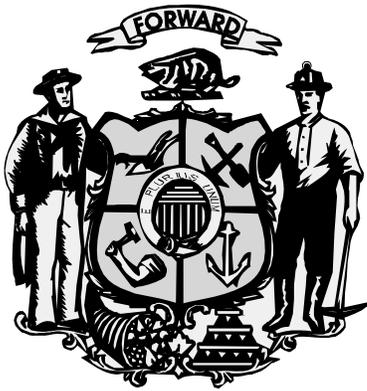


# CAMPAIGN FINANCE OVERVIEW

## State Candidates

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## **I. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Who is Required to Register**

Under Wisconsin campaign finance law, a candidate for election to public office must register with the appropriate filing officer. A candidate for one of these state offices -

Governor,  
Lieutenant Governor,  
Attorney General,  
Secretary of State,  
State Treasurer,  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction,  
Justice of the Supreme Court,  
Court of Appeals Judge,  
Circuit Court Judge,  
State Senator,  
Representative to the Assembly,  
District Attorney;

must register with the Government Accountability Board as soon as any of the following occur:

- (a) The individual takes any of the following affirmative actions to seek nomination or election to a state or local office:
  1. Files nomination papers with the appropriate filing officer.
  2. Is nominated as a candidate for state or local office by a caucus under s. 8.05 (1) or by a political party and the nomination is certified to the appropriate filing officer.
  3. Receives a contribution, makes a disbursement, or gives consent for another person to receive a contribution or make a disbursement in order to bring about the individual's nomination or election to a state or local office.
- (b) The individual holds a state or local office and is the subject of a recall petition.
- (c) The individual holds a state or local office.

A candidate must file a campaign registration statement (ETHCF-1) as soon as practicable after the individual qualifies as a candidate. Registration statements can be obtained from the Government Accountability Board website (<http://gab.wi.gov/>). A candidate who receives no contributions, makes no disbursements, and incurs no obligations need not designate a campaign depository account until the first contribution is received, disbursement is made, or obligation is incurred. The minimum amount of money needed to open an account can be deposited at a financial institution and a post office box can be rented before registration. These receipts and expenses must be reported on the first campaign finance report.

After filing the registration statement, a candidate may begin receiving and disbursing campaign funds. The campaign's financial activities must be reported to the Government Accountability Board on campaign finance reports (ETHCF-2S, 2SE, 2SU or 2a), *unless the committee has claimed an exemption from filing finance reports*. These reports will disclose information on the receipts, expenditures, incurred obligations and loans of the campaign.

## **Completing a Registration Statement**

Registration statements are now completed electronically using the Campaign Finance Information System (CFIS) website. The website address is <http://cfis.wi.gov>. Several items of information are required on a campaign registration statement (ETHCF-1). When any of this information changes, an amendment to the registration statement must be filed with the appropriate filing officer in a timely manner (**within 10 days**).

### **Item 1. Candidate and Candidate Committee Information**

This section must be completed by all candidates and candidate committees. It contains the information identifying the candidate and committee, party affiliation (*if any*), office sought (including branch and district number), and date of the election.

A personal campaign committee is organized by the candidate to promote the candidate's declared candidacy for a specific office. *Note: You must register as a personal campaign committee to appear on the ballot.*

### **Item 2. Political Committee Information (Non Candidates Only)**

This section must be completed by political committees other than candidate committees. **Candidate committees do not complete this section.**

### **Item 3. Campaign Treasurer**

The treasurer for the candidate or political committee must be listed in Item 3. The candidate can serve as the campaign treasurer. It is important that the treasurer's name, complete address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers be provided on the registration statement and be kept current. **All notices and forms for campaign finance reports will be sent to this person at the email address(es) given in this section.** Failure to keep this information current may result in the committee being penalized for failure to file necessary reports.

### **Item 4. Principal Officers of the Committee and Other Custodians of Books and Accounts**

If the committee has officers besides the treasurer, they should be listed in Item 4.

### **Item 5. Depository Information**

All registrants must list the name and address of the depository institution in which all contributions are deposited and from which all disbursements are made. Candidates claiming exemption from filing finance reports may use a personal checking account, i.e., they may commingle campaign money with personal funds. A separate (non-personal) account must be opened if the candidate (committee) exceeds the exemption limits. Account information must be provided on the ETHCF-1 whether the account is a personal or separate campaign account. An individual who holds a state or local elective office may establish a second candidate committee under this subchapter for the purpose of pursuing a different state or local office.

