

## Political Filings Tips

\*See [Pre-Campaign Compliance Check-list](#) to get started

### Expenses to track:

- Direct contributions made to candidates or other committees (track direct gifts + coordinated expenses to ensure you do not exceed the gift limit for each race)
- Staff time (if working on multiple races, will need to track each separately)
- Vendor payments (track date of payment, date communication went/will go live, and all vendor addresses)
- Credit card expenses (it can be easy to forget these!)
- Personal reimbursements (staff often wind up purchasing things like waters, parking, etc-- frequent reminders may be needed so that reimbursements are not turned in late, requiring amendments to reports already filed)
- Website usage (if you're placing electoral information on your website, calculate the % of space that takes up and report it)
- E-Blasts (if you send a blast to your supporters, know the value of your list and report it)

**Note:** In addition to tracking your expenditures by candidate/race, you will need to track by Support vs Oppose. Often, electoral communications contain both messages (ex: Candidate X is good, Candidate Y is bad). In this case, find a reasonable way to allocate the expense-- for example, if one side of a mailer says Candidate X is good and the other says Candidate Y is bad, you may report the expense as 50% Support for X and 50% Oppose for Y.

### Reporting agencies:

- FEC (Federal Elections Commission)-- Report all expenditures related to federal races
- State reporting body-- Each state has a body to report expenditures like state legislative, state ballot, and constitutional officer
- Local agencies-- Cities and Counties also have reporting bodies (and rules)

### Reporting periods:

- Reporting requirements are partly determined by how much you spend, and when
- Different jurisdictions have different reporting periods; be aware of those relevant to your races before beginning expenditures
- Generally, the closer you are to Election Day, the shorter the reporting periods get
- In some cases, 24-hour reporting is required when you spend above a certain threshold
- You may also be required to file regular annual or semi-annual reports, regardless of your activity

### Questions to consider asking legal counsel:

- What are the specific reporting requirements and periods for your races?
- What are the specific disclaimer requirements for each platform you plan to use?
- Having counsel review all scripts, ads, and other materials can be beneficial-- be sure to build in time for this