

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



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LOCAL PARTY GROUPS RECEIVE NEEDED ADVICE

WASHINGTON -- A national election looms on the horizon....Interest in the presidential race is at an all time high....Local politicians, political party activists, people from all walks of life besiege the local party headquarters wanting to get involved.

What does a local party organization do? How deeply can such groups become involved in federal elections? Are there restrictions on funding activities? Do they have to file reports with the FEC?

Local party organizations at city, county and district levels sometimes become involved in elections for federal office. Often these groups are not registered with the Federal Election Commission. Their questions are numerous -- and they often find themselves making mistakes.

That is why the FEC has published a new brochure to answer some of the many questions facing these local political organizations - organizations that are at the heart of America's political party system.

The brochure explains that federal election law places dollar limits on contributions and expenditures which party organizations may make on behalf of candidates for federal office. It outlines the types of money that are prohibited in federal elections. And it explains the financial level at which such groups would be required to register and file disclosure reports with the FEC.

In simple terms, two options are described which local groups may use to establish proper accounting procedures and insure that they stay within the law. Also discussed is how the Commission's allocation rules may apply even to party organizations that are not registered under the FECA.

Activities in which local groups may participate are outlined, including limitations. Other activities, such as sample ballots and slate cards, grassroots campaign materials (pins, bumper stickers and yard signs), voter registration or get-out-the-vote drives are described as exempt from limits, as long as certain conditions are met.

Information contained in the publication includes:

- registration thresholds
- permissible vs prohibited funds
- contributions to candidates
- coordinated expenditures
- volunteer activities
- exempt party activities
- generic voter drives
- administrative expenses
- disclaimer notices

The brochure is free and is available at the Federal Election Commission, 999 E St., N.W., Washington 20463, 202/219-3420 or 800/424-9530.

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