



Campaign Finance Handbook

CHAPTER 5: POLITICAL PARTY ACCOUNTS

What is a Political Party

A political party is any group of voters that garners and maintains at least three percent of the total vote in a gubernatorial or presidential election, or properly files party formation petitions.

Along with having a statewide party apparatus, political parties may have separate, local organizations in each of Ohio's 88 counties.

[R.C. 3517.01\(A\)](#)

Account Types

A political party may simultaneously maintain several types of accounts including a:

- Building Fund account.
- General Political account.
- Restricted Fund account.
- State Candidate Fund account.
- Judicial account.
- Levin account (state party only).

Except for a Judicial account, each of these accounts requires a separate bank account and designation of treasurer.

Building Fund

Monies given to a Building Fund account are considered "gifts" and not contributions. The gift must be specifically designated. Building Fund gifts may be used for:

- Construction, renovation, purchase, or lease of an office facility and any real property taxes associated with the facility.
- Furniture and fixtures to be installed in an office facility.
- Equipment and supplies to be used in an office facility, including telecommunications equipment, and computer hardware and software.
- Operating costs, maintenance, and repair of an office facility, other than personnel costs.

Gifts to a Building Fund account may not be used solely for the purpose of directly influencing the election of any individual candidate in any particular election for any office.



Any individual, partnership, unincorporated business organization or association, political action committee (PAC), political contributing entity (PCE), labor organization, or corporation (other than a public utility) may make one or more gifts to a Building Fund account. A gift shall not exceed the gift limit specified in [R.C. 3517.101](#), as statutorily adjusted for inflation in January of each odd-numbered year. Monies received into a building fund must be kept in a separate bank account because gifts may be accepted directly from corporations doing business in Ohio.

[R.C. 3517.101](#), [3517.01\(C\)\(5\)](#), [3517.104](#); [OEC Adv. 2000ELC-04](#)

General Political Account

The general political account is the fund used by a state or county political party to support candidates not subject to the state contribution limits, such as candidates for mayor, city council, or county commissioner. This account is also known as the local political account or the non-state candidate fund. A county political party in a county with a population less than 150,000 may support certain non-local candidates from the general political account, but at a reduced dollar limit. See the Secretary of State's [contribution limit chart](#) for the updated contribution limit specified in [R.C. 3517.102](#), as statutorily adjusted for inflation in January of each odd-numbered year. See the [State Candidate Fund](#) section for more detail.

Restricted Fund

Monies given to a Restricted Fund account are considered "gifts" and not contributions. Political parties may deposit other funds into this account, including gifts from corporations or labor organizations, as long as those gifts do not exceed \$10,000 per calendar year.

[R.C. 3517.1012](#), [3517.13\(X\)](#)

Restricted Fund money may be used for:

- Operating and maintenance costs associated with political party headquarters, including rental or leasing costs, staff salaries, office equipment and supplies, postage, and the purchase, lease, or maintenance of computer hardware and software.
- The organization of voter registration programs and get-out-the-vote campaigns.
- Direct mail campaigns and other communications with the registered voters of a party that are unrelated to any particular candidate or election.
- The preparation of reports required by law.

Money in the Restricted Fund may not be used:

- To further the election or defeat of any particular candidate or to influence directly the outcome of any candidate or issue election.
- To pay party debts incurred as a result of any election.
- To make a payment well above the market value of the item or service that is received for the payment.

[R.C. 3517.1012](#)

A county or state party must report its restricted fund activity at the semiannual and annual reporting deadlines. If the fund has accepted gifts from a corporation or labor organization, a county or state political



party restricted fund report must be filed electronically with the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State or the county board of elections examines the Restricted Fund deposit and disbursement statements for compliance.

[R.C. 3517.1012](#)

State Candidate Fund

A State Candidate Fund is used to support statewide and general assembly candidates. A state political party must use this fund to support its statewide or General Assembly candidates. A county political party in a county that has a population of 150,000 or more must establish a separate State Candidate Fund to support statewide or General Assembly candidates. A county political party affiliated with a county having a population of less than 150,000 may establish a State Candidate Fund but is not required to do so.

The following counties have population counts larger than 150,000 as of October 2021:

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|--------------|
| • Butler | • Clermont | • Cuyahoga |
| • Delaware | • Fairfield | • Franklin |
| • Greene | • Hamilton | • Lake |
| • Licking | • Lorain | • Lucas |
| • Mahoning | • Medina | • Montgomery |
| • Portage | • Stark | • Summit |
| • Trumbull | • Warren | |

If a county political party affiliated with a county having a population of less than 150,000 does not establish a State Candidate Fund, it may still support statewide or General Assembly candidates, but may do so at a reduced monetary amount, per election period. See the Secretary of State's [contribution limit chart](#) for the current contribution limitation.

