

Campaign Finance Guide

City of Roseville Candidates

2020

This information is intended to provide general guidance only. It is not intended as legal advice nor is it comprehensive. For complete information on the laws governing campaign finance, please refer to the **Minnesota Election Statutes, Chapters 211A & 211B, and Roseville City Code 103.015.**



Reporting information is available at rcelections.org



Forms are available at rcelections.org



Completed reports & forms can be submitted online at rcelections.org or scanned and emailed to elections@ramseycounty.us

I am a first-time candidate for office.

Do I need to file campaign finance reports?

All candidates and candidate committees who are not currently filing with Ramsey County Elections must register and begin filing campaign finance reports when they exceed \$750 in campaign contributions and/or expenditures in a calendar year OR when the pre-primary report is due, whichever comes first. This includes candidates who are self-funding and candidates who have not yet filed an affidavit of candidacy.

All information required by campaign finance forms is public and the forms will be posted on the Ramsey County Elections website.

Does my committee need a bank account?

A separate bank account is needed for any candidate or committee who receives contributions from outside sources. A candidate who is entirely self-funding does NOT need a separate account.

To set up an account, ask the bank for a personal account. Select a name for the account such as “Campaign Fund of (name of committee or fund)” to identify it as a campaign account. Ramsey County Elections does not issue account or identification numbers, but if requested, we will issue a letter to the bank noting a committee’s registration with the Elections office.

How do I register with Ramsey County Elections?

Within 14 days of exceeding the \$750 filing threshold or on the pre-primary report due date, whichever comes first, you must file the following two forms:

1. Registration & Statement of Organization

This form lists candidate/committee contact information and officers. A committee must have a chair and a treasurer. The candidate may serve in both roles. Updated statements must be filed within 10 days any time there is a change in committee information (except liquid assets).

2. Initial report

This form details financial activity of the committee, including cash and in-kind contributions and expenditures. This report is a one-time report that opens a committee account with Ramsey County Elections.

Once you are registered as a candidate or candidate committee, you **must file all remaining required reports in the calendar year and each year thereafter** until you submit a final report to close your registration and committee account with Ramsey County Elections.

RAMSEY COUNTY
Elections Office

REGISTRATION AND STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION
(All data on this form is public information)

This report is a(n) (check one): New registration Amendment to registration

The organization is for a (check one): Candidate Committee Political Committee Political Fund

Committee Name _____

Candidate Name (first and last) _____

Mailing Address of Committee
(include city, state, and zipcode) _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Purpose or Office sought _____

Geographic Area _____

Officers of the Committee

| Name | Address | Phone |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-------|
| Chair (required) | | |
| Treasurer/ Secretary (required) | | |
| Other Principal Officers (if any) | | |
| Other Principal Officers (if any) | | |

Depository(ies)/ Bank Location of Committee Funds

| Name | Address | Phone |
|------|---------|-------|
| | | |

CITY OF ROSEVILLE
CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORT FORM

Committee Name: _____

Office sought or held by candidate or purpose of political committee: _____

Type of Organization: Candidate Committee Political (Action) Committee

Type of report: Initial report Post-general
 Pre-primary Year-end (January) report
 Pre-general Final report (closes committee account – see M.S. Ch. 211A.03 for requirements)

Period of time covered by report: From _____ to _____

SUMMARY STATEMENT TO DATE

| | Total For This Report | Total From Previous Report | Total To Date |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS | _____ + _____ | _____ | _____ = _____ |
| ALL OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED | _____ + _____ | _____ | _____ = _____ |
| EXPENDITURES | _____ + _____ | _____ | _____ = _____ |

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES AND CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THIS PERIOD

Itemize all contributions made during the previous 365 days by an individual or committee that are greater than \$50 in the aggregate on a separate sheet. Itemization must provide amount, date, name, address, employer or occupation if self-employed for all contributors.

An itemized list of all expenditures must also be provided. This must include date, purpose, and amount for each expenditure.

Contributions less than/equal to \$50 _____

Contributions between \$51 and \$600 _____

_____ Check here if within the previous year no individual, committee or organization has made one or more contributions that in the aggregate are greater than \$50.

Expenditures _____

Current Account Balance \$ _____

List the name and address of all depositories holding this committee's deposits _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Revised 7/2014

I am registered and currently filing with Ramsey County Elections. My office is on the ballot. What reports are due during the 2020 election year?

