating to municipal elections in towns or cities with a population of 15,000 or more. If a municipal clerk becomes aware of a potential violation of this subchapter that the clerk considers to be substantial, the clerk may refer the matter to the commission for enforcement. The commission may conduct an investigation if the information referred by the municipal clerk shows sufficient grounds for believing that a violation may have occurred. After conducting the investigation, if the commission determines that a violation of this subchapter has occurred, the commission may assess penalties provided in this subchapter.

§ 1053-B. Out-of-state committees

An organization that is registered as a political action committee, ballot question committee or political committee with the Federal Election Commission or a jurisdiction outside of this State shall register and file reports with the commission in accordance with this subchapter upon receiving contributions or making expenditures to initiate or influence a campaign in the State in excess of the amounts that would require registration under section 1052-A. The committee is not required to register and file reports if the committee's only financial activity within the State is to make contributions to candidates, party committees, political action committees or ballot question committees registered with the commission or a municipality and the committee has not raised and accepted any contributions during the calendar year to influence a campaign in this State.

§ 1053-C. Caucus political action committees

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "House caucus leader" means a member of a political party in the House of Representatives who has been elected the leader of that political party in the House of Representatives. For purposes of this paragraph, if the Speaker of the House of Representatives is a member of a political party, the Speaker of the House of Representatives is deemed the House caucus leader of that political party.

B. "Political party" has the same meaning as "party" as defined by section 1, subsection 28.

C. "Senate caucus leader" means a member of a political party in the Senate who has been elected the leader of that political party in the Senate. For purposes of this paragraph, if the President of the Senate is a member of a political party, the President of the Senate is deemed the Senate caucus leader of that political party.

2. Designation of caucus political action committee. Each Senate caucus leader and each House caucus leader may designate one caucus political action committee to

promote the election of nominees of the caucus leader's political party to the body of the Legislature of which the caucus leader is a member. The designation must be made in a letter to the commission and remains effective until a new designation is made in a letter to the commission from the caucus leader of the same political party and same body of the Legislature.

§ 1054. Appointment of treasurer; segregated campaign account

1. Appointment of treasurer. A committee required to register under section 1052-A shall appoint a treasurer before registering with the commission.

2. Segregated campaign account. A committee registered under section 1052-A shall establish a separate account in a bank or other financial institution, referred to in this section as a "campaign account." The committee shall deposit all funds contributed to or received by the committee for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign in the campaign account and shall finance all of the committee's expenditures to initiate or influence the campaign through the campaign account. If a business or corporate entity has established the committee, the campaign account must be segregated from the general treasury funds of the entity that established the committee. If the committee is established by one or more individuals, the campaign account must be segregated from and not commingled with the personal funds of those individuals.

3. Exceptions. The commission may adopt procedures by rule for waiving the requirement under subsection 2 to maintain a segregated campaign account upon a showing by a committee that a separate account would be administratively burdensome, including but not limited to committees organized outside this State or an individual who registers as a ballot question committee. If the committee was formed by another organization, that other organization may pay its employees for their campaign-related activities on behalf of the committee through its own treasury, rather than the campaign account. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

§ 1054-A. Duties and liabilities of the treasurer, principal officer and primary decision maker of committees

1. Duties of the treasurer. The treasurer of the committee shall ensure that the committee files and amends the committee's registration, files complete and accurate financial reports with the commission and maintains the committee's records as required by this chapter and the commission's rules. The treasurer is responsible for the committee's performance of these duties regardless of whether the treasurer has delegated administrative tasks related to these duties to another individual.

2. Joint responsibilities of the treasurer and principal officer. The treasurer and the principal officer are jointly responsible for the committee's compliance with the

requirements of this chapter and the commission's rules. The treasurer and principal officer are responsible for accepting and responding to notices and correspondence from the commission on behalf of the committee.

3. Participation in spending decisions. An individual who is the treasurer, principal officer or primary decision maker of the committee and who has signed the acknowledgment statement required by section 1052-A, subsection 4 is deemed to have participated in the spending decisions of the committee until the commission receives the individual's resignation statement or a notice of the individual's involuntary removal from the committee.

4. Financial liability. The commission may hold the treasurer and principal officer jointly and severally liable with the committee for any fines assessed against the committee for violations of this chapter and chapter 14. In addition, the commission may assess all or part of a fine against any other agent of the committee who is directly responsible for a violation, including individuals who have resigned or have been removed involuntarily from the committee. In deciding whether to assess a penalty against a treasurer, principal officer or any other individual, the commission may consider, among other things, whether the individual had actual knowledge of the action that constituted the violation or had authorized that action and whether the violation was intentional or caused by an error by a vendor or someone outside the control of the committee.