A county political party's State Candidate Fund may not accept contributions from:

- A political action committee (PAC).
- A political contributing entity (PCE).
- Any individual whose designated Ohio residence is outside the county.
- A campaign committee of a candidate whose name will not appear on the ballot in that county or does not represent all or part of the county as an elected public office holder.
- Another county political party State Candidate Fund.
- Any county or state political party non-State Candidate Fund, such as a General Political account or Restricted Fund.

[R.C. 3517.102\(C\)\(4\)\(a\)\(i\)](#)

All contributions made by all county political party State Candidate Funds are aggregated together for determining a statewide or General Assembly candidate's contribution limits.

[R.C. 3517.102\(A\), \(B\); OAC 111:2-1-09](#)



Judicial Account

Although it is not addressed in Title 35 of the Revised Code, a political party may create a judicial account to make one or more contributions to the campaign committee of a candidate for judicial office. The Supreme Court of Ohio has adopted a Code of Judicial Conduct that governs candidates for judicial office. Under [Rule 4.4 of the Code](#), the campaign committee of a judicial candidate is prohibited from receiving a contribution from a political party, unless the contribution is made from a separate fund established by the political party solely to receive donations for judicial candidates.

For more information on judicial candidate regulations, including access to read or download the Code of Judicial Conduct, please visit the [Supreme Court of Ohio's website](#).

Levin Account

A Levin Account is a fund that only a state political party may establish. Monies given to a Levin Account are considered "gifts" and not contributions. A Levin Account fund may be used for voter registration, voter identification, get-out-the-vote or generic campaign activities that would not otherwise be considered a contribution or expenditure. A Levin Account fund may not be used to influence the election of any individual candidate. Any person, including corporations, may make a gift to a Levin Account. Corporation or labor organization gifts to a Levin Account may not exceed \$10,000 per calendar year and can only be made in years in which a candidate for federal office will appear on the ballot.

Levin Account activity is reported at the semiannual and annual reporting deadlines. These reports must be filed by electronic means with the Secretary of State.

[R.C. 3517.1013](#)

Reporting

Disclosure of campaign finance activity is a crucial element in monitoring compliance with and effectiveness of Ohio's campaign finance laws and regulations. When a report is filed, it must be a full, true, and itemized accounting of contributions and expenditures for the reporting period.

Where to File Reports

Statewide political parties file their reports with the Secretary of State. County political parties file campaign finance reports for their General Political account, Restricted Fund accounts that do not receive corporate or labor organization gifts, Building Fund accounts, and Judicial Account, if applicable, with their county board of elections.

County political parties must electronically file campaign finance reports for their Restricted Fund accounts that have received deposits from a corporation or labor organization and State Candidate Fund with the Secretary of State.

[R.C. 3517.11\(A\)](#), [3517.106\(E\)\(3\)](#), [3517.1012\(B\)](#)

When to File Reports

Reports are due based on the nature and timing of the activity in which the party engages. A political party must file pre- or post-election reports only when the party has activity supporting or opposing candidates or ballot issues appearing on the ballot. Filing deadlines refer to the date that the report is received by the



county boards of elections or the Secretary of State, not the postmark date.

Reporting Deadlines

A committee must file a pre-election report by 4 p.m. on the 12th day before an election (primary, general, or special) if the party spent or received \$1,000 or more between the time the last report was filed and the 20th day before the election, if the party supported any candidate or issue that appeared on the ballot at that election. The \$1,000 threshold includes monetary and in-kind contributions, along with the value of any new loans received during the reporting period.

[R.C. 3517.10\(A\)\(1\)](#)

A political party must file a post-election report by 4 p.m. on the 38th day after the election (primary, general, or special) if the party had activity to influence that election between the time the last report was filed and the 31st day after the election.

[R.C. 3517.10\(A\)\(2\)](#)

A political party must file a semiannual report by 4 p.m. on the last business day of July showing all activity since the last report through June 30, and should reflect only the activity that has occurred since the previous report was filed. A semiannual report is not due in any year the political party is required to file a post-primary report.

[R.C. 3517.10\(A\)\(4\)](#)

A political party must file an annual report by 4 p.m. on the last business day of January showing all activity since the last report through December 31, and should reflect only the activity that has occurred since the previous report was filed. An annual report is not due in any year the political party is required to file a post-general report.