To open the campaign account, it may be necessary to complete a request for Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. This form should be available from your financial institution or from an IRS office or the website <http://www.irs.gov/charities/political/index.html>.

#### Item 6. Certification

The candidate and committee treasurer must sign and send to the Government Accountability Board the original registration statement certifying that the information is true, correct, and complete.

#### Item 7. Exemption From Filing Campaign Finance Reports

Registrants who are eligible for an exemption from filing campaign finance reports should complete this section. The exemption requirements are explained below.

#### **Amending a Registration Statement**

When any of the information reported on the registration statement changes, the statement must be amended by filing a new ETHCF-1. The ETHCF-1 must be amended and submitted to the Government Accountability Board within 10 days of the change. Candidates updating their registration using the Campaign Finance Information System do not need to send a paper copy. Candidates that do not amend their registration in CFIS are required to send the amended copy to the Government Accountability Board and check the “yes” box at the top of the form to indicate that it is an amendment.

#### **Penalty For Not Filing a Registration Statement**

Failure to file the original registration statement by the deadline for filing nomination papers prevents a candidate’s name from appearing on the ballot. If a required statement or amendment is not filed on time, the registrant may be subject to a fine.

#### **Candidates Seeking More Than One Office**

An individual who holds a state or local elective office may establish a second candidate committee to pursue another state or local office. If a second committee is established, that committee will register and file reports with to the appropriate filing officer.

If the candidate chooses to keep a single committee, copies of the registration and all reports should be filed with both filing officers, and each reported transaction should be labeled with the office to which it applies.

## **II. EXEMPTION FROM FILING CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS**

### **Eligibility**

Committees may be eligible for an exemption from filing campaign finance reports if campaign finance activity is low enough to meet the following criteria:

1. The committee anticipates that it will not accept contributions, OR make disbursements, or incur loans and other obligations in an aggregate amount exceeding \$2,000 in a calendar year.

The candidate or treasurer must sign and date the request for exemption on the campaign registration statement (ETHCF-1) or exemption reverification (ETHCF-14). An indication of limited activity (exemption) under this section is effective only for the calendar year in which it is granted. The candidate's own contributions do count toward the total receipts of \$2,000 or less in a calendar year.

If a committee requests exemption beginning after January 1<sup>st</sup> of a calendar year, the committee must file a report covering all activity up to the date of the request.

If a candidate committee wishes to renew its exempt status, it should file the ETHCF-14 or a new ETHCF-1. Candidates on the ballot may claim an exemption when they first register, or renew their exemption from the previous calendar year. HOWEVER, candidates on the ballot in that calendar year, who didn't claim the exemption on their original registration, may not amend her/his registration to claim the exemption before the date of her/his election.

### **Financial Records During Exemption**

When a committee is exempt, it is not required to file any campaign finance reports (ETHCF-2S, 2SE, 2SU or 2a). However, the candidate or treasurer is required to keep financial records adequate to meet the requirements of campaign finance law. Records must be kept of all contributions to the committee and of all expenditures.

A candidate who is exempt from filing campaign finance reports may use a personal account as the campaign depository. The name and address of the financial institution must be provided on the ETHCF-1.

### **Revoking Exemption**

If a decision is made at a later date to exceed the \$2,000 limit on contributions or disbursements, the committee must amend its campaign registration statement immediately, by checking the box: "*This registrant is no longer eligible to claim exemption*" on either the ETHCF-1 or ETHCF-14.

The committee is then required to file campaign finance reports beginning with the next regular report. The first report must cover all financial activity from January 1 of the current year, through the cutoff date of the required report.

## **III. MAJOR PROVISIONS OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW**

### **Contribution Limits**

The contribution limits established by state statute determine the maximum amount of contributions (cash, non-commercial loans, and in-kind contributions combined) that an individual or committee can give or receive over a campaign period. These limits depend on the office sought by the candidate and the identity of the contributor. A candidate or committee may not accept contributions that exceed the applicable limit.

THESE LIMITS APPLY TO ALL CANDIDATES AND PERSONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES.  
 Contribution limitations apply cumulatively to the entire primary and election campaign in which the candidate participates, whether or not there is a contested primary election.