§ 1054-B. Payments to Legislators by political action committees and ballot question committees

1. Payments to Legislators. If a Legislator is a principal officer or treasurer of a political action committee or a ballot question committee or is one of the individuals primarily responsible for raising contributions or making decisions for a political action committee or a ballot question committee, the committee is subject to the following restrictions regarding payments to that Legislator.

A. Except as provided in paragraphs B and C, the committee may not compensate the Legislator for services provided to the committee.

B. The committee may pay for or reimburse the Legislator for travel expenses incurred in the proper performance of the Legislator's legislative duties and in volunteering for the committee. If the Legislator uses the Legislator's vehicle when conducting the activities described in this paragraph, the committee may pay the Legislator mileage reimbursement at a rate established by the commission by rule but may not pay for or reimburse the Legislator for the direct costs of repairing or maintaining the Legislator's vehicle.

C. The committee may pay for or reimburse the Legislator for other expenses incurred in the proper performance of the Legislator's legislative duties and for purchases made by the Legislator on behalf of the committee.

D. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the committee may not pay for or reimburse the Legislator for any expenses that have been or will be paid for or reimbursed by the Legislature or any other source of payment or reimbursement.

E. The committee may not make any payments for or reimburse the Legislator for any expenses that are determined by the commission to be for the purpose of personal financial enrichment of the Legislator.

2. Payments to immediate family members and businesses. If a Legislator is a principal officer or treasurer of a political action committee or a ballot question committee or is one of the individuals primarily responsible for raising contributions or making decisions for a political action committee or a ballot question committee, the committee is subject to the following restrictions regarding payments to an immediate family member of the Legislator or a business owned or operated by the Legislator or an immediate family member of the Legislator.

A. The committee may not compensate an immediate family member of the Legislator for services provided to the committee.

B. The committee may not make payments to or distribute, loan, advance, deposit or give money or anything of value to or compensate a business owned or operated by the Legislator or an immediate family member of the Legislator.

C. The committee may not make any payments for or reimburse the immediate family member of a Legislator for any expenses that are determined by the commission to be for the purpose of personal financial enrichment of the immediate family member of the Legislator.

3. Commingling of funds. If a Legislator is a principal officer or treasurer of a political action committee or a ballot question committee or is one of the individuals primarily responsible for raising contributions or making decisions for a political action committee or a ballot question committee, the committee's funds may not be commingled with the personal funds of the Legislator or the funds of a business owned or operated by the Legislator or any other person.

4. Penalties. A political action committee or ballot question committee that violates subsection 1, 2 or 3 commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$500 or the amount of the impermissible payment or reimbursement, whichever is greater, may be imposed by the commission according to the procedures set forth in section 1004-A. A Legislator who accepts a payment or reimbursement from a committee that is prohibited by subsection 1 or who violates subsection 3 commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$500 or the amount of the impermissible payment or

reimbursement, whichever is greater, may be imposed by the commission according to the procedures set forth in section 1004-A.

5. Rules. The commission may adopt rules as necessary to implement this section, including rules establishing mileage reimbursement rates, record-keeping requirements and reporting requirements and rules related to reimbursable travel expenses. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

§ 1055. Publication or distribution of political public communications

A political action committee that makes an expenditure to finance a public communication expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate or that names or depicts a clearly identified candidate is subject to the requirements of section 1014.

§ 1055-A. Political public communications to influence a ballot question

1. Public communications to influence ballot question elections. Whenever a person makes an expenditure exceeding \$500 for a public communication expressly advocating for or against an initiative or referendum that is on the ballot, the public communication must clearly and conspicuously state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the public communication, except that telephone calls must clearly state only the name of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the public communication. A digital public communication, including the transmission of text messages with the assistance of mass distribution technology, costing more than \$500 that expressly advocates for or against an initiative or referendum or that includes a link to a publicly accessible website containing express advocacy must clearly and conspicuously state the name of the person who made or financed the expenditure, unless the digital communication is excluded under subsection 2. A website established by a person required to register as a ballot question committee expressly advocating for or against an initiative or referendum must clearly and conspicuously state the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the website. Telephone surveys that meet generally accepted standards for polling research and that are not conducted for the purpose of influencing the voting position of call recipients are not required to include the disclosure.

