



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

## **LAW AFFECTING MAINE CLEAN ELECTION ACT CANDIDATES INVOLVED IN POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES**

Beginning with the 2016 election cycle, Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA) candidates are no longer allowed to establish or maintain a political action committee (PAC) to promote his or her election for a legislative leadership position (a “leadership PAC”), to raise money for legislative expenses, or for most other purposes. ([P.L. 2015, ch. 116](#)) However, MCEA candidates may continue to be involved in other PACs, such as those organized by their legislative caucus or formed to influence a ballot question election.

### **1. I’m thinking of running as a Maine Clean Election Act candidate in 2018. How does this change apply to me?**

Any candidate who has declared an intention to qualify for MCEA funding in the 2018 elections may not establish a PAC, or maintain a PAC that the candidate has previously established, for which the candidate is:

- the principal officer or the treasurer, or
- primarily responsible for fund-raising or making decisions.

### **2. How long does the prohibition last?**

The prohibition will begin April 1, 2018. The prohibition ends on January 1, 2020 if you win the 2018 general election. If you lose the 2018 primary or general election, or withdraw from the race, the prohibition ends on the day of the lost election or date of withdrawal.

### **3. I established a leadership PAC years ago. Do I have to terminate the PAC to run as an MCEA candidate in 2018?**

Yes. If you have established a PAC that meets the criteria in the answer to Question 1, you must terminate the PAC or your involvement with the PAC no later than April 1, 2018.

#### **4. Can I be involved in the political activities of other PACs or political committees?**

Yes. Although you may not establish your own PAC, you may be involved in other PACs, ballot question committees and state and local party committees. As an MCEA candidate:

- You may be active in a PAC organized by your party's legislative caucus, including raising money and making decisions for the PAC. However, you must not be involved in any way with any spending by the PAC to promote your election.
- You may raise money for other candidates, endorse other candidates, or use personal funds to promote other candidates.
- You may be involved in the raising and spending of funds by a state or local political party committee, provided that you are not involved in any way with spending to promote your election (with the exception of "slate cards").
- You may raise money and make decisions for ballot question committees and PACs organized for the purpose of promoting or defeating a ballot question.

If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact the Commission staff at (207) 287-4179 or [ethics@maine.gov](mailto:ethics@maine.gov).

Updated June 19, 2017