[R.C. 3517.10\(A\)\(3\)](#)

The Restricted Fund, Levin Accounts, and Building Fund reports are filed only as semiannual and annual reports.

[R.C. 3517.10\(A\)](#), [3517.101](#), [3517.102](#), [3517.103](#)

Corrections and Amendments

The political party must file an amended report when a correction is necessary, additional information is obtained by the political party, or when ordered by the political party's auditing authority. Amendments filed on paper consist of only corrections to previously submitted information or additional information. The amendment should include either a report cover page or a cover letter specifying the name of the committee that is filing and what report is being amended. Amendments filed electronically consist of all report data — what was originally filed and new or modified records.

When an error is found or when checks are received that could not earlier be attached to a report, the political party should file an amendment immediately. When an auditing authority requests more information or a correction to a report, the political party has 21 days to provide the information or correction.

[R.C. 3517.11\(B\)](#); [OAC 111:2-4-19](#)



Report Forms

All reporting forms, along with instructions for their use, are available at the Secretary of State's website: OhioSoS.gov.

Political parties not required to file electronically may choose to download the forms and use them for creating reports in paper form. Filers may choose to create their own forms for use in paper filing, with the express written approval of the Secretary of State's office, as long as they are substantially similar to the forms prescribed by the Secretary of State's office.

[OAC 111:2-4-10](#)

Filers seeking the approval of alternative paper forms may direct their request, along with a sample of each of the alternative forms to CFinance@OhioSoS.gov, or via mail to:

Office of the Ohio Secretary of State
Campaign Finance Unit
180 Civic Center Dr.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

General Rules

Treasurer's Duties and Liability

The treasurer and any appointed deputy treasurer are legally responsible for campaign finance reporting requirements. There are no statutory restrictions on who can be a treasurer. The treasurer is appointed by an authorized representative of the political party and is responsible for keeping detailed records of everything received, given, or expended. A treasurer may appoint a deputy treasurer to assist in the accounting, recordkeeping, and disclosure responsibilities. The treasurer and the appointed deputy treasurer both sign the DOT to acknowledge their appointment.

Each report must contain a statement that the report is complete and accurate, subject to the penalty for election falsification. Whoever commits election falsification is guilty of a felony of the fifth degree. The cover page of every report filed must be signed by the treasurer or a deputy treasurer. The treasurer must retain accurate records of all activity for six years.

[R.C. 3517.081](#), [3517.10](#), [3517.13](#), [3517.992\(A\)](#), [3599.36](#); [OAC 111:2-4-11](#), [111:2-4-13](#)

Keeping Reports in Balance

Errors and mistakes in the report can easily affect the balance on hand (line 6) on a report's cover page, causing it to be incorrect. A treasurer should take two easy steps to avoid or detect potential problems in the report.

1. When a report is completed, the balance on hand (line 6) on the cover page should equal the balance listed on the political party's bank account statement. If the treasurer has reported all the necessary contributions and expenditures (including service charges, interest, and voided checks), then these balance figures should be the same.
2. The treasurer should ensure the statements received from the bank are balanced against the political party's reports in a regular and timely fashion.



These two steps will help the treasurer ensure that no contribution or expenditure information is incorrect or omitted.

Anonymous Contributions

Contributors may not remain anonymous by request. If a donor does not want to be identified, the contribution is not truly anonymous, and the political party should not accept the contribution. That said, if an anonymous contribution is received, the political party must make its best efforts to identify the donor. If that effort fails, the contribution should have an explanation of the circumstances that caused it to be anonymous and a description of the efforts made to determine the donor's identity. This information should appear in the address portion of [Form 31-A, Statement of Contributions Received](#), or attached to the report as supplemental documentation.

[R.C. 3517.10\(C\)\(2\)](#)

Contribution Limits

The amounts that some of the political party funds may contribute or accept are shown on the [contribution limit chart](#). The limits on statewide or legislative candidates are based on contributions made to designated state campaign committees. These are, in the case of the contributions to or from a state political party, State Candidate Fund, a campaign committee of a statewide or general assembly candidate.

For contributions to or from a county political party State Candidate Fund, a designated state campaign committee is the campaign committee of a statewide candidate or general assembly candidate whose candidacy is to be submitted to some or all of the electors in that county.