2. Exceptions. The following forms of political public communication do not require the name and address of the person who made or financed the expenditure for the public communication because the name or address would be so small as to be illegible or infeasible: clothing, envelopes and stationery, small promotional items, tickets to fundraisers and electronic media advertisements where compliance with this section would be impracticable due to size or character limitations and similar items

determined by the commission to be too small and unnecessary for the disclosures required by this section. “Small promotional items” includes but is not limited to ashtrays, badges and badge holders, balloons, campaign buttons, coasters, combs, emery boards, erasers, glasses, key rings, letter openers, matchbooks, nail files, noisemakers, paper and plastic cups, pencils, pens, plastic tableware, 12-inch or shorter rulers and swizzle sticks.

3. Enforcement. A violation of this section may result in a penalty of no more than \$5,000. In assessing a penalty, the commission shall consider, among other things, how widely the communication was disseminated, whether the violation was intentional, whether the violation occurred as the result of an error by a printer or other paid vendor and whether the communication conceals or misrepresents the identity of the person who financed it.

§ 1056. Expenditure limitations

Any committee required to register under this chapter shall comply with the following expenditure limitations.

- 1. Aggregate expenditures.** A committee may not make contributions in support of the candidacy of one person aggregating more than the contribution limits established by the commission pursuant to section 1015.
- 2. Prohibited expenditures.** No committee may make any expenditure for liquor to be distributed to or consumed by voters while the polls are open on election day.

§ 1056-A. Expenditures by political action committees (Repealed)

§ 1056-B. Ballot question committees (Repealed)

§ 1056-C. Limits on contributions to leadership political action committees (Repealed)

§ 1056-D. Limits on contributions to separate segregated fund committees (Repealed)

§ 1057. Required records for committees

Any committee that is required to register under section 1052-A or 1053-B shall keep records as provided in this section for 4 years following the election to which the records pertain.

1. Details of records. The treasurer of a committee shall record a detailed account of:

- A. All expenditures made to or in behalf of a candidate, campaign or committee;
- B. The identity of each candidate, campaign or committee;
- C. The office sought by a candidate and the district the candidate seeks to represent, for candidates that a committee has made an expenditure to or in behalf of; and
- D. The date of each expenditure.

2. Receipts. The treasurer of a committee shall retain a vendor invoice or receipt stating the particular goods or services purchased for every expenditure in excess of \$50 to initiate or influence a campaign.

3. Record of contributions. The treasurer of a committee shall keep a record of all contributions to the committee, by name and mailing address, of each donor and the amount and date of the contribution. This provision does not apply to aggregate contributions from a single donor of \$50 or less. When any donor's contributions to a committee exceed \$50, the record must include the aggregate amount of all contributions from that donor.

4. Account statements. The treasurer of a committee shall keep account statements for the campaign account required by section 1054.

5. Simplified record-keeping requirements. The commission may adopt by rule simplified record-keeping requirements for an individual registering as a ballot question committee to initiate or influence a ballot question. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

§ 1058. Reports; qualifications for filing (Repealed)

§ 1059. Report; filing requirements

A committee required to register under section 1052-A or 1053-B shall file an initial campaign finance report within 7 days of registration or within 14 days of having been required to register, whichever comes first, and thereafter shall file reports in compliance with this section. All reports must be filed by 11:59 p.m. on the day of the filing deadline,

except that reports submitted to a municipal clerk must be filed by the close of business on the day of the filing deadline.

1. Contents; quarterly reports and election year reports. [Repealed]

2. Reporting schedule. A committee shall file reports according to the following schedule.

A. A committee shall file quarterly reports:

- (1) On January 15th, and the report must be complete as of December 31st;
- (2) On April 10th, and the report must be complete as of March 31st;
- (3) On July 15th, and the report must be complete as of June 30th; and
- (4) On October 5th, and the report must be complete as of September 30th.

B. During any year in which primary and general elections are held, a committee shall file primary and general election reports in addition to the reports required under paragraph A:

- (1) On the 11th day before the date on which the election is held, which must be complete as of the 14th day before that date; and
- (2) On the 42nd day after the date on which the election is held, which must be complete as of the 35th day after that date.

A committee shall file primary and general election reports even if the committee did not engage in financial activity to influence the primary or general election.

