Getting Started with FECFile User Manual

Hands-on Help with FECFile and Electronic Filing for Candidate Committees

The "Getting Started with FECFile User Manual" was developed as a quick reference tool for Candidate Committees to be used as a training aid in FEC sponsored Reporting Workshops. Candidate committees must consult the FECFile User Manual for Candidate Committees for more detailed reporting assistance.

Reports Analysis Division (800) 424- 9530 (Menu Option #5); 202-694-1130

Submit a Question to the Reports Analysis Division & Analyst Lookup

Electronic Filing Office (800) 424- 9530 (Menu Option #4); 202-694-1307

eFiletechsupport@fec.gov

Last Updated: 6/10/2026

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Getting Started

Beginning Electronic Filing

Electronic filing is:

1. Required when a political committee or other person receives contributions or makes expenditures in excess of $50,000 in the current calendar year or has reason to expect to do so.
2. Voluntary for any political committee or other person that receives contributions or makes expenditures less than $50,000 in the current calendar year. However, once a committee decides to e-file on a voluntary basis, it must continue to do so for the remainder of the calendar year, unless the Commission determines that extraordinary and unforeseeable circumstances have made it impractical for the committee to continue filing electronically. For more information visit the Electronic Filing Overview page (https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/electronic-filing/).

Electronic Filing Passwords:

Registered committees can enroll in the Electronic Filing Password Assignment System (https://webforms.fec.gov/psa/getstarted.htm). For further password assistance, please visit the Password Help page (https://webforms.fec.gov/psa/help.htm) or contact the FEC's Electronic Filing Office at 202-694-1307, toll free at 800-424-9530 (menu option #4) or eFiletechsupport@fec.gov.

It is important to obtain or update your password as soon as possible. Due to the extra security requirements, it may take up to two business days for the FEC to complete electronic filing password requests.

Downloading Software:

1. Go to https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/fecfile-software/ and confirm Minimum System Requirements are met.
2. Click *Download FECFile*.
3. Enter the committee ID and choose *Submit*.
4. Enter the required committee and contact information then click *Submit*.
5. Click the *FECFile X.X.X.X Download* button.
6. Follow your computer's download instructions.
7. Double-click the FECFile install icon and follow the installation prompts.

Note: FECFile will automatically check for the latest program updates every time you start the software. If you are having trouble downloading FECFile, please contact the FEC's Electronic Filing Office at 202-694-1307, toll free at 800-424-9530 (menu option #4) or eFiletechsupport@fec.gov

Using FECFile

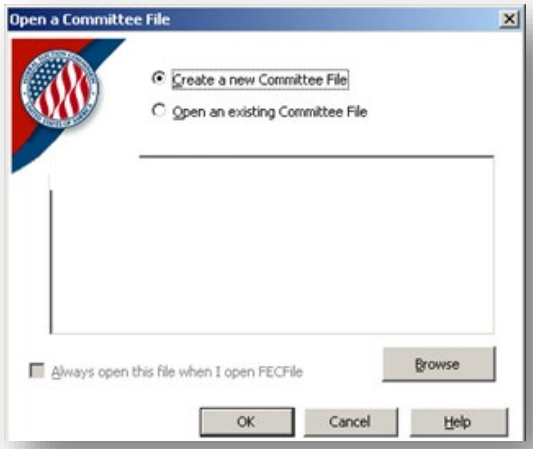
FECFile Video Tutorial: "FECFile Introduction"

FECFile Video Tutorial: "Setting Up a FECFile Database for a Candidate"

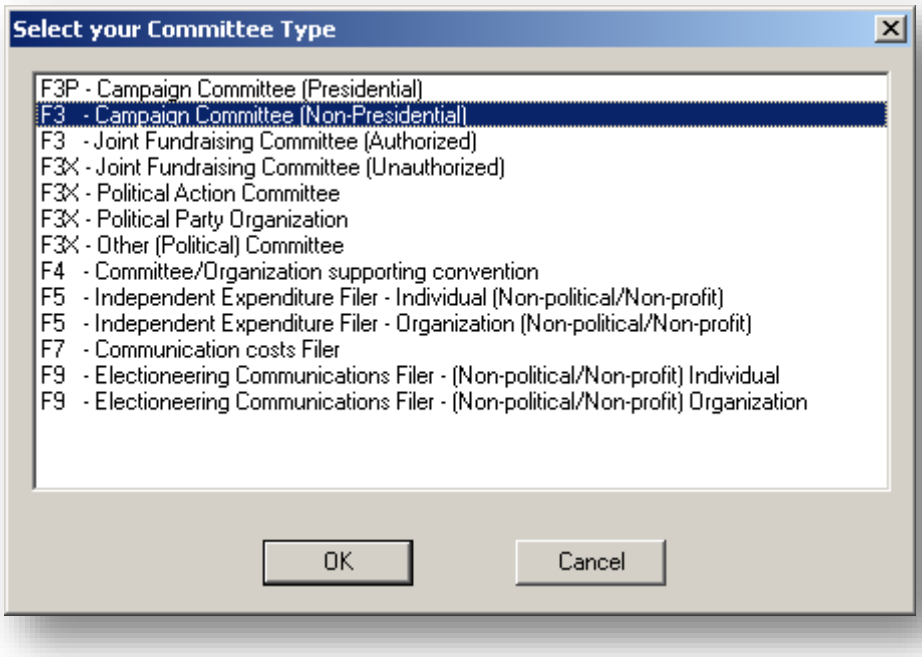
Creating a New Committee File

Note: If you have an existing committee file, skip to page 6 to create a report in an existing file.

1. Start FECFile using either the desktop icon or the computer's Start Menu.
2. Click *Create a new committee file.* **Use the same file every time a report is created**.
3. A window will appear to confirm the creation of a new committee file. Click *OK*.



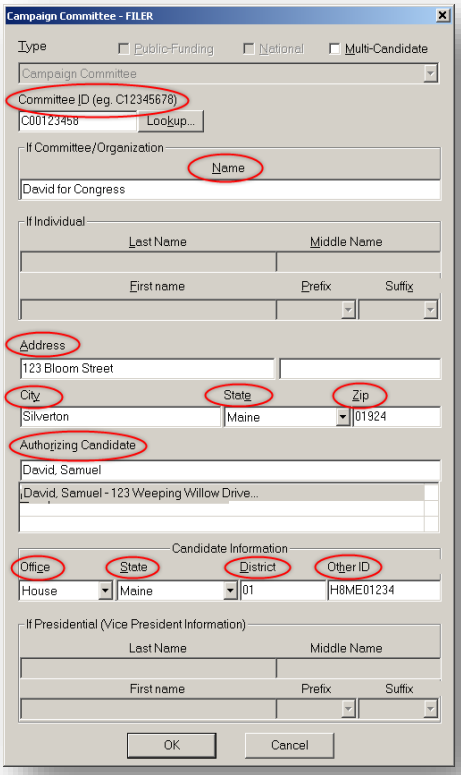
4. Choose the committee type from the following list and click *OK*.



5. Enter the committee's ID number, name, and address. In the "Authorizing Candidate" field at the bottom of the page, type the candidate's name (last name, first name) and press the Tab key.

   a. A new window will open. Enter the candidate's information and click *OK*. The "Campaign Committee – FILER" window will reappear.

   b. Enter the candidate's information at the bottom of the window. When finished, click *OK*.



6. Click *Yes* at the prompt.

7. Click *OK* at the prompt.

8. Enter the current election cycle. **An election cycle begins the day after the previous general election for that office and ends on the date of the next general election.** The election cycle spans two years for House candidates, four years for presidential candidates, and six years for Senate candidates. Election cycle dates can also be entered by clicking the *View* menu and selecting *Election Cycles*. Then click the *Edit* menu and select *New*. Enter the date of the day after the previous general election in the "Date From" field and enter the date of the next scheduled general election in the "Date Thru" field. Then click *OK*.

   To confirm that you have entered the correct election cycle dates, please contact the Reports Analysis Division (800-424-9530, Menu Option #5).

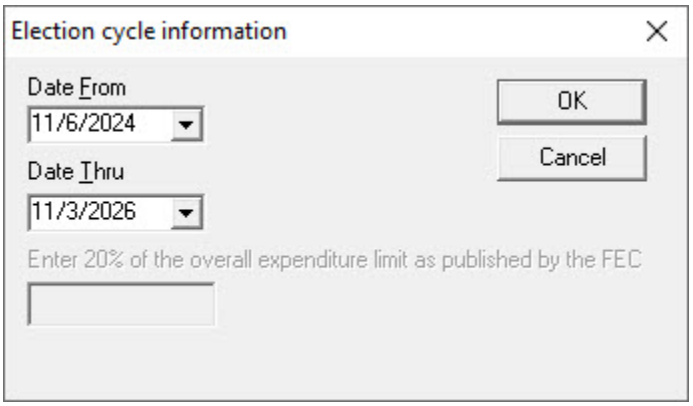
2026 House Election Cycle: 11/6/2024 – 11/3/2026

2026 Senate Election Cycle: 11/4/2020 – 11/3/2026

2028 Senate Election Cycle: 11/9/2022 – 11/7/2028

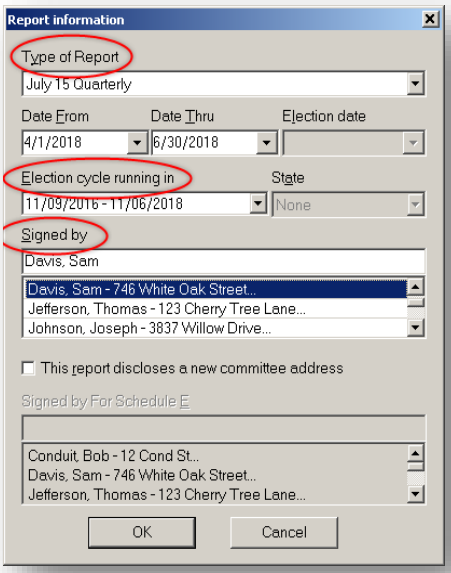
2030 Senate Election Cycle: 11/6/2024 – 11/5/2030