OFFICE	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS	CANDIDATE COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTORS	POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTORS
GOVERNOR	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$86,000
LT. GOVERNOR	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$26,000
SECRETARY OF STATE	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$18,000
STATE TREASURER	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$18,000
ATTORNEY GENERAL	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$44,000
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$18,000
SUPREME COURT	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$18,000
STATE SENATOR	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVE	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
APPEALS JUDGE – POPULOUS DISTRICTS	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
APPEALS JUDGE – OTHER DISTRICTS	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
CIRCUIT JUDGE – POPULOUS AREA	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
DISTRICT ATTORNEY – POPULOUS AREA	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
CIRCUIT JUDGE – OTHER AREA	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
DISTRICT ATTORNEY – OTHER AREA	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
LOCAL OFFICES	GREATER OF \$500 OR 2 CENTS TIMES THE POPULATION, BUT NOT MORE THAN \$6,000	GREATER OF \$500 OR 2 CENTS TIMES THE POPULATION, BUT NOT MORE THAN \$6,000	GREATER OF \$400 OR 2 CENTS TIMES THE POPULATION, BUT NOT MORE THAN \$5,000

**Corporations cannot make contributions to candidate committees.  
 Party Committees can make unlimited contributions to candidate committees.**

Definition of Campaign for Calculating Contribution Limits

For purposes of calculating contribution limits, a new candidate’s campaign **begins** on the date a new candidate is required to file a registration statement, i.e., the date she or he becomes a

candidate. The campaign period includes both the primary and general election. The campaign period ends the day before the winning candidate begins her or his new term.

For an incumbent candidate, the new campaign period begins on the day the candidate assumes office. The campaign period runs through the primary and general election for that office, and lasts until the day before the winning candidate begins his or her new term.

### Exclusions from Contribution Limits

Contributions used to pay legal fees and other expenses incurred in connection with a recount or petitions to recall an officer are not subject to contribution limits. In order to qualify for this exclusion, recall expenses must occur before the recall primary or election is ordered, or in contesting or defending the order. Contributions used to pay recount or recall expenses must be reported on the regular campaign finance reports. Both the contributor and the candidate should indicate which contributions are being used for this purpose.

### In-Kind Contributions

An in-kind contribution is any good, service or property offered to the candidate's campaign free of charge or at less than the usual cost, or payment of a registrant's obligations for such goods, services or property. For example, if a campaign worker purchases stamps that are used for a mailing and is not reimbursed for the cost of the stamps, the value of the stamps is an in-kind contribution to the candidate's campaign from that campaign worker. When an individual is paid to work on behalf of a candidate by a political committee or some other individual, the payment for those services is an in-kind contribution to the candidate's campaign. If a political committee or individual offers to provide food and beverages for a fundraiser at less than the ordinary market price, the difference between the ordinary market price and the cost to the campaign is an in-kind contribution from the political committee or individual. If another committee pays for a newspaper, radio, or TV ad, and coordinates with the candidate committee about the content, timing, or other details of that ad, that ad would be an in-kind contribution.

The candidate or campaign treasurer must agree to accept an in-kind contribution before it is given. Before making an in-kind contribution to a candidate, the contributor is required to notify an authorized person from the candidate's campaign and obtain either oral or written consent to the contribution. If the contributor does not know the actual value of the contribution, a good faith and reasonable estimate of the fair market value should be provided.

An in-kind contribution received by the campaign committee is reported by the committee as both a receipt and expenditure. This procedure allows the campaign to disclose the receipt of the contribution on its campaign finance report along with cash contributions received and track year to date and campaign period totals. Then, in order to keep the committee's cash balance accurate, the amount of the in-kind is reported as an expenditure. The two entries offset each other and do not affect the cash balance.

If an estimate of the value of an in-kind contribution is the only value available at the time the candidate is required to file a report, the committee must report the estimated value of the contribution. When the actual value of the estimated in-kind contribution is known, the actual amount is reported as an amendment to the original campaign finance report.

In-kind contributions are subject to the same itemization thresholds and the same contribution limits as cash contributions. Cash contributions and in-kind contributions from a single contributor are added together for the purposes of determining compliance with contribution limits and the year-to-date amount for a specific contributor. When a political communication is provided as an in-kind contribution, the disclaimer must identify the committee receiving the contribution.

### **Contributions and Other Income from Businesses**

Businesses may make contributions under some circumstances, but the rules vary by the type of business.