C. In any election year other than a year described in paragraph B, if a committee has received contributions or made expenditures for the purpose of influencing a ballot question election, a special election or a municipal candidate or referendum election subject to Title 30-A, section 2502, the committee shall file preelection and post-election reports:

- (1) On the 11th day before the date on which the election is held, which must be complete as of the 14th day before that date; and
- (2) On the 42nd day after the date on which the election is held, which must be complete as of the 35th day after that date.

D. A committee that files an election report under paragraph B or C is not required to file a quarterly report when the deadline for that quarterly report falls within 10 days of the filing deadline established in paragraph B or C.

E. If a committee is required to file a report 11 days before an election pursuant to paragraph B or C, the committee shall report any single contribution of \$5,000 or

more received or single expenditure of \$1,000 or more made after the 14th day before the election and more than 24 hours before 5:00 p.m. on the day of the election within 24 hours of that contribution or expenditure. The treasurer is not required to include in this report expenditures for overhead expenses or compensation paid to an employee or other member of the campaign staff who has received payments at regular intervals that have been disclosed in previously filed campaign finance reports. As used in this paragraph, “overhead expenses” includes, but is not limited to, rent, utility payments, taxes, insurance premiums or similar administrative expenses.

3. Report of expenditure made after the 11th day and more than 48 hours before any election. [Repealed]

4. Special election reports. [Repealed]

5. Electronic filing. A committee shall file each report required by this section through an electronic filing system developed by the commission. Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, for purposes of entering and retrieving information, the electronic filing system may categorize ballot question committees as a subcategory of political action committees. The commission may make an exception to this electronic filing requirement if a committee submits a written request that states that the committee lacks access to the technology or the technological ability to file reports electronically. The request for an exception must be submitted within 30 days of the registration of the committee. The commission shall grant all reasonable requests for exceptions.

§ 1060. Content of reports

The reports must contain the following information and any additional information required by the commission to monitor the activities of committees:

- 1. Identification of candidates.** The names of and offices sought by all candidates whose campaigns the committee supports or intends to influence;
- 2. Identification of committees; parties.** The names of all political committees or party committees supported in any way by the committee;
- 3. Identification of ballot question campaigns.** The ballot question campaigns that the committee intends to initiate or influence;
- 4. Itemized expenditures.** An itemization of each expenditure made to initiate or influence any campaign, including the date, payee and purpose of the expenditure and the name of each candidate, and each referendum or initiated petition supported or opposed by the expenditure. If expenditures were made to a person described in section 1012, subsection 3, paragraph A, subparagraph (4), the report must contain the name of the person; the amount spent by that person on behalf of the committee, including,

but not limited to, expenditures made during the signature gathering phase; the reason for the expenditure; and the date of the expenditure. The commission may specify the categories of expenditures that are to be reported to enable the commission to closely monitor the activities of committees;

5. Aggregate expenditures. [Repealed]

6. Identification of contributions. An itemization of each contribution of more than \$50 made to or received by the committee for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign, including the name, occupation, places of business and mailing address of each contributor and the amount and date of the contribution;

6-A. Funds deposited into campaign account. Any funds deposited into or transferred into the campaign account described in section 1054, including but not limited to funds from the general treasury of an organization that is required to establish a committee; and

7. Other payments. Operational expenses and any other payments made from the campaign account described in section 1054.

§1060-A. Campaign for direct initiative or people's veto; reporting by major contributors

This section governs the reporting of contributions aggregating in excess of \$100,000 for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign for a people's veto referendum under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 17 or a direct initiative of legislation under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 18.

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Contribution" has the same meaning as set out in section 1052, subsection 3 and also includes but is not limited to:

(1) Funds or anything of value that the contributor specified were given in connection with a campaign for a people's veto referendum or direct initiative campaign;

(2) Funds or anything of value provided in response to a solicitation that would lead the contributor to believe that the contribution would be used specifically for the purpose of initiating or influencing a people's veto referendum or direct initiative campaign; and

(3) Funds or anything of value that can be reasonably determined to have been provided by the contributor for the purpose of initiating or influencing a people's veto referendum or direct initiative campaign when viewed in the

context of the contribution and the recipient committee's activities during the campaign.

B. "Major contributor" means a person, other than an individual or a committee, that makes one or more contributions aggregating in excess of \$100,000 to a ballot question committee or political action committee for the purpose of initiating or influencing any one people's veto referendum campaign or any one direct initiative campaign.