2028 Presidential Election Cycle: 11/6/2024 – 11/7/2028

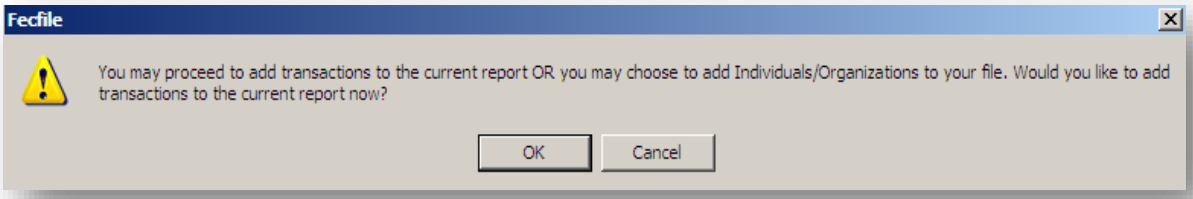


Creating the First Report (Form 3) in a New Committee File

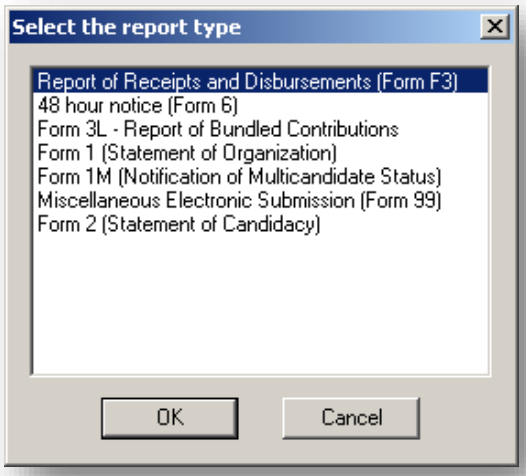
1. Select the *Type of Report* from the Report's drop-down menu and, if necessary, modify the "Date From" and "Date Thru" fields for the report coverage dates.
2. Select the election cycle – make sure it is the current election cycle (An election cycle begins the day after the previous general election for that office and ends on the date of the next general election; please consult page 4 for more information).
3. To sign the report, click in the *Signed by* box. Enter the treasurer's name (last name, first name). If the treasurer has not already been entered into FECFile, press Tab or Enter.
    a. An "Individual/Organization" box will appear. Ensure that the type selected is "Individual other than a Candidate" and enter the rest of the treasurer's information (name, address, etc.).
    b. After entering the treasurer's information, click *OK* to return to the *Report Information* box.



4. After all the information is entered, click *OK*.
5. A window will appear, with options for what to do next in the report. To view the Summary Page and begin to add transactions click *OK*. To view the Individuals/Organizations screen, click *Cancel.*



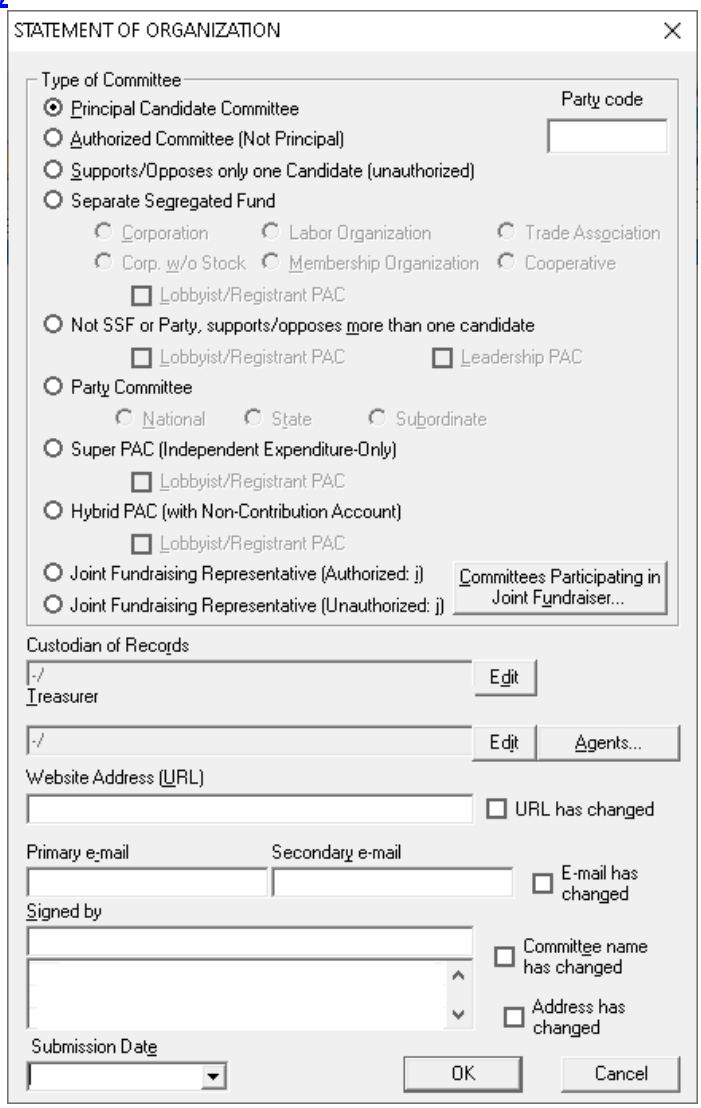
Creating a New Report in an Existing Committee File



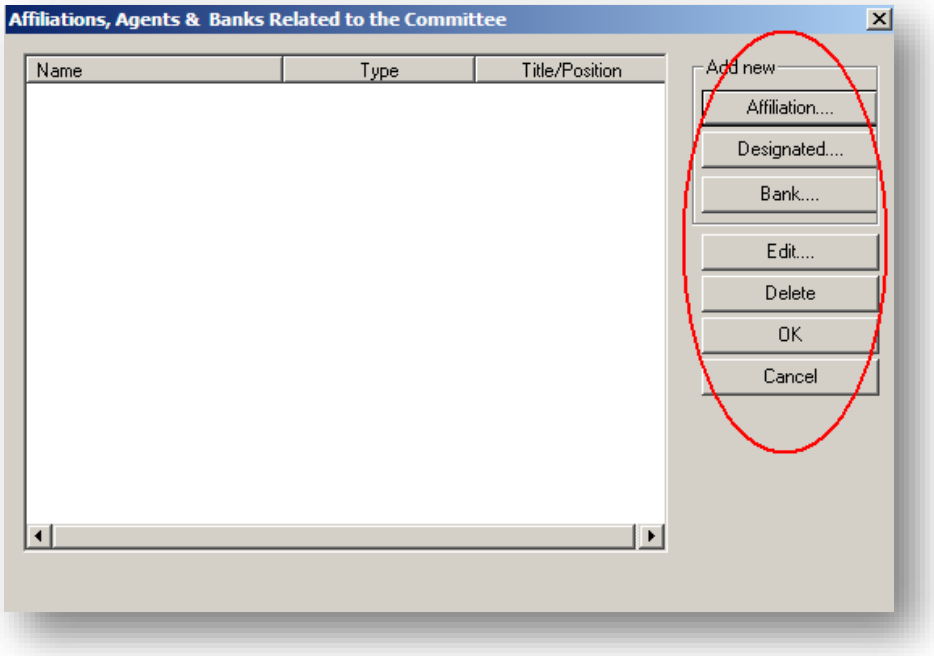
1. In the "View" menu, click *Reports*.
2. In the "Edit" menu, click *New*, or right click anywhere in the Reports window and click *New*.
3. Select the report type you would like to create (Forms 3, 6, 3L, 1, 99, or 2) and click *OK*. House and Senate committees report their financial activity on the Report of Receipts and Disbursements (Form F3).

Creating a Statement of Organization (Form 1)

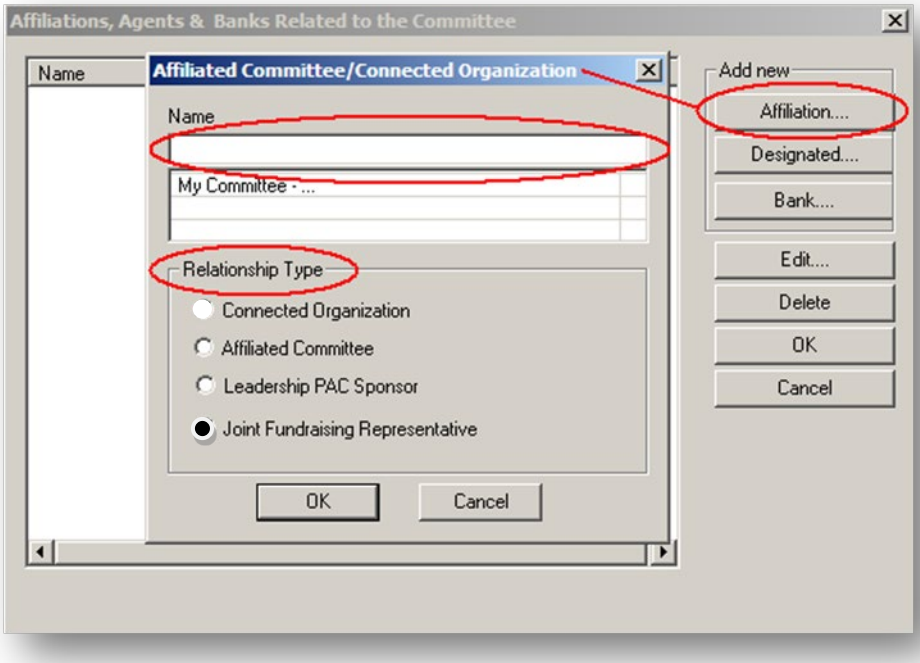
1. Create a Statement of Organization by following the steps to create a new report as outlined in the previous section and choose *Form 1 (Statement of Organization)*. Click *OK*.
2. The "Statement of Organization" dialog box appears. Select the type of committee, and enter the party code, website address (if applicable), e-mail address (required), and date.
3. If the "Custodian of Records" and "Treasurer" fields (both required) do not already contain the names of the committee's custodian of records and treasurer, click *Edit*.
    a. Select the custodian of records or the treasurer's name from the scroll box. (Note: if the name does not appear in this box, press Tab or Enter to input that individual's information.)
    b. Enter the custodian of record and treasurer's phone number and title/relationship to the committee, then click *OK*.
4. To enter connected organizations, affiliated committees, leadership PAC sponsors, joint fundraising representatives; designated agents; and banks/other depositories, click on *Agents…*



a. The "Affiliations, Agents & Banks Related to the Committee" dialog box will appear.