1. Corporations **may not contribute** to local or state candidates in the State of Wisconsin.
2. Sole-proprietorships may contribute. The contribution must be reported under the name of the individual owner. This contribution counts toward the contribution limits from that individual to the candidate.
3. Partnerships may contribute. The contribution must be reported under the names of the individual partners. The partnership may agree beforehand on how to allocate a portion of the contribution to each partner. If the partnership does not inform the candidate how the contribution should be allocated between the partners, then the contribution should be divided up according to each partner's share of the partnership's profits.
4. LLCs that are taxed as corporations **may not contribute** to local or state candidates in the State of Wisconsin.
5. LLCs taxed as a sole-proprietorship or partnership may contribute. The contribution must be reported under the name(s) of the individual owner(s). If there is more than one owner, contributions should be allocated as described in the partnership section above.

Occasionally, a candidate committee may receive other income, like interest on a savings or checking account, or a refund of a security deposit, from a business. This other income is not a contribution, and may be accepted from any type of business. The income should be reported on Schedule 1-C (Other Income), rather than Schedule 1-A, where contributions are reported.

### **Prohibited Contributions**

Certain contributions are prohibited by Wisconsin law. A candidate's campaign may not accept the following types of contributions:

1. Anonymous contributions of more than \$10;
2. Contributions in cash of more than \$100;
3. Contributions given in the name of someone other than the contributor (these are laundered contributions);
4. Contributions from corporations, labor organizations or federally recognized American Indian Tribe;
5. Contributions in excess of the limits set by law.

A candidate should monitor contributions from organizations that have not registered. If the candidate's campaign is notified that a contribution was received from an unregistered organization, the candidate should ensure that the contribution is lawful, and not accept any additional contributions from that organization if the committee cannot determine whether the contribution is lawful.

Registered lobbyists are prohibited from making campaign contributions to state candidates for partisan state office except between April 15 and the day of the general election in the year of the candidate's election. Contributions cannot be given to legislative candidates during this period if the legislature is in session. For further information on lobbyist contributions, visit the lobbying portion of the Government Accountability Board's website (<http://gab.wi.gov>) or contact a Government Accountability Board staff member.

### **Returned Contributions**

Any contribution a candidate returns to the donor after depositing it in the campaign account must be reported as a returned contribution to the contributor. Any contribution returned to the donor uncashed within 15 days of receipt has not been accepted and does not get reported.

### **Contributions Transferred through Conduits**

A conduit is any individual, committee or group that receives contributions from individuals, deposits those contributions in a financial institution, and then transfers the contributions to a candidate or political committee selected by the original contributor. The conduit may not exercise any discretion over the amount or ultimate recipient of the contributions. A conduit is required to register with the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board.

When a conduit transfers contributions, it writes a single check for the total amount of all individual contributions designated for that committee. It is required to provide a transmittal letter with the check. This letter must identify the organization as a conduit, and list the individual contributors, the amount of each individual's contribution, and the date the individual authorized the contribution (see G.A.B. 1.855 Wis Admin Code).

Contributions transferred through conduits are reported as contributions received from the individuals listed in the transmittal letter. These contributions are reported under the individual's name. They are subject to itemization on the same basis as other individual contributions.

### **Obligations**

“Obligation” means any express agreement to make a disbursement, including all of the following:

- (a) A loan or loan guarantee.
- (b) A promise to purchase, rent, or lease tangible personal property.
- (c) A promise to pay for a service that has been or will be performed.

## **IV. ATTRIBUTION STATEMENTS ON POLITICAL LITERATURE (DISCLAIMERS)**

### **Disclaimers**

No disbursement by candidate committees may be made anonymously and no contribution or disbursement may be made in a fictitious name or by one person or organization in the name of another.

- (a) Every printed advertisement, billboard, handbill, sample ballot, television or radio advertisement, or other communication containing express advocacy which is paid for by any contribution or disbursement shall clearly identify its source.
- (b) Every communication described under par. (a) the cost of which is paid for or reimbursed by a committee, or for which a committee assumes responsibility, whether by accepting a contribution or making a disbursement, shall identify its source by the words "Paid for by" followed by the name of the committee making the payment or reimbursement or assuming responsibility for the communication and may include the name of the treasurer or other authorized agent of the committee.

If the communication is an in-kind contribution, the committee accepting the contribution is also accepting responsibility for the communication and must be listed in the disclaimer.

