

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

11 CFR Parts 9007 and 9038

[Notice 1984-14]

**Repayments by Publicly Financed
Presidential Candidates**

AGENCY: Federal Election Commission.

ACTION: Final Rule; Transmittal to Congress.

SUMMARY: The Commission is publishing today revised rules governing the formula used to determine repayments for non-qualified campaign expenses by publicly-financed Presidential candidates. The regulations provide for a pro-rata, rather than 100%, repayment of funds used for such expenses, in accordance with the recent decisions by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in *Kennedy for President Committee v. Federal Election Commission*, No. 83-1521 (D.C. Cir. May 15, 1984) and *Reagan for President Committee v. Federal Election Commission*, No. 83-1666 (D.C. Cir. May 15, 1984). Further information on the revised regulations is found in the Supplemental Information which follows.

EFFECTIVE DATES: Further action, including the announcement of an effective date, will be taken by the Commission after these regulations have been before the Congress 30 legislative days in accordance with 28 U.S.C. 9009(c) and 9039(c).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susan E. Propper, Assistant General Counsel, (202) 523-4143 or Toll Free (800) 424-8530.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 28, 1984, the Commission published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking comments on proposed revisions to the regulations governing certain kinds of repayments by publicly-financed candidates. 49 FR 28596. The comment period ended on July 30, 1984. No comments were received in response to the Notice.

28 U.S.C. 9009(c) and 9038(c) require that any rule or regulation prescribed by the Commission to carry out the provisions of Title 28, United States Code, be transmitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate prior to final promulgation. These regulations were transmitted on August 17, 1984.

Explanation and Justification

On May 15, 1984, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit held that repayments by publicly-financed Presidential primary candidates for non-qualified campaign expenses should be "limited to the amount of federal funds that the Commission reasonably determined were spent" by the candidates for such purposes. *Kennedy for President Committee et al. v. Federal Election Commission*, No 83-1521 (D.C. Cir. May 15, 1984); *Reagan for President Committee v. Federal Election Commission*, No. 83-1666, slip op. at 2 (D.C. Cir. May 15, 1984). In accordance with the court's order, the Commission has revised its regulations, which currently require repayment of the total amount spent on non-qualified campaign expenses. See, 11 CFR 9007.2(b)(2) and 9038.2(b)(2) [1983]. The revised regulations implement a pro-rata formula based on the proportion of federal funds to total funds received by the candidate. The amount of any repayment sought would then be a similar proportion of the total amount spent on non-qualified campaign expenses. In the case of Presidential primary candidates, the proportion of federal funds certified will be determined as of the candidates date of ineligibility. In the general election, a pro-rata formula will only be used for major party candidates who have received private contributions to make up a deficiency in the Fund and for minor or new party candidates receiving partial Federal funding. The use of such formulas is consistent with the court's opinion, which does not require a mathematically precise determination of the amount of the Federal funds spent improperly but only a reasonable determination of the amount of federal matching funds so used. *Kennedy* slip op. at 7. Moreover, the revisions are limited to repayment determinations under 26 U.S.C. 9007(b)(4) and 9038(b)(2), as those were the only types of repayment determinations addressed in the *Kennedy* and *Reagan* decisions.

To demonstrate how these formulas will operate, the Commission has prepared two examples of hypothetical repayment determinations under 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2). Although the examples deal with repayments by Presidential primary candidates, they may be analogized to repayments by general election candidates as the issues presented in both cases are similar. The examples cover hypothetical repayments by candidates in a surplus and in a deficit position.

Illustration No. 1: Surplus Candidate

Assumptions:

- Date of ineligibility (DOI): 7/19/84.
- Surplus on DOI: \$1,000,000.
- Matching funds received through DOI: \$8,000,000 (net).
- Total deposits through DOI: \$20,000,000.
- Non-qualified campaign expenses incurred pre-DOI: \$100,000 (in excess of New Hampshire limit).
- Non-qualified campaign expenses incurred post-DOI: \$25,000 (purchase of 1984 Corvette).