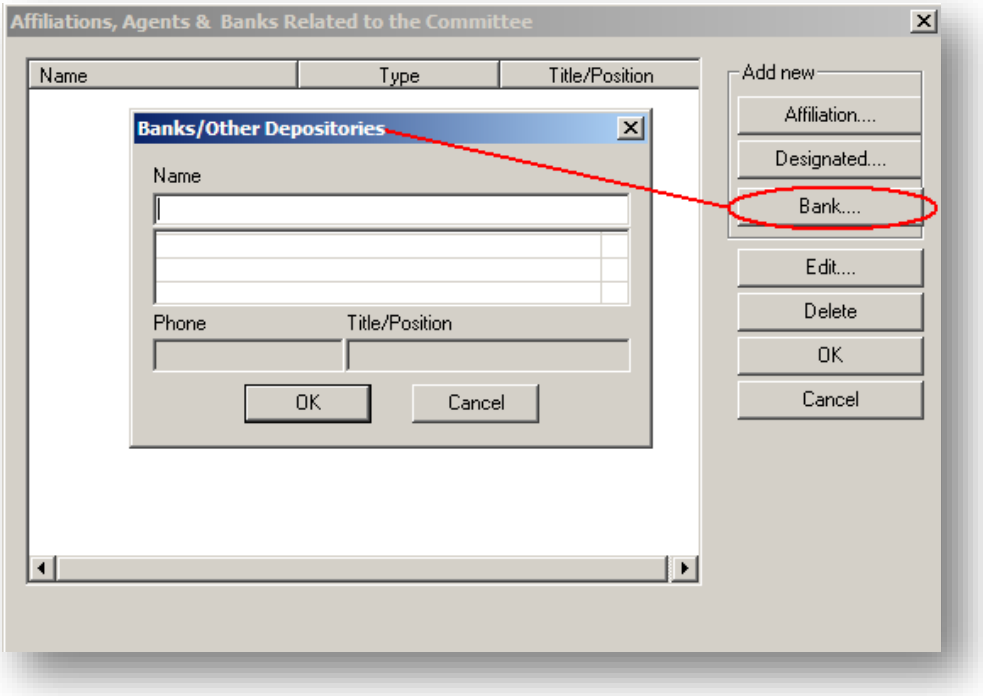
b. To add a connected organization, affiliated committee, leadership PAC sponsor, or joint fundraising representative, click on *Affiliation…*



c. Select the name of the connected organization, affiliated committee, leadership PAC sponsor, or joint fundraising representative from the list. (Note: if the name of the entity does not appear, and press Tab or Enter to input its information.)

d. Under "Relationship Type", select the corresponding type of relationship then click *OK*.

5. To add a designated agent (for example, an assistant treasurer), click on *Designated...*
    a. Select the name of the designated agent from the list. (Note: if the individual does not appear, type the name (last, first), and press Tab or Enter to input that individual's information.)
    b. Enter the designated agent's phone number and title/position with the committee, then click *OK*.
6. To enter a bank/other depository, click *Bank...*



- Select the name of the bank/other depository from the drop down box. (Note: if the bank or depository does not appear, type the name, and press Tab or Enter to input its information.) Click *OK*.

7. To edit an entry in the "Affiliations, Agents & Banks Related to the Committee" screen, click on the particular entry to highlight it, then click *Edit.*
8. To delete an entry in the "Affiliation, Agents and Banks Related to the Committee" screen, click on the particular entry to highlight it, then click *Delete.*
9. After entering the information, click *OK.*
10. Click *OK* after returning to the "Statement of Organization" box.
11. The Form 1 is now created. To review the Form 1 to ensure that it is complete, click the printer icon in the top menu bar in order to review the committee's information.

Note: You can also electronically file a new or amended Statement of Organization (FEC Form 1) using the online webform on the FEC's website: https://webforms.fec.gov/

FECFile Basics

Saving in FECFile:

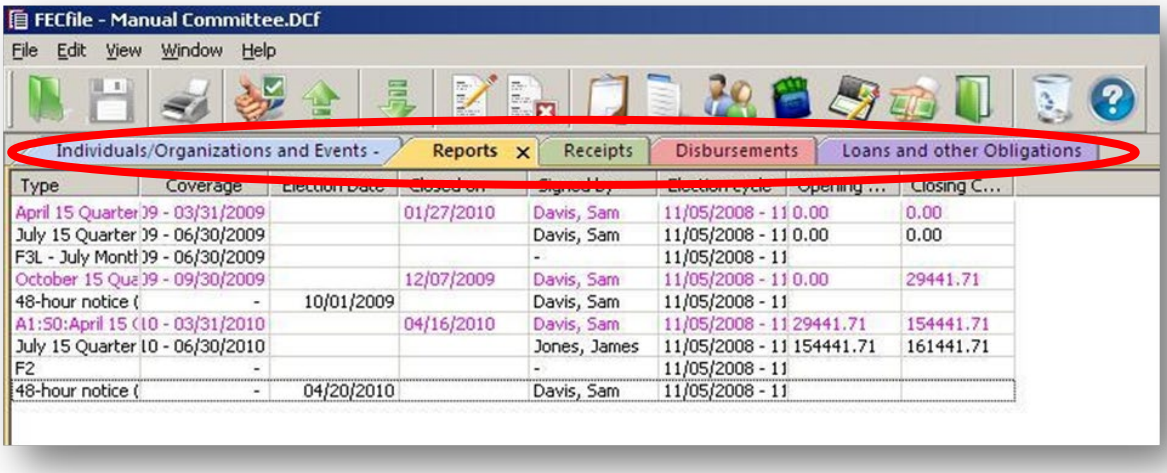
FECFile creates a committee database (with file extension **.DCf**), which holds the entirety of the committee's reporting history. This includes all reports, amendments, and contributors or vendors with whom the committee works.

1. **Save the file as often as possible.** This will decrease the chance of massive data loss. Be sure to save the file in a location easily accessible and easily remembered. The FEC cannot recover a lost file. **The FEC strongly recommends that you frequently back up the file to an external source, such as a cloud storage service, a flash drive, external hard drive, or CD.**
2. For each new report, open the same committee file. **Do not create a new committee file each time the committee files a report. This will lead to problems with election cycle-to-date amounts, cash on-hand amounts, and aggregate amounts**.

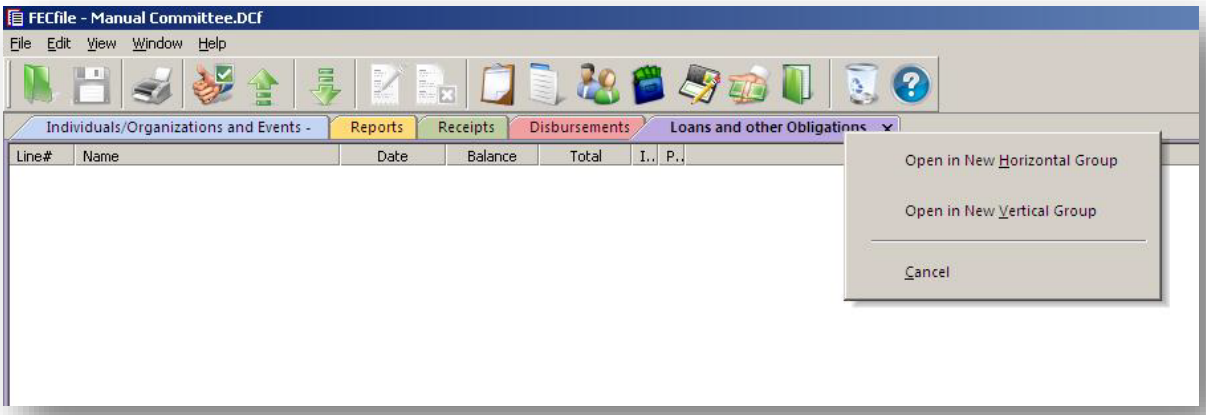
Using the Different Views:

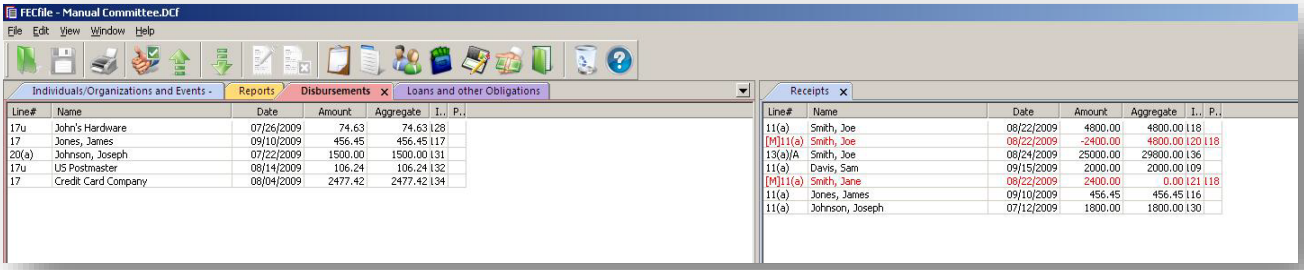
FECFile is organized into seven different views or windows: Reports; Summary Page; Individuals/Organizations and Events; Receipts; Disbursements; Loans, Debts, & Other Obligations; and All Transactions. Each of these views displays a different aspect of reporting and is used to create and modify both reports and transactions. There are three different ways to access a view:

1. When FECFile first opens, tabs will be displayed underneath the icon bar. Click on the tab to access the desired view. Tabs can be rearranged by dragging them to another location on the tab bar.