Attribution statements do not apply to communications containing express advocacy printed on small items, which would normally require a disclaimer, but cannot be conveniently printed, including text messages, social media communications, and certain small advertisements on mobile phones.

### **Formats for Disclaimers**

When a communication is paid for by a candidate committee, the disclaimer must include the words "Paid for by," followed by the name of the committee:

"Paid for by Friends of Mary Smith."

The disclaimer may also include the name of the treasurer or other authorized agent:

"Paid for by Friends of Mary Smith for Mayor, James Jones, Treasurer."

## **V. CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS (GAB-2S, 2SE, 2SU, or 2a)**

All registrants that are not exempt from filing must file campaign finance reports. Committees must continue to file periodic reports until termination of their registration. The reports must be submitted electronically via (<http://cfis.wi.gov/>), uploaded using the 2SU, email, fax, mail or other authorized format.

### **Types of Reports**

Candidates on the ballot must file a pre-primary and a pre-election report due 8 days before the primary or general election. Candidates for state nonpartisan office are always required to file a pre-primary report, even if their names do not appear on a primary ballot. Candidates that lose in the primary or general election must continue to file reports until they are eligible for, and request, termination of their committee. Candidates must also file continuing reports in January and July of each year until they terminate their registration, whether or not they are on the ballot.

- Itemization of Reporting Periods and Elections:

Spring Primary: A committee that engages in activity concerning a spring primary must file: (1) a pre-primary report; (2) a pre-election report; and (3) annually in each year of an election cycle, a report on January 15 and July 15.

Spring Election: A committee that engages in activity concerning a spring election must file: (1) a pre-election report; and (2) annually in each year of an election cycle, a report on January 15 and July 15.

Partisan Primary: A committee that engages in activity concerning a partisan primary must file: (1) a pre-primary report; (2) a pre-election report; (3) in an odd-numbered year, a report on January 15 and July 15; and (4) in an even-numbered year, a report on January 15 and July 15 and on the 4th Tuesday in September.

General Election: A committee that engages in activity concerning a general election must file: (1) a pre-election report; (2) in an odd-numbered year, a report on January 15 and July 15; and (3) in an even-numbered year, a report on January 15 and July 15 and on the 4th Tuesday in September.

Reporting deadlines can be found at: (<http://www.gab.wi.gov/campaign-finance/limits-deadlines>)

## **Information Required**

The information listed on the campaign finance report discloses the financial activity of the candidate's campaign. The law requires disclosure of income, disbursements, and incurred obligations. In addition, disclosure is required for obligations, including loan guarantees, and for estimated in-kind contributions. Committee treasurers must exercise diligence in acquiring and furnishing the contributor information required on the receipts schedules. Under current state law, treasurers and candidates are required to make a "good faith effort" to obtain all information required on the reports. For all contributors, you must disclose the individual's name and address. If the individual's year-to-date total exceeds \$200, you must also provide the individual's occupation.

State candidate committees will almost always file the ETHCF-2 campaign finance reports electronically through the CFIS website. The help screens on that site may answer some of your questions, and you can also obtain a paper or PDF copy of the ETHCF-2 - each of the report schedules has detailed instructions for completing it. When you have entered all transactions for a reporting period, the CFIS system will automatically generate the ETHCF-2 report for you, and place all transactions on the appropriate schedules.

All contributions received by the committee must be reported in Schedule 1 (Receipts) of the campaign finance report. Contributions and loans from individuals are listed in Schedule 1A (Contributions Including Loans From Individuals). Contributions from other committees, such as political action committees, political party committees, and other candidate committees, are reported in Schedule 1B (Contributions from Committees). All other income such as loans from financial institutions, contributions returned from other registrants, refunds, returns of deposits or interest on investments are reported in Schedule 1C (Other Income and Commercial Loans). The date which must be provided for all contributions is the date the committee **received** the contribution, that is, the date it acquired possession and control of the contribution, **not** the date of deposit or date on the check (unless all dates are the same).

All money spent by the committee is reported in Schedule 2 (Disbursements) of the campaign finance report. General operating expenditures are listed in Schedule 2A (Gross Expenditures). Contributions to other political committees are listed in Schedule 2B (Contributions to Committees).

Additional information required to be disclosed is reported in Schedule 3 (Additional Disclosure) of the campaign finance report. All obligations of the committee such as unpaid bills are listed in Schedule 3A (Incurred Obligations Excluding Loans). Loans and the individuals who guarantee loans for the committee are listed in Schedule 3B (Loans).