2. Notice to major contributor. Within 5 days of receiving more than \$100,000 in the aggregate from a major contributor, the recipient committee shall provide written notice to the major contributor of the reporting requirement under this section and shall submit a copy of the notice to the commission. If the \$100,000 aggregate amount is exceeded as a result of a contribution received during the last 13 days before an election, the recipient committee shall, within 24 hours of receiving the contribution, provide written notice of the reporting requirement to the major contributor and submit a copy of the notice to the commission. The commission shall prepare a sample written notice for this purpose.

3. Required reports. A major contributor shall file a report containing the information required in subsection 4 on or before the next regularly scheduled filing deadline under section 1059, subsection 2 occurring after the major contributor receives notice of the reporting requirement. If a major contributor has received a notice from a recipient committee or the commission during the last 13 days before an election as required under subsection 2, the major contributor shall file a report within 2 business days of receiving notice from the recipient committee or commission. The commission shall prescribe and prepare forms for these reports and may require major contributors to file reports electronically.

4. Content. In the reports required under subsection 3, a major contributor shall provide:

A. The name of and relevant contact information for the major contributor and the name of a responsible officer of the major contributor;

B. The form of organization and purpose of the major contributor;

C. The amount and date of each contribution from the major contributor to the recipient committee;

D. A certification that the major contributor has not received contributions, in whole or in part, for the purpose of initiating or influencing a people's veto referendum or direct initiative campaign in this State or, if the major contributor has received such contributions, the dates, sources and amounts of any such contributions;

E. The names of the 5 largest sources of funds received by the major contributor during the period beginning 6 months prior to the first contribution made to the recipient committee and ending on the date of the filing of the report. This paragraph does not apply to funds received by the major contributor:

- (1) That are restricted to purposes that are unrelated to a people's veto referendum or direct initiative campaign in the State;
- (2) In the ordinary course of the major contributor's regular trade or business or as investment income; or
- (3) If the source of the funds provided no more than \$5,000 to the major contributor during the relevant period of time; and

F. A statement indicating whether the major contributor is exempt from taxation under the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and a list of any governmental jurisdictions within the United States in which the major contributor has filed campaign finance reports during the previous 12 months.

The commission may require by rule additional information to be reported consistent with this subsection to facilitate disclosure to citizens of this State of financial activity conducted for the purpose of influencing elections in this State.

5. Noncompliance. The commission may assess a civil penalty against a person that does not comply with the requirements of this section. The preliminary penalty is 10% of the total contributions required to be reported or \$50,000, whichever is less, for:

- A. A recipient committee that fails to provide timely notice to a major contributor under subsection 2;
- B. A recipient committee that fails to provide a copy of the notice to the commission under subsection 2. If the commission assesses a penalty under paragraph A, the commission may not also assess a penalty under this paragraph; and
- C. A major contributor that fails to file a timely report required under this section or that files a report that does not substantially conform to the disclosure requirements of this section or rules adopted under this section.

6. Waiver request; final penalty. Not later than the 14th calendar day after the date the person receives notice of the preliminary penalty from the commission under subsection 5, the person may request a waiver of the penalty in full or in part. In considering a request for a waiver under this subsection, the commission shall consider:

A. For violations under subsection 5, paragraphs A and B:

- (1) Whether, as a result of the late notice, the due date for a report required by this subchapter is later than if a timely notice had been received;

- (2) Whether the recipient committee made a bona fide effort to provide notice to the major contributors;
- (3) The amount of the contributions required to be reported; and
- (4) Other relevant factors; and

B. For violations under subsection 5, paragraph C:

- (1) The failure of the recipient committee to provide notice of the reporting requirement to the major contributor;
- (2) The number of days the report is late;
- (3) The amount of the contributions required to be reported; and
- (4) Other relevant factors.

A person requesting a determination on a waiver may either appear in person or designate a representative to appear on the person's behalf or may submit a sworn statement explaining the mitigating circumstances for consideration by the commission. After a commission meeting, the commission shall mail notice of the final determination of the commission and the penalty, if any, imposed pursuant to this subsection to the person against whom the commission is assessing the penalty. If the person against whom the commission is assessing the penalty does not request a waiver, the preliminary penalty calculated by the commission is final. The commission shall mail final notice of the penalty to the person against whom the commission is assessing the penalty. A final determination by the commission on a waiver may be appealed to the Superior Court in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 7 and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 80C.