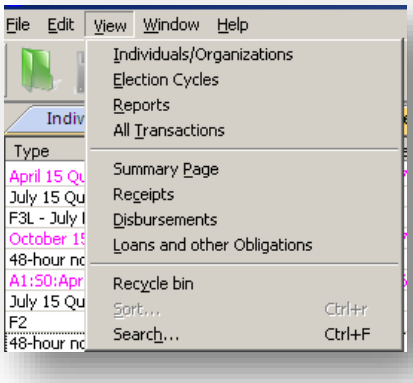
a. In order to view two tabs side-by-side, right-click on a tab and select *Open in a Horizontal Tab* or *Open in New Vertical Group.*





b. Tabs can be closed by clicking on the "X." New tabs can be opened or re-opened by using the "View" menu, clicking on the appropriate icon (please consult the next page for FECFile Views) or by clicking the "Window" menu and selecting "Open All" to open up all the tabs.

2. Under the "View" menu, select the desired tab:



3. Click on the icon, located across the top of the screen, representing the view:

About Each FECFile View:

Reports View – This view lists all reports created in the committee file. Transactions on these reports can be modified if the report is "open." Reports also can be amended using this view by right-clicking on the report and selecting *Amend.*

Summary Page View – This view shows both itemized (.I) and unitemized (.U) totals for each line number in both the period covered (ThisP.I and ThisP.U) and the election cycle (CTD.I and CTD.U). Transactions may be entered on to line numbers by double clicking a line.

#Line	Description	ThisP.I	ThisP.U	CTD.I	CTD.U

Individuals/Organizations and Events View – This view lists all entities entered into the committee database, including the committee's information, contributors, other political committees, businesses, etc. Modify an entity by double clicking on it.

Receipts View – This view lists all receipts entered in the report currently selected in Reports View. Modify a transaction by double clicking it, or right click an entry for a list of options such as creating a new transaction, deleting a transaction, adding memo text, etc.

Disbursements View – This view lists all disbursements entered in the report currently selected in Reports View. Modify a transaction by double clicking it, or right click an entry for a list of options such as creating a new transaction, deleting a transaction, adding memo text, etc.

Loans, Debts, & Other Obligations View – This view lists all debts, loans, or other obligations that are owed to or by the committee in the report currently selected in Reports View. Modify a transaction by double clicking it, or right click an entry for a list of options such as creating a new transaction, deleting a transaction, adding memo text, etc.

All Transactions View – This view lists all transactions entered in the committee file. Transactions are sorted by line number and name.

Memo Text:

Memo text is used to provide additional information regarding reports and transactions. Memo text can be added by highlighting the report or transaction, right-clicking, and choosing *Memo Text…* from the available options.

Miscellaneous Electronic Submission (Form 99):

A Form 99 is another way to provide additional information as a separate filing. Go to the *Reports* tab and right-click and select *New*. Then choose Miscellaneous Electronic Submission (Form 99) and click *OK*. Enter the additional information, choose the treasurer's name in the "Signed by" field and select "Miscellaneous Report to FEC" as the "Document Type." Follow the instructions on page 25 to upload the Form 99. You can also electronically file a Form 99 using the online webform on the FEC's website: https://webforms.fec.gov/

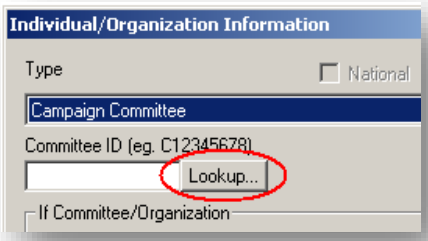
Creating Contributor and Vendor entries:

FECFile creates a database for all entities (individuals, businesses, PACs, Political Party Organizations, etc.) within the committee file. This saves the committee from repeatedly entering the contributor or vendor information if a committee conducts multiple transactions with a particular entity.

There are two ways to create an entity:

1. When entering the first transaction associated with an entity, make sure the cursor is in the "Name" field and press Tab or Enter. The "Individual/Organization Information" window will appear.
2. Using the Individuals/Organizations view, right click anywhere in the workspace and click *New* from the available options. The "Invididual/Organization Information" window will appear.

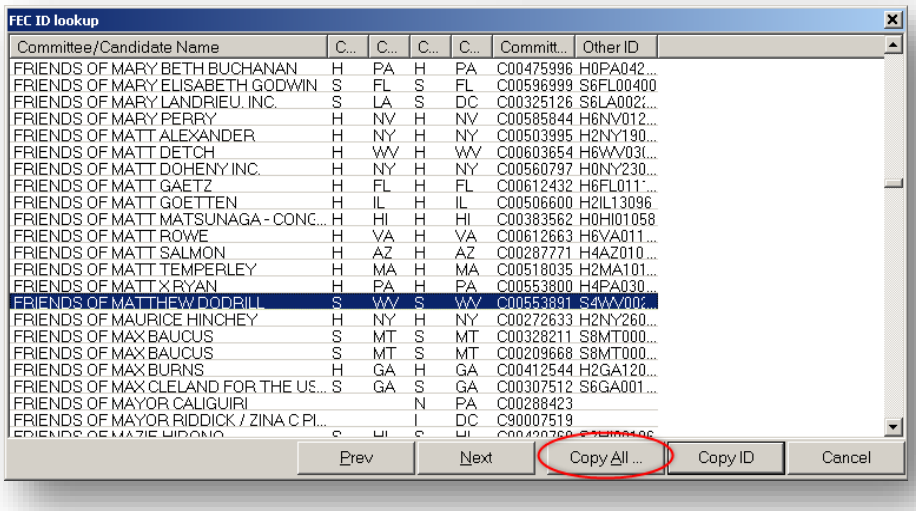
Filling Out the Individual/Organization Information Box



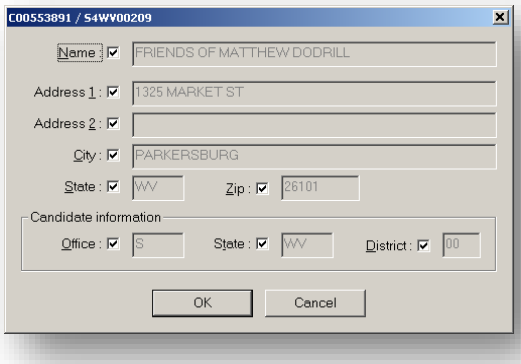
1. **Select the correct entity type from the drop-down menu at the top of the window.**
   - Note: FECFile disables any field that is not required for a type of entity.
2. After entering the information, click *OK*.

Using the FEC "Lookup" Feature:

Click *Lookup…* to access the FEC's database of federally registered candidates and political committees. This is an optional feature to copy information for a federal candidate or political committee instead of entering it in manually.



2. The "FEC ID Lookup" window appears. Scroll through the list and click once on the entry to highlight it.



3. Copy all applicable information by clicking *Copy All….*

4. Unchecking boxes in the window that appears will exclude that information from copying to the entity record. Click *OK* and all of the committee's checked information will be copied into the entity record.

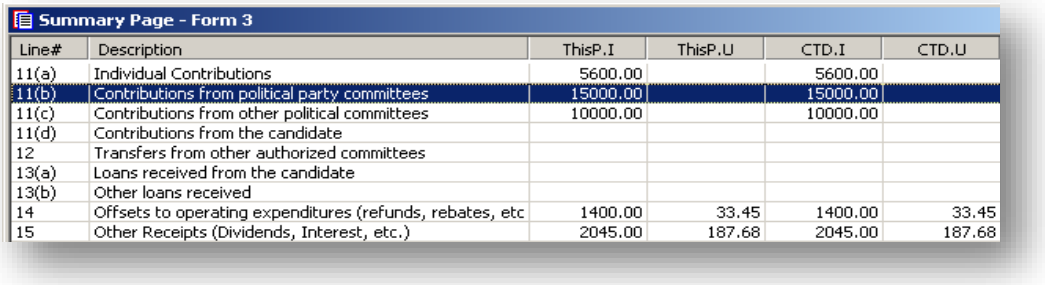
5. Click *OK* to return to the transaction screen.