Schedule 4 (Termination Request) of the campaign finance report or the ETHCF-13 form (Termination Request) is used for requests to terminate a committee.

### **72 Hour Reporting - (Special Report of Late Contribution)**

Candidates for state offices must report contributions of \$1000 or more **received** in the 14-day period before the primary or election within 72 hours of receipt. A special report of late contribution (ETHCF-3) must be filed (1) for any contribution of \$1000 or more, or (2) for contributions from a single source totaling \$1000 or more **received** after the closing date of the pre-primary or pre-election report and before the primary or election is held. Contributions of \$1000 or more from the candidate to his or her own campaign are included in this reporting requirement. The report must be filed within 72 hours of **receiving** the contributions. Also, the contribution must be reported on the next full campaign finance report.

### **Electronic Filing**

All committees with receipts of \$1,000 or more during a campaign period are required to file an electronic copy of their report. If a committee has filed a report electronically in the past, it must continue to file all subsequent reports electronically. *Every committee is urged to file electronically.*

### **No-Activity Report (Postcard Report)**

If a candidate receives no contributions, makes no disbursements and incurs no obligations during a reporting period, the registrant may file a post card report form, ETHCF-2a. This post card form should be used **only** when there has been no financial activity and the cash balance remains unchanged during the reporting period. If there is any financial activity, a registrant is required to use the regular campaign finance report form.

### **How to Complete Campaign Finance Reports**

There are three ways to file a campaign finance report:

- Using the online screens in the Campaign Finance Information System (“CFIS”),
- Using the CFIS upload templates (ETHCF-2SU), or
- Using a GAB-2SE Excel workbook with schedules that may be found on the Government Accountability Board website at <http://www.gab.wi.gov/forms>.

If you choose to use the Excel spreadsheet, you should e-mail your completed document to Board staff at [gabcfis@wi.gov](mailto:gabcfis@wi.gov) and we will upload the information contained in the spreadsheet into CFIS for you.

**Every committee must** use one of the specified, approved forms. A committee that chooses to use the Excel or SU upload template with schedule detail must use the template approved by the Board. **If your template does not match any fields listed in this document, you are using the wrong template and it will not upload properly.** Please contact the Government Accountability Board for the correct form.

For detailed instructions on how to complete and file the campaign finance report, go to <https://cfis.wi.gov> and click on the **Manuals** link in the center of the page.

In the rare case that your committee is allowed to file a paper report, please contact Government Accountability Board staff.

### **Reporting Receipts**

In preparing to report receipts on a campaign finance report, please remember the following:

1. Anonymous contributions of \$10 or less can be accepted from individuals only. Under this threshold, the individual donor's name and address do not have to be tracked. If any anonymous receipts of more than \$10 are received, the excess donations must be donated to the common school fund or to charity.
2. Any non-anonymous contribution or cumulative contribution must be itemized, and include the person's name and address.
4. Contributions of \$100 or less may be accepted in cash. Contributions over \$100 must be made by check, or by other negotiable instrument.
3. If a single contribution is over \$200 (or if one person's total contributions for the calendar year go over \$200) the committee must report not only the contributor's name and address, but also the contributor's occupation.
4. Contributions from individuals received through a conduit are reported as receipts. They are treated in the same manner as other individual contributions.
7. A contribution given from a joint checking account should be reported as a contribution from the individual that signed the check. If any part of the amount on the check is intended to be contributed by the other owner of the account, that amount should be clearly indicated on the check or in some other writing which accompanies the check.
8. Receipts from raffles, auctions, garage sale, and other similar fundraising events are individual contributions (unless anonymous under \$10) and must be entered as a receipt.
9. All contributions from political committees, regardless of the amount, must be itemized and entered as a receipt from the contributing committee. The full name and address of the registrant, the date and amount of the contribution are required.

10. In-kind contributions such as political posters, lawn signs, and other items are reported at their fair market value at the time of contribution. These contributions are reported as both a receipt and an expenditure. As a receipt, they are entered as a contribution type of “in-kind”, with the appropriate information about the contributor. This offsetting expenditure entry is necessary because an in-kind contribution is treated as if cash was given, and then used to buy the item contributed.
11. A loan from an individual is considered a contribution. It must be reported as a contribution and as a loan. Payments on the loan should be reported as expenditures and the cumulative amount paid in a reporting period is also reported. THE LOAN ADDED TO OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE SAME INDIVIDUAL CANNOT —EXCEED THE APPLICABLE INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION LIMIT. Loans from political committees are considered contributions and are reported.
12. Returned contributions received from other registrants, refunds, interest income and loans — from commercial lenders are also reported as money received by the campaign. They are listed as “other income” rather than contributions.