[R.C. 3517.102\(A\)\(9\)](#)

A county political party, or its State Candidate Fund when required, is only permitted to make a contribution to a campaign committee of a candidate for the General Assembly when the candidate's legislative district lies, in whole or in part, within the party's county. A county with a population of less than 150,000 that has no State Candidate Fund may contribute to any statewide candidate or any candidate for the General Assembly whose district lies, in whole or in part, within the party's county in the amount limited by [R.C. 3517.102\(A\)\(9\)](#), per election period. See the Secretary of State's [contribution limit chart](#) for the updated limitation.

[R.C. 3517.102\(A\)\(9\), \(B\)\(6\)](#)

Cash Contribution Limits

A contributor may not give more than \$100 per election in cash. Cash means coined or paper money designated as legal tender and circulated from hand to hand. If a contribution exceeds this amount, the recipient must issue a refund of the amount over the \$100 limit. The full amount of the contribution received and deposited must be disclosed on the appropriate campaign finance report forms, as well as the offsetting refund expenditure issued.

[R.C. 3517.13\(F\); OAC 111:2-4-05](#)

Affiliated PAC/PCE Contributions Limits

The amount, as updated, a political party may receive from a PAC or PCE is shown on the [contribution limit](#)



[chart](#). Contributions made from two or more affiliated PACs and contributions made from two or more affiliated PCEs are considered to have been made from a single PAC or from a single PCE. For more information, see [Chapter 7, Political Action Committees](#) and [Chapter 8, Political Contributing Entities](#).

Deposit of Contributions and Other Income

The political party must deposit all contributions and other monetary income in the party's account within 30 days of receipt or return the contribution to the donor. A contribution that is clearly illegal must be returned and not deposited. A contribution that appears on its face to be legal (e.g., not from a foreign national, corporation, or in excess of the contribution limits) may be deposited and used by the political party.

Contributions that appear questionable may be deposited, but not spent. The treasurer must make a good-faith effort to determine the legality of the contribution. If, within 30 days of receipt, it cannot be determined that the contribution is legal, it must be returned.

If a contribution is kept that is later found to be illegal, then the political party fund must refund it within 10 days of the discovery.

[OAC 111:2-4-11](#)

Contributions from Minor Children

Political parties are prohibited from accepting a contribution from an individual under the age of seven.

[R.C. 3517.102\(C\)\(4\)](#)

Contributions from Foreign Nationals

Foreign nationals are prohibited from contributing or promising to contribute to any political party. This applies to both direct contributions and those made indirectly through a person or entity.

Political parties are prohibited from knowingly soliciting, accepting, or receiving funds from a foreign national, either directly or indirectly through another person or entity, for any political purpose. They are also prohibited from making contributions, expenditures, or independent expenditures using funds they know were received from a foreign national for a political purpose.

[R.C. 3517.121\(B\)](#), [3517.121\(B\)-\(C\)](#)

Partnerships/Unincorporated Associations

Contributions received from partnerships or unincorporated associations must reflect both the name of the entity and the individual contributing. Unincorporated professional associations and limited liability companies are considered unincorporated associations or, if applicable, partnerships. These entities may contribute, but must include, at the time of the distribution, detailed information on the allocation of the contribution amount among the owners or partners of the unincorporated association or partnership. A party may not accept, deposit, or use a contribution from a partnership or other unincorporated business unless the party has the allocation information necessary to itemize the contribution by the partner, owner, or member.

[R.C. 3517.10\(I\)](#); [OAC 111:2-4-20](#); [OEC Adv. 96ELC-03](#)



Contributions from Joint Checking Accounts

Contributions received from a joint checking account shall be considered a contribution from the person signing the check, absent evidence to the contrary. If the contribution is to be apportioned to each account holder, the contributions must be reported separately as two individual contributions.

[OAC 111:2-4-14](#)

Contributions Received Through Online Payment Processors

Online payment processing applications must provide for complete reporting of all contribution disclosure requirements, including:

- The full name of the contributor.
- The complete street address of the contributor.
- The date of contribution.
- The full amount of the contribution as authorized by the contributor.
- The contributor's employer (or, if self-employed, occupation, and business name), if applicable.

The political party must disclose the full amount of the payment as a contribution. Any fee associated with the processing of the contribution must be disclosed as an offsetting expenditure. The fees assessed on multiple contributions made through an online payment processor during any reporting period may be aggregated for disclosing as a single expenditure transaction. A political party that aggregates payment processing fees must attach a copy of the statement verifying the individual expenditures to the respective campaign finance statements.