Receipts

[FECFile Video Tutorial: "Entering Contributions from Individuals and PACs"]

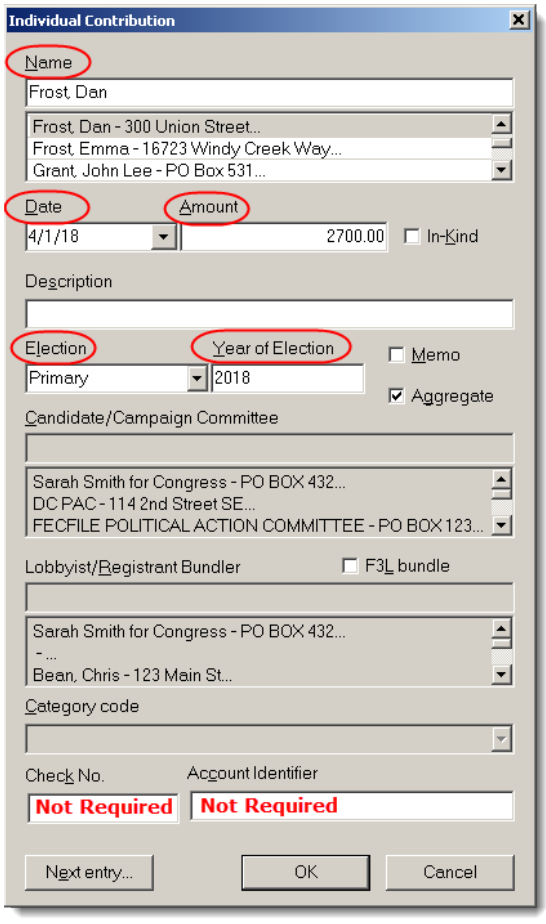
Receipt Basics

1. Click the "Summary View" icon at the top of FECFile. In the "Summary Page" window, double click on appropriate Line to enter a transaction.



Line#	Description	ThisP.I	ThisP.U	CTD.I	CTD.U
11(a)	Individual Contributions	5600.00		5600.00	
11(b)	Contributions from political party committees	15000.00		15000.00	
11(c)	Contributions from other political committees	10000.00		10000.00	
11(d)	Contributions from the candidate				
12	Transfers from other authorized committees				
13(a)	Loans received from the candidate				
13(b)	Other loans received				
14	Offsets to operating expenditures (refunds, rebates, etc	1400.00	33.45	1400.00	33.45
15	Other Receipts (Dividends, Interest, etc.)	2045.00	187.68	2045.00	187.68

2. Click on the name in the list scroll box immediately beneath the name field if the entity already exists in the committee's FECFile database. If the entity is not in the database, press the Tab key or Enter key to add the information. Refer to page 11 ("Creating Contributor and Vendor entries") for more information.
3. Enter date and amount and any applicable description of the transaction ("partnership", for example).
4. Enter the election and year of election for the contribution.
5. The "Memo" box should remain **unchecked** unless the entry is providing supplemental information that does not affect the report's cash on hand.
6. The "Aggregate" box should remain **checked** so that transactions aggregate on an election cycle-to-date basis.
7. Click *OK*.



Note: The check number and account identifier are NOT required fields and do not show up on a report. However, providing this information will allow the committee to keep better internal financial records.

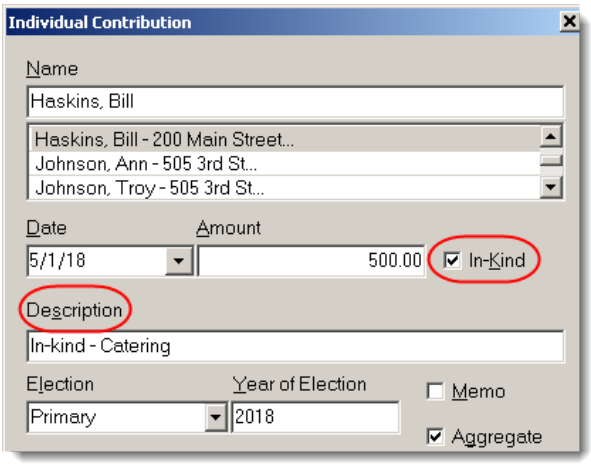
Receipt Reporting Examples:

- Individual Contributions, Political Party Contributions, PACs & Other Political Committee Contributions, Candidate Contributions and Partnership and LLC Contributions

Special Categories of Receipts

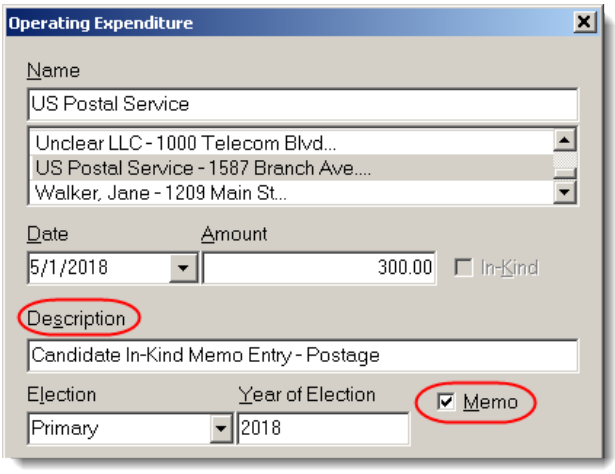
In-Kind Contributions

When entering an in-kind contribution, click the "In-Kind" box shown at right and add a description. Note: Checking the "In-Kind" box will automatically create the necessary balancing entry on Schedule B (the Disbursements tab). Use the "Description" field to add a description of the in-kind received. Consult the adequate and inadequate purpose of disbursement lists when describing the in-kind.



Candidate In-Kind Contributions

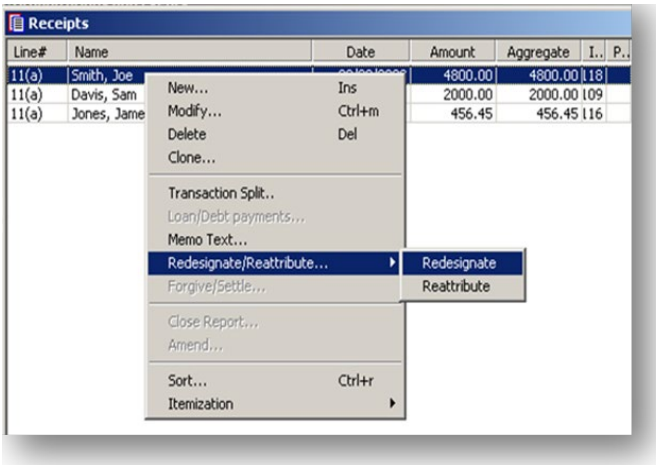
For candidate in-kind contributions, committees must also report information about the ultimate payee (i.e., the vendor) as a memo entry. Follow the instructions above for entering an in-kind contribution. Then, go to the Summary Page tab, right click on "Line 17 Operating expenditures," and select "New." Enter the information of the ultimate vendor who was paid by the candidate and check the "Memo" box. Use the "Description" field to reference the candidate in-kind entry.

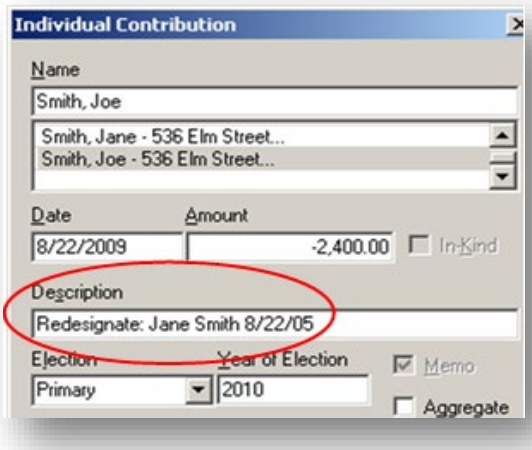


Reattribution/Redesignation of a Contribution

Go to the "Receipts" view.

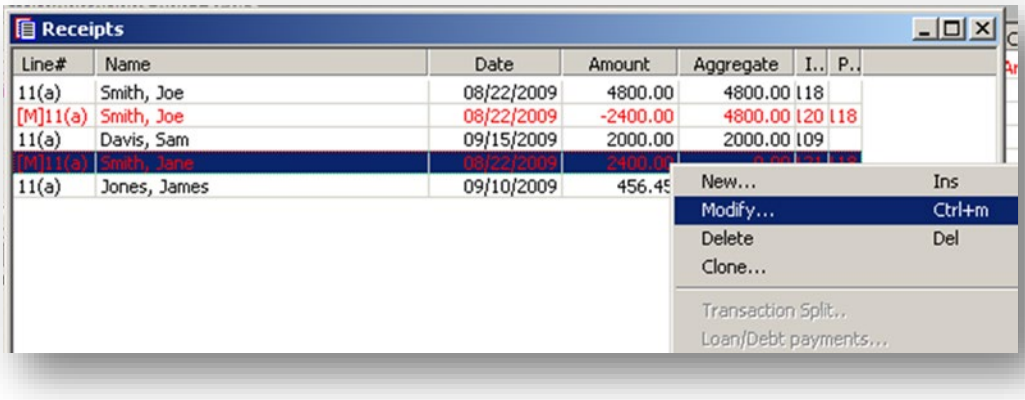
1. Find the contribution to be reattributed or redesignated and right click on it. Mouse over the "Redesignate/ Reattribute." Then click *Reattribute* or *Redesignate* in the box that appears.





2. After choosing *Reattribute* or *Redesignate*, enter the correcting information for the transaction and click *OK*. Note: Remember to cross reference by including the name of the original contributor in the description field. Click *OK* to return to the "Receipts" view.

a. For reattribution, highlight the newly created negative entry that FECFile generated for the original contributor, then right click and click *Modify…*

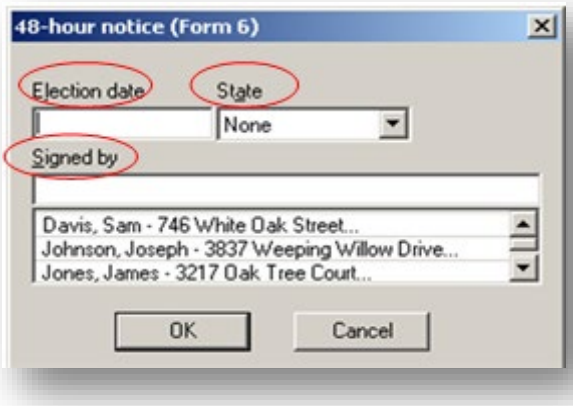


b. Update the description field to include the name of the person to whom the contribution is being reattributed.