### **Reporting Disbursements – Gross Expenditures**

In preparing Schedule 2 of the campaign finance report, the treasurer should remember the following:

1. An expenditure that exceeds \$20 in amount or value must be itemized – requiring the name and address of the person or business to whom it was made and the date and amount of the payment.
2. The specific political purpose of an expenditure must be reported. Please remember that the purpose of campaign finance reports is to inform the public. The descriptions should provide a person, perhaps unfamiliar with the intricacies of campaigning, with information on the nature of the expenditure and how it relates to the political process. For example, if food has been purchased for a fundraiser or for a party for workers, give the purpose as “food for fundraiser” or “food for party for campaign workers.” Do not write “food” only. If T-shirts are purchased for resale by the committee, give the purpose as “campaign T-shirts for resale,” not “T-shirts” only.
3. An in-kind contribution of goods or services to another committee must be itemized, regardless of the amount. The itemization must include the name and address of the registrant on whose behalf the disbursement (in-kind contribution) is made, the name and address of the original vendor of the goods or services, and the date and amount of the disbursement.
4. The receipt of an in-kind contribution is also reported as an in-kind expenditure. If the candidate or other person makes an in-kind contribution to the committee, the in-kind expenditure must include the name of the original vendor of the goods or services, and the political purpose of the expenditure.
5. Payments made on loans and incurred obligations are reported as expenditures. The cumulative amount paid to each creditor is reported.

6. All financial institution service charges should be listed as itemized expenditures depending on the amount.
7. Contributions to other political registrants should be reported and must be itemized regardless of the amount transferred. The itemization must list the name and address of the registrant receiving the contribution, the date and amount of the contribution.
8. A letter should be sent to the Government Accountability Board within 5 days of donating money to a charitable organization, the Common School Fund, or any government entity. The letter should include the date of the donation, the name of the organization, and shall provide an explanation to the filing officer of why the funds were not retained by the committee. See 11.1302 *Wis. Stats.*

### **Reporting Incurred Obligations**

1. Incurred obligations are to be reported when an enforceable agreement has been reached. If the exact amount of the obligation has not yet been defined, the amount of the obligation must be estimated. Although the committee may not have received a bill, the amount recorded should be a good faith estimate of the amount owed.
2. Each obligation must be carried forward on subsequent reports until the obligation has been reduced to zero.

### **Reporting Loans**

It is important to remember the following information concerning the recording and reporting of loans:

1. A loan from an individual or a political committee is reported as a contribution in Schedule 1A (individual) or in Schedule 1B (political committee) and is listed in Schedule 3B.
2. A loan from a financial institution is reported in Schedule 1C as other income and in Schedule 3B as a loan.
3. Each payment on a loan must be reported as an expenditure in Schedule 2A. The cumulative amount of the payments made on a loan is reported in Schedule 3B.

## **VI. TERMINATION OF REGISTRATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

A candidate may terminate its registration if it meets the following requirements:

1. Determines that all financial activity will stop, and that she or he will no longer receive contributions, make disbursements, or incur obligations; and
2. Files a termination campaign finance report showing that all incurred obligations have been paid or satisfied, and that the cash balance has been reduced to zero; and,
3. Completes a request for termination in Schedule 4 (Termination Request) or form ETHCF-13.

**A candidate may not terminate his or her registration before a primary or election in which he or she is a candidate. If a candidate loses a primary, he or she may terminate before the election.**

### **Disposal of Residual Funds**

Residual funds may be used for any purpose not strictly personal and not prohibited by law, including:

1. Returning money to contributors in amounts that are not more than the contributor's original contribution (note: the candidate or treasurer may choose which contributors to refund. You *are not required* to pro-rate and return a portion to all contributors); or
2. Donating money to any tax-exempt charitable organization or the Common School Fund; or
3. Transferring money to another registrant within the permitted contribution limit; or
4. Using any combination of the above.

Prior to making these disbursements, make sure the committee does not have any pending fees or settlement offers.