1. **Pre-primary report** - due 10 days prior to the primary - July 31, 2020
2. **Pre-general report** - due 10 days prior to the general election - October 23, 2020
3. **Certification of Filing** - due 7 days after the general election - November 10, 2020
4. **Post-general report** - due 30 days after the general election - December 3, 2020
5. **January report** - due January 31 of each year - Monday, February 1, 2021 (per M.S. 645.151, timely if filed the next succeeding day if the prescribed due date falls on a weekend).

What is the reporting period for each report?

The reporting period is different for contributions over \$50 than for contributions equal to and less than \$50 and all expenditures.

The reporting period for all contributions received that in the aggregate are greater than \$50 is the 365 days preceding the reporting period end date. The reporting period end date is always the end of the fifth day before the current report is due.

The reporting period for all contributions equal to or less than \$50 is from the day following the last reporting date up to and including the fifth day before the current report is due.

The reporting period for all expenditures is from the day following the last reporting date up to and including the fifth day before the current report is due.

What information must be included on each report?

1. Summary of all contributions received, including cash and in-kind, during the reporting period
2. Summary of all expenditures made during the reporting period
3. Account balance as of reporting period end date
4. Itemization of contributions exceeding \$50 in the aggregate during the previous one year period which must include the following information:
 - name of individual
 - address of individual
 - employer or, if self-employed, occupation
 - date of contribution
 - amount of contribution
5. Itemization of all expenditures made during the reporting period which must include the following information:
 - date
 - purpose
 - amount
6. Signature

What are the contribution limits?

Candidate and candidate committees may not accept cash or in-kind contributions from individuals or committees that in the aggregate exceed the following amounts:

- In a year when the office is on the ballot: \$600
- In a non-election year: \$250

Candidates for municipal offices may not accept contributions from principal campaign committees (such as a committee established for a candidate for a state office under MN Stat. Ch. 10A) and must not make contributions to a principal campaign committee, unless the contribution is made from the personal funds of the candidate.

How do I close my committee registration and end filing requirements?

A candidate/committee may dissolve a committee and file a final report at any time once all debts have been paid and all assets in excess of \$100 in the aggregate have been disposed of. Filing a final report closes the candidate/committee account with Ramsey County Elections and ends all reporting requirements.

- Use the City of Roseville Campaign Finance form and mark “Final report.”
- For laws governing disposal of assets, see MN Stat. Ch. 211A.13 and Ch. 211B.12 subd 6.

How do I submit reports to Ramsey County Elections?

All reports can be submitted by one of the following methods. It is not necessary to submit an original.

- Scan and email
- Mail
- In-person
- Fax

What reports are due in non-election years?

New committees

If you begin receiving contributions or making expenditures in a non-election year (a year when the office is not on the ballot), you will owe the following:

1. Registration & Statement of Organization

Due date: within 14 days of exceeding \$750 threshold in contributions and/or expenditures, but can be submitted at any time

2. Initial report

Due date: within 14 days of exceeding \$750 threshold in contributions and/or expenditures

Reporting period: date of first transaction up to and including fifth day before report is submitted

3. January report

Due date: January 31 of each calendar year. Monday, Feb 1, 2021 is the next due date: when the prescribed date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, it is timely if delivered or filed on the next succeeding day (M.S. 645.151).

Reporting period: See reporting period information on page 5

Currently registered/reporting committees

If you are registered with Ramsey County Elections and have been filing campaign finance reports, you will owe the following:

1. January report

Due date: January 31 of each calendar year. Monday, Feb 1, 2021 is the next due date: when the prescribed date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, it is timely if delivered or filed on the next succeeding day (M.S. 645.151).

Reporting period: See reporting period information on page 5

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a candidate also hold committee offices?

Yes.

Do I need to fill all the committee offices on the statement of organization?

No. You need only complete the treasurer and chair portions; they can be the same people.

Do I need to set up a special bank account for the campaign funds?

A separate bank account needs to be established as soon as funds are accepted from an individual other than the candidate. Inform the bank that you need another personal account, not a business account.

If a candidate is self-funding their campaign, the candidate does not need a separate bank account, but must list their own bank location on the reporting forms when requested.

Do I need an Employer Identification Number (Federal Tax ID Number) for a bank account?

No. An EIN is required for filing at the state level, but it is not required for filing for county, city, or school board candidates.

Is it OK for the same person to hold multiple committee accounts?

Yes. Keep in mind the contribution limit for the year and office. Report any funds transfers as expenses and contributions; transferring funds from one account should be an expenditure in that account and a contribution to the other account. You may also file an initial report for the new committee immediately, even if you have not yet reached the spending/raising threshold in your new committee account.

How do I account for in-kind contributions on a report?