Fund-Raiser Exemption

Individual contributions totaling \$50 or less per person received at a specific fund-raising activity need not be itemized (listed by person) within a report. These contributions should be reported as a single line item with an aggregate amount on [Form 31-E, Statement of Contributions Received at a Social or Fund-Raising Event](#). Also, in-kind contributions totaling \$425 or less from one contributor at a single fund-raising activity need not be itemized. These contributions should be reported as a single line item with an aggregate amount on [Form 31-J-1, Statement of In-Kind Contributions Received](#). In all events, the treasurer must keep itemized records of all contributions, in case such records are requested by the auditing authority.

[R.C. 3517.10\(B\)\(4\)\(e\)](#)

Contributor Address Exemption

Political parties need not include the addresses of contributors within their reports.

[R.C. 3517.10\(B\)\(4\)\(b\)](#)



Employer/Occupation Disclosure

When a state or county political party is required to file its campaign finance report by electronic means, the party is required to provide the employer information for all contributions greater than \$100 received from individuals. If the individual is self-employed, then the occupation and name of the individual's business must be disclosed.

[R.C. 3517.10\(B\)\(4\)\(b\)\(ii\), 3517.10\(E\)\(2\)](#)

Public Employee Solicitations/Contributions

Public employees are prohibited from being solicited for political contributions while performing their official duties or while they are in those areas of a public building where official business is conducted. Public employees are prohibited from soliciting contributions while performing official duties or in areas of a public building where official business is conducted. For these prohibitions, the term "public employee" does not include any person holding an elective office.

[R.C. 3517.092](#)

In-Kind Contributions Received

An in-kind contribution is a non-monetary contribution of goods or services that is made with the consent of, in coordination or cooperation with, or at the request or suggestion of, the benefited candidate, agent of the candidate, committee, or party. Examples include receiving postage or signs, receiving rent-free office space, having personnel compensated by a third party, or having a third party buy media advertising on behalf of a committee. An in-kind contribution is considered a contribution and should be reported on Form [31-J-1, In-Kind Contributions Received](#).

[R.C. 3517.01\(C\)\(16\)](#)

The exception to the general definition of an in-kind contribution is when a political party makes one or more expenditures to finance communications advocating the election or defeat of a candidate for judicial office. This type of expense made by a political party, whether or not it is made in coordination with a candidate or campaign committee, will be considered an independent expenditure and reported as such by the political party on [Form 31-U, Independent Expenditures Made by a Campaign Committee, PAC, Political Party, or Legislative Campaign Fund](#). As an independent expenditure, the affected judicial candidate campaign committee does not have a duty to disclose the expenditures made by the political party.

[R.C. 3517.105\(D\)](#)

Loans

A political party may receive contributions in the form of a loan where the contributor expects to be repaid. While there is no requirement to obtain or disclose any formal loan agreement between the political party and the contributor, it is advisable to consider having an agreement with all terms expressly detailed. Once a loan is received, the balance—along with any payments made—must be disclosed on [Form 31-C, Statement of Loans Received](#), in each report filed until the loan is repaid or forgiven by the contributor.



Debts

When a political party has received a good or service that is 60 days or more payable at the time of a reporting deadline, it must disclose the transaction on [Form 31-N, Statement of Outstanding Debts](#), within that report. The debt, and any activity relating to it, must be in each report until the debt is repaid or forgiven by the contributor. If the debt is forgiven, the amount forgiven is considered an in-kind contribution.

Raffles

The use of raffles or other games of chance to raise money for a political party, while not specifically prohibited in the campaign finance statutes, is discouraged for many reasons. First, the collecting and reporting of all the required contributor information for every raffle ticket or chance sold can be very difficult. A committee treasurer must keep a strict account of all contributions received, regardless of the amount of the contribution. Second, the raffle or other games or schemes of chance in which persons pay to play may be a lottery prohibited by [Article XV, Section 6 of the Ohio Constitution](#) or may constitute gambling in violation of [R.C. 2915](#). In addition, political fund-raising events involving a raffle or other scheme or game of chance held on the premise of a liquor permit holder may involve a violation of [OAC 4301:1-1-53](#) of the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of Liquor Control.

Many fund-raising events award door prizes to some persons who attend. Giving door prizes of minimal value, such as flower arrangements, is unlikely to constitute a violation because the persons participating would have contributed regardless of the possibility of receiving a prize. But if the value of the door prize is significant enough to encourage contributors to purchase an entrance ticket in order to win the prize, then a violation may have occurred. Questions or information on raffles and other schemes or games of chance should be referred to the county prosecutor in the county where the activity will occur.