3. Click "OK" and then click "Yes" at the prompt.

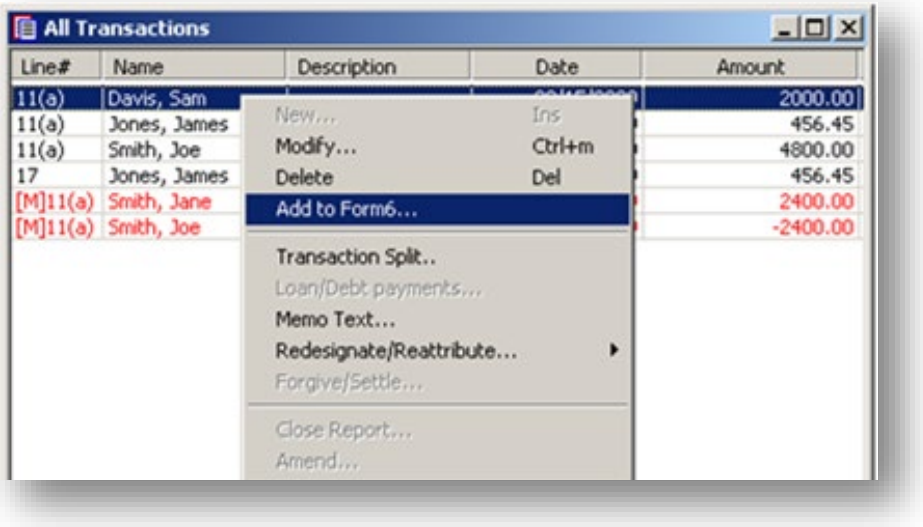
48-Hour Notices (Form 6)

1. A 48-hour notice is a *separate filing* from a Form 3. 48-hour notices are required for all contribution of $1,000 or more received less than 20 days but more than 48 hours before the day of an election.
2. To prepare to create 48-hour notices**, first create the Form 3 that includes the 48-hour notice period (please consult page 6 for instructions on how to create a new Form 3 report)**.
3. Enter the contribution on the Form 3 report (please consult page 13 for instructions on entering a contribution).
4. To create a 48-hour notice, go to the "Reports" view, right click, and click *New*. Click "48-hour notice (Form 6)" and click *OK*.
5. The "48-hour notice (Form 6)" box will appear; fill in the election date, the state, and enter the treasurer's information in the "Signed by" box.
6. Click *OK*. **Note that at this point the notice is not complete.**



7. Select the "Reports" view and select the 48-hour notice by left clicking on it. *48-Hour Notice instructions continue on the next page.*

8. Select the "All Transactions" view and locate the receipt(s) that needs to appear on the 48-hour notice. Receipts will be sorted by line number and then alphabetical order.



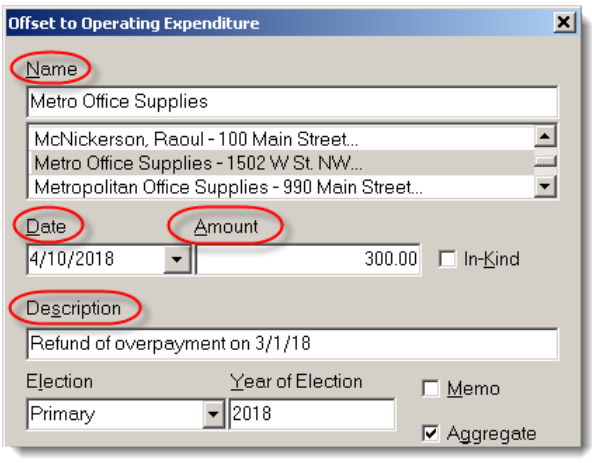
9. After finding a transaction, select the entry, right click, and click *Add to Form 6*. **Repeat this step until all the required contributions have been added to the 48-hour notice.**

The 48-hour notice is complete. Close and upload it in the same manner as a regular report of receipts and disbursements (please consult page 25). Repeat this process if you need to file additional 48-hour notices.

To see when your committee needs to file 48-hour notices, please visit the Dates and Deadline and 48-Hour Notices pages or contact the Reports Analysis Division (800-424-9530, Menu Option #5).

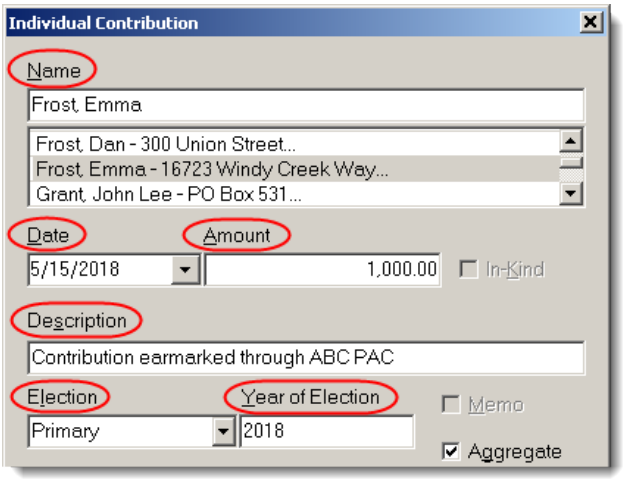
Offsets to Operating Expenditures

To report the refund of a good or service previously purchased by the committee, go to the Summary Page tab, right click on "Line 14 Offsets to operating expenditures (refunds, rebates, etc.)" and select "New." Include the vendor's name, address, date the refund was received, and, in the "Description" field, include a clear description connecting the transaction to the original payment.

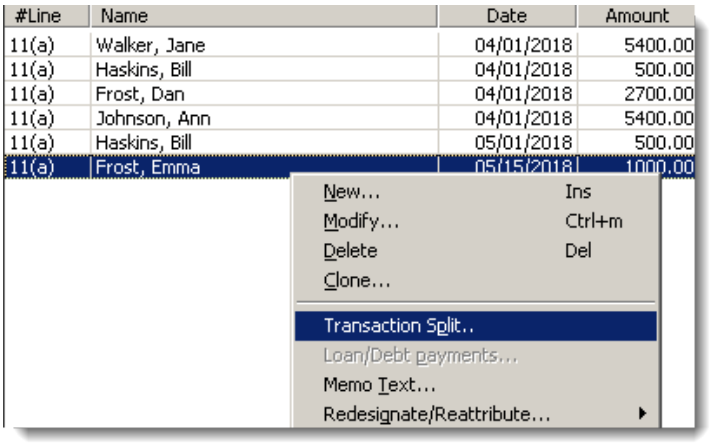


Contributions Received Through Conduits (Earmarked Contributions)

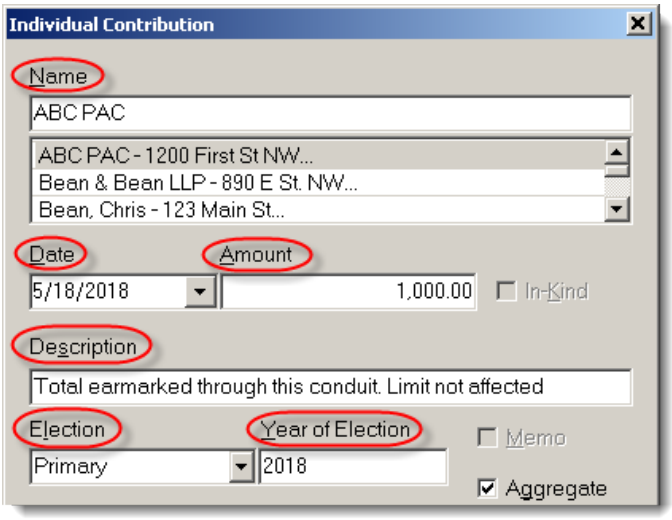
1. Follow the instructions on page 13 to report the original contribution. The date of receipt is the day that the contributor gave the contribution to the conduit. In the "Description" field include a note stating "Contribution earmarked through [name of conduit]."



2. Right click on the original contributions and select "*Transaction Split*." After the "Transaction Split" window opens, click "*Add new*"

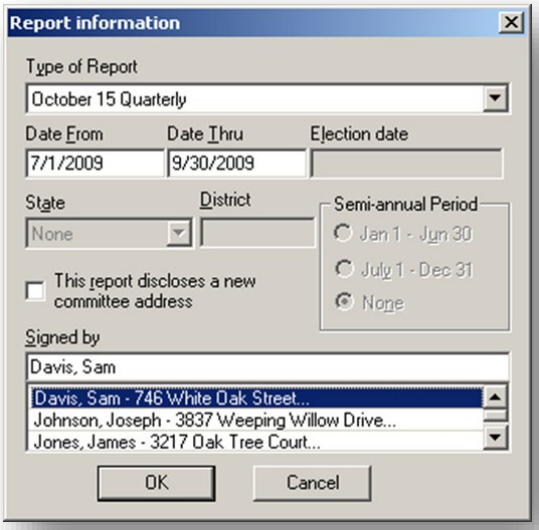


3. Enter the conduit information. The date of receipt for this entry will be the day that the conduit gave the contribution to the committee. In the "Description" field include a note stating "Total earmarked through conduit. Limit not affected" if the conduit did not have direction or control over which committee receives the contribution. Click the *OK* button when finished.