Determine the fair market value of an in-kind donation and list it in the contributions section of the report. It must also be recorded as an expenditure in the same period.

Can a candidate committee or political action committee contribute to a ballot question campaign?

Yes, and there is no limit for individual contributions to a ballot question campaign.

Are anonymous contributions allowed?

No, all donors must provide their names. Candidates must report the name, address, employer or occupation if self-employed, amount, and date, if over the threshold amount for itemization. If a donations lower than the threshold are received, it may be best to track all donor information in case donations exceed the threshold amount in the aggregate during the year. If the anonymous party is known, the donation should be returned to them or the payment voided before processing. If the anonymous party is not known, anonymous contributions should be given to the city or county's treasury.

Can I loan money to my campaign and use contributions to pay myself back?

Yes, but you must have a separate campaign bank account established. A loan should be reported as a contribution when made and the repayments as expenditures when paid back.

Can an office space be donated to a campaign in lieu of rental fees?

Yes, but contribution limits apply as a donation of office space would be considered an in-kind donation; the appropriate contribution limit would apply, depending on the year and the office. Owners of the property should assess fair market value to determine value of the in-kind donation.

Individuals have donated items, other than food, for a fundraising auction. How do I account for this on the finance report?

Assign the fair market value to the item and list it as an in-kind contribution and as an expenditure in the same period. Any money received for the item is listed as a cash contribution in the appropriate reporting period.

How do I account for contributions of food for meetings/fundraisers, etc?

As long as the food brought by each individual falls under the itemization threshold it can be reported in the lump sum non-itemized contribution section of the report. However, it is important to keep track of the monetary value of each food item brought and the individual who brought it as it does figure into the aggregate contribution limitation in election/non-election years. Be sure to also list it as an expenditure on the same report.

How do I account for food consumed by attendees at meetings/fundraisers, etc?

Attendees of an event at which food is provided must not consume more than \$5.00 worth to fall within the non-reporting requirements of 211B.13. If items/meal is worth more than \$5.00, an attendee must be charged fair market value for the food and pay anything over the \$5.00 allowed by statute. Payment is then recorded as a contribution.

Can a campaign provide food or non-alcoholic refreshments at a campaign event?

Food or non-alcoholic refreshments can be provided at an event if the value of the food and non-alcoholic beverages does not exceed \$5.00 and they are consumed on the premises of the private event or public meeting. Any alcoholic beverages must be purchased by attendees, not provided for free.

Does my campaign material need a disclaimer?

Yes, campaign material should contain a disclaimer with specific phrasing depending on the material's medium. Printed campaign materials should contain the phrasing: "prepared and paid for by the committee, (address/web address)"; if a written independent expenditure is produced and disseminated without cost, the words "and paid for" may be omitted from the disclaimer.

For broadcast campaigning, the disclaimer should be: "Paid for by the committee." If the material is produced and broadcast without cost, the required form of the disclaimer is: "The committee is responsible for the content of this message."

Do any campaign materials not need a disclaimer?

Yes, items that do not need a disclaimer are fundraising tickets, business cards, personal letters, or similar items that are clearly being distributed by the candidate.

Do independent expenditures in the form of campaign materials need disclaimers?

Yes, independent expenditures must contain the following disclaimer: “This is an independent expenditure prepared and paid for by (name of entity participating in the expenditure), (address). It is not coordinated with or approved by any candidate nor is any candidate responsible for it.” The address must be either the entity’s mailing address or web address, if the website includes the entity’s mailing address. When a written independent expenditure is produced and disseminated without cost, the words “and paid for” may be omitted from the disclaimer.

For broadcast independent expenditures, the disclaimer phrasing should be: “This independent expenditure is paid for by (name of entity participating in the expenditure). It is not coordinated with or approved by any candidate nor is any candidate responsible for it.” If a broadcast independent expenditure is produced and disseminated without cost, the following disclaimer may be used: “..... (name of entity participating in the expenditure) is responsible for the contents of this independent expenditure. It is not coordinated with or approved by any candidate nor is any candidate responsible for it.”

I discovered an error in a report already submitted to the Elections office. How do I proceed? Corrections must be reported in writing within 14 days of becoming aware of the error. Submit the *City of Roseville Campaign Finance Report Form*, checking the applicable report and writing “amendment” next to it. List the individual contributions and/or expenditures that are corrections along with the other required itemization information. Also note that it is a “correction to original itemization on (original date).” Record the new *Current Account Balance*.

If you have any questions, please contact Ramsey County Elections.

651-266-2171



elections@ramseycounty.us



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