SOS Advisory No. 94-04

Independent Expenditures

Any expenditure by a political party seeking to influence the results of an election for a candidate for judicial office should be reported by the political party as an independent expenditure on [Form 31-U, Independent Expenditures Made by a Campaign Committee, PAC, Political Party, or Legislative Campaign Fund](#), and not as an in-kind contribution made.

[R.C. 3517.105\(D\)](#)

In-Kind Contributions Made

An in-kind contribution made occurs when a political party gives items or services to another committee or pays the bill for items or services for another committee's benefit. An in-kind contribution made is considered a campaign disbursement and should be reported as such on [Form 31-J-2, In-Kind Contributions Made](#). If the in-kind contribution made involved the outlay of money, then a corresponding expenditure entry should appear on [Form 31-B, Statement of Expenditures](#), or if related to an event [Form 31-F, Statement of Expenditures for Social or Fund-Raising Event](#).

[R.C. 3517.01\(C\)\(16\)](#)



Expenditure Verification

Every expenditure in excess of \$25 must have a corresponding canceled check or receipt photocopy attached to the report. A proper receipt is one that has been marked "PAID" by the vendor. In addition, the Secretary of State or the county board of elections may request a mileage log for mileage reimbursements, so that the expenditure and its appropriateness may be verified.

If canceled checks are not returned or provided by the banking institution of the political party, a copy or printout of the political party's bank statements will suffice for the receipt requirement, so long as the name of the vendor, date of transaction, and amount of the expenditure are all provided. Additionally, printouts of canceled check images as provided by the political party's banking institution satisfy the expenditure verification requirement.

[*R.C. 3517.10\(D\)*](#); [*OAC 111:2-4-13*](#); [*OEC Advs. 87ELC-03, 87ELC-12*](#)

Credit Cards

A political party may obtain a credit card to purchase goods and services on behalf of the committee. If the political party pays the credit card company directly, each credit card purchase should be listed separately as an expenditure on [Form 31-B, Statement of Expenditures](#), or on [Form 31-F, Statement of Expenditures for a Social or Fund-Raising Event](#), with the vendor name, address, date, and amount of purchase. The credit card statement should be attached to the report, along with a copy of the canceled check to the credit card company.

[*OAC 111:2-4-13*](#)

If an individual uses a personal or non-political party credit card and then seeks reimbursement from the political party for the purchases, then the reimbursement expenditure must be reported on the expenditure form.

The treasurer must obtain receipts for all reimbursements issued to verify the legitimacy of each expense. The documentation for an expenditure must be provided with the respective campaign finance report.

[*R.C. 3517.13\(O\)*](#), [*3517.10\(D\)*](#)

Charitable Contributions

Charitable contributions are those made to a charity designated as exempt from federal income taxation under subsection 501(a) and described in subsections 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), 501(c)(8), 501(c)(10), or 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code, or to any charity approved by advisory opinion of the Ohio Elections Commission.

[*R.C. 3517.08\(G\)*](#)

Permissible Political Party Expenses

The use of political party funds for personal or business purposes is prohibited. Political parties are prohibited from knowingly soliciting, accepting, or receiving funds from foreign nationals, either directly or indirectly. They are also prohibited from making contributions, expenditures, or independent expenditures using funds from foreign nationals.

[*R.C. 3517.121\(B\)*](#)



Closing an Account

A political party must have a zero-dollar balance and no outstanding loans or debts before it can terminate. When these criteria have been met, a political party must file a final report. This report must list all activity, if any, that has occurred since the previous report.

A political party's method for requesting to terminate varies by their filing location and whether they file electronically or via paper.

- Electronic filers with a board of elections will select the "Termination Report" option when creating their final report for submission.
- Paper filers with the Secretary of State or a board of elections will select the "Termination" option on the [Form 30-A, Ohio Campaign Finance Report Cover Page](#).
- Electronic filers with the Secretary of State's office, after filing their final report, must email CFinance@OhioSoS.gov the relevant fund has a zero-dollar balance, no outstanding loans or debts, and wishes to terminate.

[R.C. 3517.10\(A\)](#)

Record Retention

Political parties must maintain their records for six years. This requirement includes all bank records (including deposit records), reports, amendments, correspondence, receipts, invoices, and mileage logs. The county boards of elections and the Secretary of State must maintain all reports filed for six years.

[R.C. 3517.10\(C\), \(D\); OAC 111:2-4-13](#)