§ 1061. Dissolution of committees

Whenever any committee determines that it will no longer accept any contributions or make any expenditures, the committee shall file a termination report that includes all financial activity from the end date of the previous reporting period through the date of termination with the commission. The committee shall dispose of any surplus prior to termination. In the termination report, the committee shall report any outstanding loan, debt or obligation in the manner prescribed by the commission.

§ 1062. Failure to file on time (Repealed)

§ 1062-A. Failure to file on time

1. Registration. A political action committee required to register under section 1052-A, 1053-A or 1053-B or a ballot question committee required to register under section 1053-A or 1056-B that fails to do so or that fails to provide the information required by the commission for registration may be assessed a fine of no more than \$2,500. In assessing a fine, the commission shall consider, among other things, whether the violation was intentional, the amount of campaign and financial activity that occurred before the committee registered, whether the committee intended to conceal its campaign or financial activity and the level of experience of the committee's volunteers and staff.

2. Campaign finance reports. A campaign finance report is not timely filed unless a properly signed or electronically submitted copy of the report, substantially conforming to the disclosure requirements of this subchapter, is received by the commission by 11:59 p.m. on the date it is due. Except as provided in subsection 6, the commission shall determine whether a required report satisfies the requirements for timely filing. The commission may waive a penalty in whole or in part if it is disproportionate to the level of experience of the person filing the report or to the harm suffered by the public from the late disclosure. The commission may waive the penalty in whole or in part if the commission determines the failure to file a timely report was due to mitigating circumstances. For purposes of this section, "mitigating circumstances" means:

A. A valid emergency of the committee treasurer determined by the commission, in the interest of the sound administration of justice, to warrant the waiver of the penalty in whole or in part;

B. An error by the commission staff; or

C. Other circumstances determined by the commission that warrant mitigation of the penalty, based upon relevant evidence presented that a bona fide effort was made to file the report in accordance with the statutory requirements, including, but not limited to, unexplained delays in postal service or interruptions in Internet service.

3. Basis for penalties. The penalty for late filing of a report required under this subchapter is a percentage of the total contributions or expenditures for the filing period, whichever is greater, multiplied by the number of calendar days late, as follows:

A. For the first violation, 2%;

B. For the 2nd violation, 4%; and

C. For the 3rd and subsequent violations, 6%.

Any penalty of less than \$25 is waived.

Violations accumulate on reports with filing deadlines in a 2-year period that begins on January 1st of each even-numbered calendar year. Waiver of a penalty does not nullify the finding of a violation.

A report required to be filed under this subchapter that is sent by certified or registered United States mail and postmarked at least 2 days before the deadline is not subject to penalty.

4. Maximum penalties. The maximum penalty under this subchapter is \$10,000 for reports required under section 1053-A, 1056-B or 1059, except that if the dollar amount of the financial activity that was not timely filed or did not substantially conform to the reporting requirements of this subchapter exceeds \$50,000, the maximum penalty is 100% of the dollar amount of that financial activity.

5. Request for a commission determination. If a committee files a report required under this subchapter late, a notice of preliminary penalty must be forwarded to the treasurer of the committee whose report is not received by 11:59 p.m. on the deadline date informing the treasurer of the commission staff finding of violation and preliminary penalty calculated under subsection 3 and providing the treasurer with an opportunity to request a determination by the commission. A request for determination must be made within 14 calendar days of receipt of the commission's notice. A principal officer or treasurer requesting a determination may either appear in person or designate a representative to appear on the principal officer's or treasurer's behalf or submit a sworn statement explaining the mitigating circumstances for consideration by the commission. A final determination by the commission may be appealed to the Superior Court in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 7 and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 80C.

6. Final notice of penalty. After a commission meeting, notice of the final determination of the commission and the penalty, if any, imposed pursuant to this subchapter must be sent to the principal officer and the treasurer of the committee.

If a determination is not requested, the preliminary penalty calculated by the commission staff is final. The commission staff shall mail final notice of the penalty to the principal officer and to the treasurer of the committee. A detailed summary of all notices must be provided to the commission.

7. List of late-filing committees. [Repealed]

8. Penalties for failure to file report. If the commission staff finds that a committee or other person has failed to file a report required under this subchapter, the commission staff shall send by regular mail and e-mail a notice to the committee treasurer or other responsible officer within 3 business days following the filing deadline informing the committee treasurer or other responsible officer that the report has not been received. If the report remains unfiled after 10 days, the commission staff shall send another notice by regular mail and e-mail. If the committee or other person has not filed the

report after these 2 notices, commission staff may refer the violation to the commission, which may, after providing notice and an opportunity to be heard, determine whether a violation has occurred and, if so, the amount of any penalty. The maximum penalty for failure to file a report required under section 1059 is \$10,000 or the amount of financial activity not reported, whichever is greater. A person who fails to file a report as required by this subchapter after the commission has sent the first 2 notices required in this subsection is guilty of a Class E crime, except that, if a penalty is assessed pursuant to this subsection and collected by the commission, the State may not prosecute a violation under this subsection.