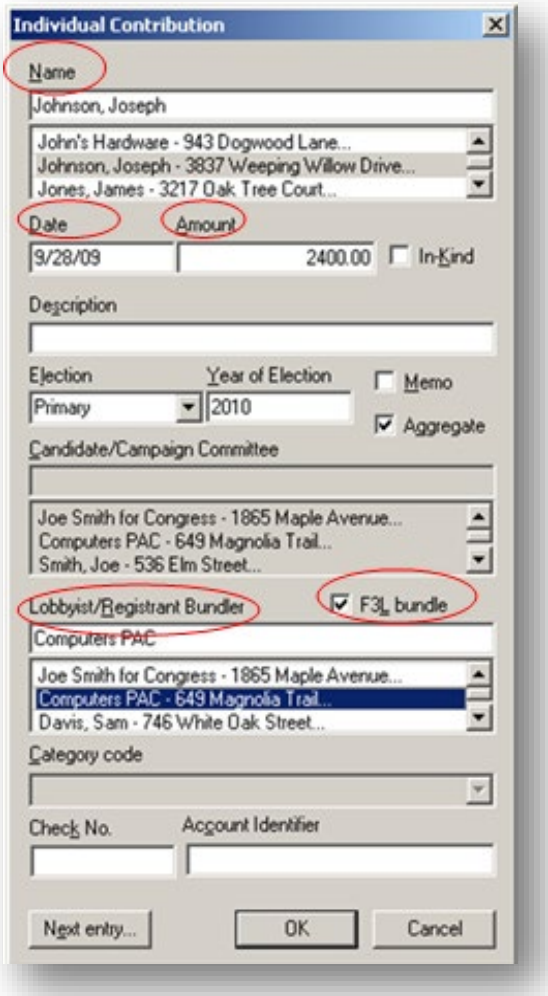


Bundled Contributions

1. Select the "Reports" view and create a Form 3L (Report of Bundled Contributions). Select the correct report under "Type of Report," and input the treasurer's name in the "Signed by" box.



2. Once the Form 3L is created, contributions can be added to it by checking the "F3L Bundle" box while entering contributions to the Form 3.
3. To specify the bundler, select the Lobbyist/Registrant from the scroll box underneath. If the Lobbyist/Registrant does not appear, type the name in the "Lobbyist/Registrant Bundler" box and hit Enter or Tab, and then input the necessary information.
4. The Lobbyist/Registrant will only appear on the Form 3L if the total activity attributed to them exceeds the itemization threshold during the coverage dates of the Form 3L.
5. Close and upload the Form 3L in the same manner as a regular report of receipts and disbursements (please consult page 25).



Disbursements

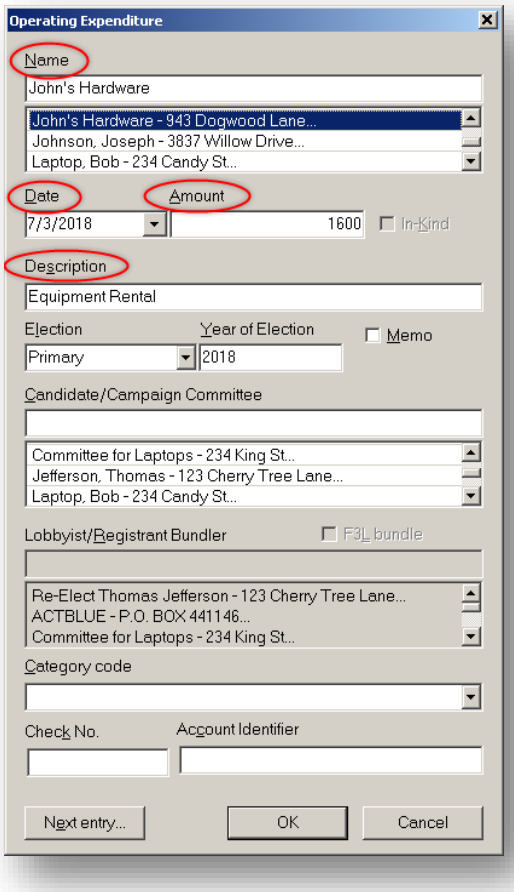
FECFile Video Tutorial: "Entering Operating Expenditures and Staff Reimbursements"

Disbursement Basics

1. Go to the "Summary Page" view and double-click on the appropriate line.

17	Operating expenditures	10510.34		10510.34	
18	Transfers to other authorized committees				
19(a)	Loan repayments made to the candidate				
19(b)	Other loan repayments made				
20(a)	Refunds of individual contributions	1000.00		1000.00	
20(b)	Refunds of contributions from political party committees	5000.00		5000.00	
20(c)	Refunds of contributions from other political committees	15.00		15.00	
21	Other disbursements	15000.00	54.12	15000.00	54.12
21	Loans made				

2. A disbursement box for that line number will appear.
3. Select the payee's name from the scroll box below the "Name" field. If the entity is not in the database, press Tab or Enter to add the information. Refer to page 11 ("Creating Contributor and Vendor entries") for more information.
4. Enter the date, amount, and description fields. Consult the adequate and inadequate purpose of disbursement lists when filling out the "Description" field.
5. We recommend filling in the election to more easily calculate net debts.
6. Candidate/Campaign Committee is not required for line 17 Operating Expenditures.
7. Category code, Check No., and Account Identifier are not required and are only for internal use.
8. Click *OK*.



Disbursement Reporting Examples:

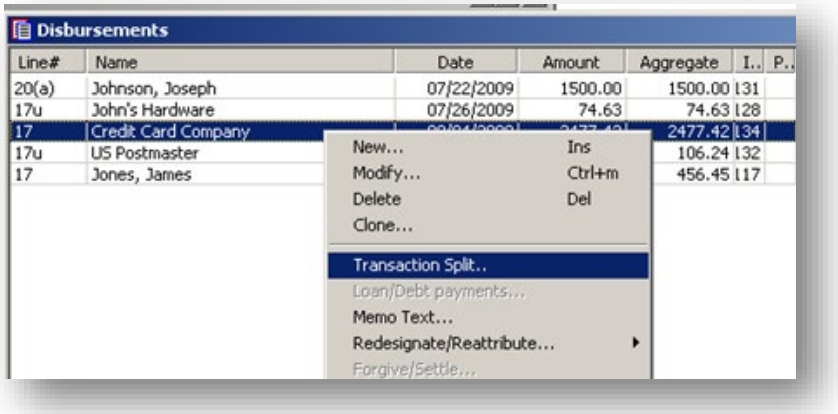
- Operating Expenditures
- Refunds of Contributions
- Voided Checks
- Contribution Made to Other Candidate Committees
- Charitable Donations
- Candidate Salary Payments

Special Categories of Disbursements

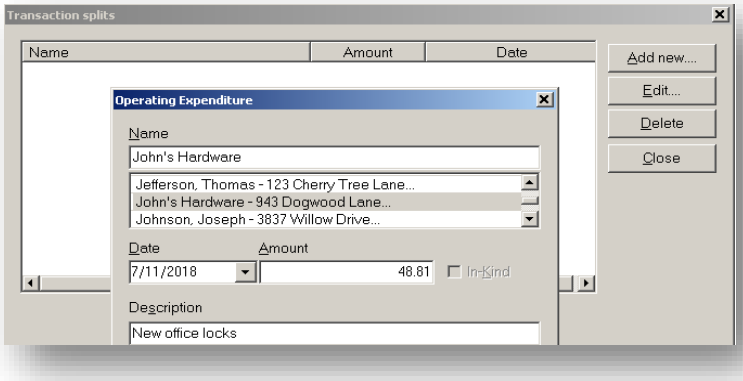
Staff Reimbursements, Travel Reimbursements, Credit Card & Payroll Payments:

Payments to credit card companies, payroll companies, and reimbursements all need to list supporting memo entries to disclose the ultimate recipient of the funds. *Click on the links above for reporting examples of each special category of disbursements.*

1. Double-click the desired line of the Summary Page and enter the entity receiving the reimbursement or payment. In the description field, provide an acceptable description, such as "Reimbursement," "Payroll payment," or "Credit card payment."
2. Go to the "Disbursements" view and find the transaction that needs supporting memo entries.
3. Right click on the transaction and click *Transaction Split*.



4. Click *Add new…*.
5. A new transaction window will open. Fill out the original vendor's information and click *OK* when finished. (Note: the "Memo" box is grayed out as the transaction will automatically appear as a memo entry.)



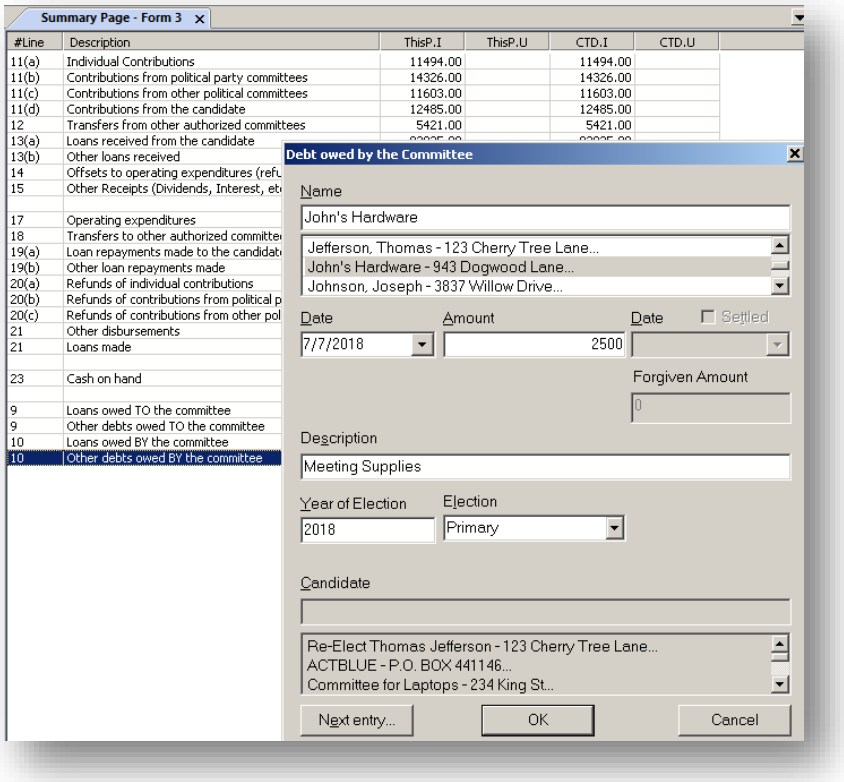
6. Repeat this process until all of the supporting memo entries for the payment or reimbursement have been entered.
7. After entering all of the supporting memo entries, click *Close* to return to the "Disbursements" view.