1. Calculate 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(3) ratio and determine amount of 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(3) surplus repayment.

The Audit staff verified the Candidate's NOCO statement (as of 7/19/84) and reach agreement with the Treasurer as to the amount of the surplus at DOI (i.e., \$1,000,000). The Audit staff then calculated the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(3) ratio using figures developed by reviewing reports and records of the Committee. The ratio calculated was

$$(40\%) \frac{\$8,000,000}{\$20,000,000}$$

Applying this ratio (40%) to the verified surplus (\$1,000,000)¹, the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(3) repayment amount becomes \$400,000. Since some estimates (for winding down costs) were used to calculate the surplus, adjustments to the amount repayable may be appropriate as a result of audit fieldwork updates.

2. Calculate 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio and determine amount of 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) repayment for non-qualified campaign expenses.

In order to determine the repayment for \$100,000 in expenditures in excess of the New Hampshire state limit, several calculations and adjustments were performed by the Audit staff. First, the ratio had to be calculated. In this case, the Treasurer had workpapers supporting his calculation of the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio and the Audit staff verified his figures. The Treasurer's ratio was

¹ The Treasurer included \$25,000 in accounts payable for expenses chargeable in the New Hampshire limit and arrived at a calculated surplus of \$975,000. The Audit staff excluded the \$25,000 in accounts payable for non-qualified campaign expenses, thus making the surplus \$1,000,000.

$$\frac{\$7,000,000}{\$19,000,000} = 36.7755\%$$

The Treasurer reasoned that since \$400,000 was to be repaid via the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(3) repayment, actual matching funds certified (NET) was equal to matching funds certified through DOI (\$8,000,000) less the \$400,000 to be repaid. A similar adjustment was made to the denominator. The Audit staff explained that for purposes of calculating the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio, repayments pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(1) and (b)(3) did not come into consideration.² The 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio was calculated to be

$$40\% \frac{\$8,000,000}{\$20,000,000}$$

Since the \$100,000 (\$75,000 paid and \$25,000 yet to be paid) were the only non-qualified expenses incurred prior to date of ineligibility, the Audit staff simply multiplied 40% time \$100,000 to arrive at the amount (\$40,000) repayable pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2).

With respect to the review of post-DOI disbursements, the Audit staff noted a \$25,000 payment for purchase of an automobile made on 8/2/84. It was also noted that the Treasurer had properly: (1) not included this amount for purposes of inclusion in the NOCO statement and (2) considered this expense to have been defrayed with excess campaign funds pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 439a. (The Committee's calculated residual funds after all repayments and qualified expenses were satisfied, amounted to approximately \$560,000).

In summary, the total repayment requested would have been as follows:

$$\frac{\$8,000,000}{\$20,000,000} \times \$1,000,000 = \$400,000$$

26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(3):

² There is no adjustment for repayments under 26 U.S.C. 9038 (b)(1) or (b)(3) because the repayment formula for section 9038(b)(2) is based on the amount of funds certified to the candidate and therefore available to defray non-qualified campaign expenses. This is so even if the Commission may later determine that the candidate was not entitled to a portion of the funds or that the candidate had a surplus.

$$\frac{\$8,000,000}{\$20,000,000} \times \$100,000 = \$40,000$$

$$\frac{\$3,000,000}{\$3,000,000 + \$6,000,000} \text{ or } 33.3333\%$$

9038(b)(2) ratio was applied to the \$20,000 which resulted in a repayment amount of \$6,666.67 for convention expenses. It should be noted that the \$5,000 transfer (dated 5/4/85) was made after all matching funds received had been disposed of and thus, this transfer was considered to have been made using non-federal monies.