8-A. Penalties for failure to file report. [Repealed]

9. Enforcement. A penalty assessed pursuant to this section that has not been paid in full within 30 days after issuance of a notice of the final determination may be enforced in accordance with section 1004-B.

§ 1062-B. Failure to keep records

A committee that fails to keep records required by this chapter may be assessed a fine of up to \$10,000 or the amount of financial activity for which no records were kept, whichever is greater. In assessing a fine, the commission shall consider, among other things, whether the violation was intentional, whether the violation occurred as the result of an error by someone outside the control of the committee, whether the committee intended to conceal its financial activity, the amount of financial activity that was not documented and the level of experience of the committee's volunteers and staff.

§ 1063. Constitutional officers and State Auditor

The Secretary of State, the Treasurer of State, the Attorney General, the State Auditor, or any individual running for these offices, may not form a political action committee or be involved in decision making for or solicit contributions to a political action committee.

§ 1064. Foreign government campaign spending prohibited

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

- A.** "Contribution" has the meanings given in section 1012, subsection 2 and section 1052, subsection 3.
- B.** "Electioneering communication" means a communication described in section 1014, subsection 1, 2 or 2-A.
- C.** "Expenditure" has the meanings given in section 1012, subsection 3 and section 1052, subsection 4.

D. "Foreign government" includes any person or group of persons exercising sovereign de facto or de jure political jurisdiction over any country other than the United States or over any part of such country and includes any subdivision of any such group and any group or agency to which such sovereign de facto or de jure authority or functions are directly or indirectly delegated. "Foreign government" includes any faction or body of insurgents within a country assuming to exercise governmental authority, whether or not such faction or body of insurgents has been recognized by the United States.

E. "Foreign government-influenced entity" means:

(1) A foreign government; or

(2) A firm, partnership, corporation, association, organization or other entity with respect to which a foreign government or foreign government-owned entity:

(a) Holds, owns, controls or otherwise has direct or indirect beneficial ownership of 5% or more of the total equity, outstanding voting shares, membership units or other applicable ownership interests; or

(b) Directs, dictates, controls or directly or indirectly participates in the decision-making process with regard to the activities of the firm, partnership, corporation, association, organization or other entity to influence the nomination or election of a candidate or the initiation or approval of a referendum, such as decisions concerning the making of contributions, expenditures, independent expenditures, electioneering communications or disbursements.

F. "Foreign government-owned entity" means any entity in which a foreign government owns or controls more than 50% of its equity or voting shares.

G. "Independent expenditure" has the meaning given in section 1019-B, subsection 1.

H. [Repealed]

I. "Referendum" means any of the following:

(1) A people's veto referendum under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 17;

(2) A direct initiative of legislation under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 18;

(3) A popular vote on an amendment to the Constitution of Maine under the Constitution of Maine, Article X, Section 4;

(4) A referendum vote on a measure enacted by the Legislature and expressly conditioned upon ratification by a referendum vote under the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 19;

(5) The ratification of the issue of bonds by the State or any state agency; and

(6) Any county or municipal referendum.

2. Campaign spending by foreign governments prohibited. A foreign government-influenced entity may not make, directly or indirectly, a contribution, expenditure, independent expenditure, electioneering communication or any other donation or disbursement of funds to influence the nomination or election of a candidate or the initiation or approval of a referendum.

3. Solicitation or acceptance of contributions from foreign governments prohibited. A person may not knowingly solicit, accept or receive a contribution or donation prohibited by subsection 2.

4. Substantial assistance prohibited. A person may not knowingly or recklessly provide substantial assistance, with or without compensation:

A. In the making, solicitation, acceptance or receipt of a contribution or donation prohibited by subsection 2; or

B. In the making of an expenditure, independent expenditure, electioneering communication or disbursement prohibited by subsection 2.

5. Structuring prohibited. A person may not structure or attempt to structure a solicitation, contribution, expenditure, independent expenditure, electioneering communication, donation, disbursement or other transaction to evade the prohibitions and requirements in this section.