The total 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) repayment is \$31,666.67, comprised of the following:

Pre-DOI non-qualified campaign expenses (\$75,000 x 33.3333%)	\$25,000.00
Post-DOI non-qualified expenses (\$20,000 x 33.3333%)	6,666.67
Total 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) repayment	\$31,666.67

Total repayment, \$440,000.
Illustration No. 2: Deficit Candidate

Assumptions:

- Date of ineligibility (DOI): 3/20/84.
- Matching Funds Certified Through DOI: \$3,000,000.³
- Total Contributions Deposited Through DOI: \$6,000,000.
- Amount of Non-Qualified Expenses incurred Pre-DOI:

Undocumented	\$50,000
Excess loans	25,000
Total 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) incurred pre-DOI	75,000

not the

$$31.0345\% \text{ or } \frac{\$2,700,000}{\$2,700,000 + \$6,000,000}$$

as originally calculated by the Treasurer. Applying the 33.3333% ratio to the amount of non-qualified campaign expenses incurred prior to the date of ineligibility (\$75,000), the repayment amount was \$25,000.

The Audit staff verified the figures contained on the Treasurer's NOCO workpapers. It was noted that the Treasurer had included \$25,000 in non-qualified expenses as a payable on her NOCO statement. This amount represented expenses for materials and services used in February 1984 which had not been paid and are included in the pre-ineligibility non-qualified expenses included above. The Audit staff explained that, if permitted, inclusion of the \$25,000 in non-qualified campaign expenses could result in an additional \$25,000 in matching fund entitlement.

During the audit fieldwork update, the Audit staff reviewed expenses incurred after the date of ineligibility, the updated NOCO statements submitted, and the liquidation of matching fund payments received after the date of ineligibility. It was noted that the Treasurer included on her NOCO statement, \$20,000 in expenses relating to the candidate's and his staff's travel, food and lodging costs at the nominating convention. The Audit staff pointed out two problems with the Treasurer's approach.

First, the \$20,000 in convention-related expenses were not valid winding down costs and, therefore, could not be defrayed with matching funds. The Audit staff informed the Treasurer that the \$20,000 payment was a non-qualified campaign expense subject to repayment pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2). The Treasurer agreed.

Second, for the same reasons that the \$25,000 in pre-DOI non-qualified campaign expenses could not be included on the NOCO statement, the \$20,000 in post-DOI non-qualified campaign expenses also could not be included. Thus, the entitlement as calculated by the Treasurer was reduced by \$20,000⁴ and the 26 U.S.C.

At the close of follow-up fieldwork, the Treasurer inquired concerning the possible impact of settling a \$500,000 debt for \$50,000 in the near future. The Audit staff advised her of the Commission's debt settlement procedures and informed the Treasurer that all NOCO statements filed carried this debt at \$500,000. Should the debt be settled for less, it was the Commission's policy to recalculate entitlement based on the \$50,000 settlement amount, and seek a 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(1) repayment, if appropriate.

Amount of Non-Qualified Expenses incurred Post-DOI:

Date incurred	Date paid	Amount paid	Non-qualified type
June 1, 1984	July 1, 1984	\$20,000	Non-campaign related (Convention expenses) Transfer to National Party
May 4, 1985	May 4, 1985	5,000	
Total post-DOI non-qualified		25,000	

Amount of Last Matching Fund

Payment: \$1,750 on 2/5/85.

1. Calculate 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio and resultant repayment amount.

During initial fieldwork, the Audit staff reviewed workpapers prepared by the Treasurer concerning the Committee's NOCO position and 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) repayment situation. The Audit staff verified the Committee's NOCO position (entitlement). Several differences were noted between the Committee Treasurer's calculations and those performed by the Audit staff.

The Treasurer did not include the \$300,000 matching payment received on 3/23/84 in computing the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio. This appeared to be an oversight on the Treasurer's part. The Audit staff pointed out that the 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) ratio (both numerator and denominator) is to include the amount of matching funds certified through the date of ineligibility, whether or not received by that date. Hence, the correct ratio for 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2) repayment purpose was

³ Actual matching funds received through DOI totaled \$2,700,000; however, a certification for \$300,000 was approved on 3/18/84, with the resulting payment not received until 3/23/84.

⁴ To the extent the candidate's entitlement was inflated by this amount, a repayment determination would also be made under 26 U.S.C. 9038(b)(1).