6. Communications by foreign governments to influence policy; required disclosure. Whenever a foreign government-influenced entity disburses funds to finance a public communication not otherwise prohibited by this section to influence the public or any state, county or local official or agency regarding the formulation, adoption or amendment of any state or local government policy or regarding the political or public interest of or government relations with a foreign country or a foreign political party, the public communication must clearly and conspicuously contain the words "Sponsored by" immediately followed by the name of the foreign government-influenced entity that made the disbursement and a statement identifying that foreign government-influenced entity as a "foreign government" or a "foreign government-influenced entity."

7. Due diligence required. Each television or radio broadcasting station, provider of cable or satellite television, print news outlet and Internet platform shall establish due diligence policies, procedures and controls that are reasonably designed to ensure that

it does not broadcast, distribute or otherwise make available to the public a public communication for which a foreign government-influenced entity has made an expenditure, independent expenditure, electioneering communication or disbursement in violation of this section. If an Internet platform discovers that it has distributed a public communication for which a foreign government-influenced entity has made an expenditure, independent expenditure, electioneering communication or disbursement in violation of this section, the Internet platform shall immediately remove the communication and notify the commission.

8. Penalties. The commission may assess a penalty of not more than \$5,000 or double the amount of the contribution, expenditure, independent expenditure, electioneering communication, donation or disbursement involved in the violation, whichever is greater, for a violation of this section. In assessing a penalty under this section, the commission shall consider, among other things, whether the violation was intentional and whether the person that committed the violation attempted to conceal or misrepresent the identity of the relevant foreign government-influenced entity.

9. Violations. Notwithstanding section 1004, a person that knowingly violates subsections 2 through 5 commits a Class C crime.

10. Rules. The commission shall adopt rules to administer the provisions of this section. Rules adopted under this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

11. Applicability. Notwithstanding section 1051, this section applies to all persons, including candidates, their treasurers and authorized committees under section 1013-A, subsection 1; party committees under section 1013-A, subsection 3; and committees under section 1052, subsection 2.

Subchapter V

Maine Code of Fair Campaign Practices

§ 1101. Maine Code of Fair Campaign Practices

1. Distribution to candidates. At the time a candidate for the office of Governor, the Senate or the House of Representatives registers with the commission as required under section 1013-A, the commission shall give the candidate a form containing a copy of the Maine Code of Fair Campaign Practices established in this subchapter. The commission shall, at that time, inform the candidate that subscription to the code is voluntary. For the purposes of this subchapter, “code” means the Maine Code of Fair Campaign Practices.

2. The code form. The code, printed on the form provided to candidates under subsection 1, must read as follows:

“MAINE CODE OF FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES

I shall conduct my campaign and, to the extent reasonably possible, insist that my supporters conduct themselves, in a manner consistent with the best Maine and American traditions, discussing the issues and presenting my record and policies with sincerity and candor.

I shall uphold the right of every qualified voter to free and equal participation in the election process.

I shall not participate in and I shall condemn defamation of and other attacks on any opposing candidate or party that I do not believe to be truthful, provable and relevant to my campaign.

I shall not use or authorize and I shall condemn material relating to my campaign that falsifies, misrepresents or distorts the facts, including, but not limited to, malicious or unfounded accusations creating or exploiting doubts as to the morality, patriotism or motivations of any party or candidate.

I shall not appeal to and I shall condemn appeals to prejudices based on actual or perceived race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, age or familial status.

I shall not practice and I shall condemn practices that tend to corrupt or undermine the system of free election or that hamper or prevent the free expression of the will of the voters.

I shall promptly and publicly repudiate the support of any individual or group that resorts, on behalf of my candidacy or in opposition to that of an opponent, to methods in violation of the letter or spirit of this code.

I, the undersigned, candidate for election to public office in the State of Maine, hereby voluntarily endorse, subscribe to and solemnly pledge to conduct my campaign in accordance with the above principles and practices.

§ 1102. Printing of code forms

The commission shall print, or cause to be printed, copies of the code for distribution to registered candidates.

§ 1103. Acceptance of completed forms

The commission shall accept, at all times prior to the election, completed code forms that are properly subscribed to by a candidate.

§ 1104. Public records

The commission shall retain for public inspection all completed code forms accepted by the commission under section 1103. A code subscribed to by a candidate is a public record under Title 1, section 408-A.

§ 1105. Subscription to code voluntary

In no event may a candidate be required to subscribe to or endorse the code.