Debts and Loans

Schedule D: Debts

Debts Owed by the Committee:

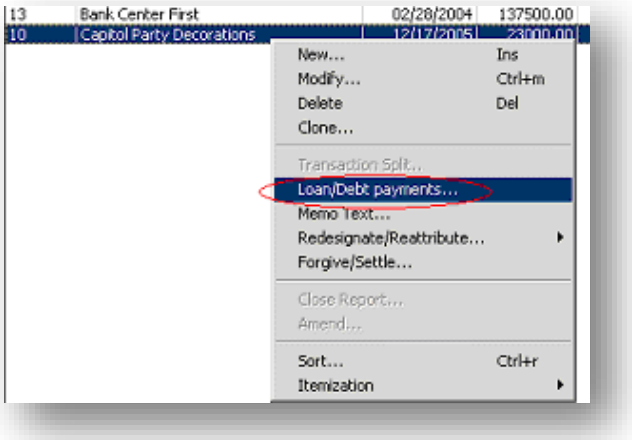
1. Select the "Summary Page" view.
2. To add a new debt owed by the committee, double click on *Line 10 (Other Debts Owed BY the Committee)*.



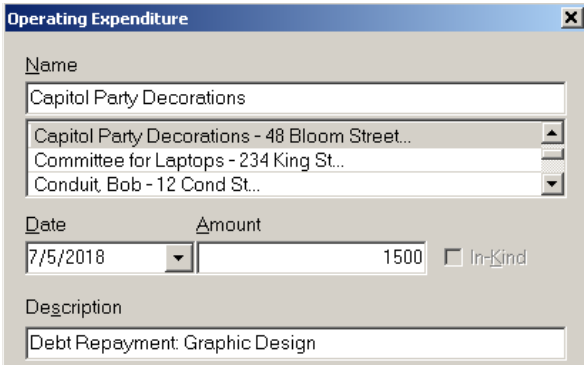
3. Select the name field and enter in the debtor. If the vendor has not been added to the system, press Tab or Enter. Please consult page 11 ("Creating Contributor and Vendor entries") for more information.
4. Enter the date, amount, and the purpose of the debt in the appropriate fields.
5. Click *OK*.

Debt Repayments:

1. To add debt repayments, go to the "Loans/Debts and Obligations" tab.
2. Right click on the debt to which you would like to make a payment and click *Loan/Debt payments*.



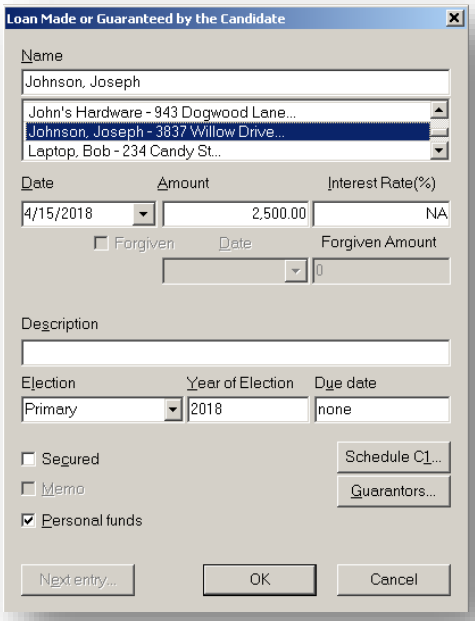
3. In the "Loans/Debt payments" box, click on *Add new…*.
4. In the "Select the type of Deferred Disbursement" window, click on the line number the payment will go on, such as *Operating Expenditure [17]*.
5. Enter the name of the vendor, date, amount, and the purpose of disbursement.



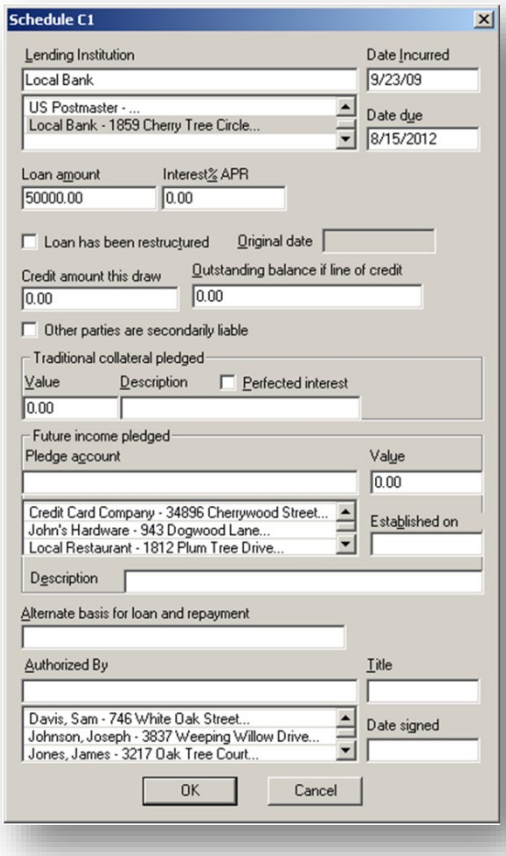
6. Click *OK*. The debt payment should now appear in the "Loan/Debt payment" dialog box.
7. Click *Close*.

Schedule C & Schedule C-1: Loans

Loans Received:



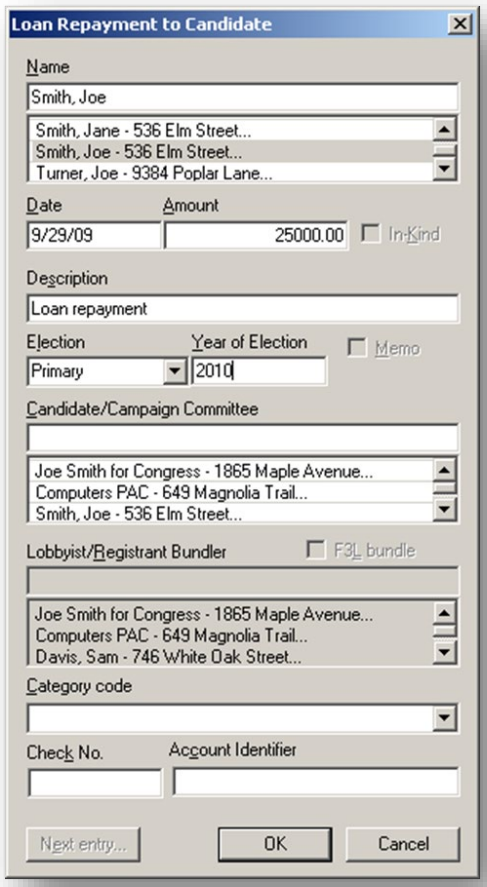
1. Go to the "Summary Page" view and double click *on Line 13(a): Loans received from the candidate* or *13(b): Other Loans Received*.
2. Type the name of the creditor in the "Name" field. If the creditor has not been entered into the system previously, type the name and then press Tab or Enter.
3. Enter the date the loan was incurred, amount of loan, interest rate, election type, year of election, and the loan's due date. If there is no interest rate or due date, enter "none" in both fields. **Do not leave the interest rate or due date fields blank.**
4. If the loan was secured, check the "Secured" box. The committee may also add a description of the loan in the "Description" field.
5. **If the loan is from the candidate's personal funds, check the "Personal Funds" box**.
6. If the loan is from the candidate and derived from a bank or some other source that is NOT the candidate's personal funds, click *Schedule C-1…* and enter all information that is applicable to the loan.
7. If the loan is received directly from a bank or lending institution, click on "Schedule C-1…" and enter the required information. **Note:** If the committee receives the loan directly from a bank or lending institution, the committee is required to file a paper copy of Schedule C-1 with the signature of the representative from the lending institution and the treasurer's signature, as well as a copy of the loan agreement.
8. After completing this section, click *OK*.
9. If there are any guarantors, click *Guarantors…*
10. Click *Add new…* to enter guarantor information. Click *Edit…* if the guarantor has been added previously. Click *OK* to return to the "Loans Made" screen.
11. After the loan information is entered, click *OK* to return to the "Summary Page" view. Schedule A supporting Line 13 and Schedule C supporting Line 10 will now have amounts reflected on the Summary Page and the corresponding schedules will be created on the report.



Loan Reporting Examples: Candidate Personal Funds Loans, Bank Loans Obtained by the Candidate & Bank Loan Obtained by the Candidate Committee

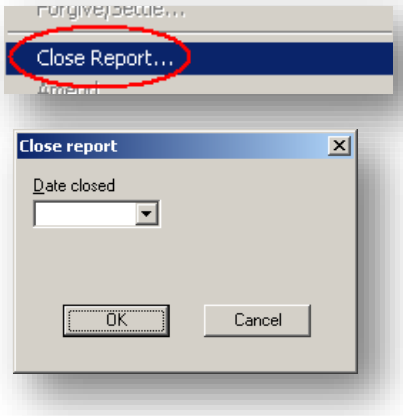
Loan Repayments Made:

1. Go to the "Loans, Debts and Obligations" tab.
2. Click the loan for which repayment is being made, right click, and click *Loan/Debt payments…*
3. Click *Add New…*
4. Enter the creditor's name; if the creditor has already been entered, select that name. Type the date, amount, and enter "Loan repayment" into the "Description" field.
5. Click *OK* to return to the "Loan/Debt Payments" screen, then click *OK* to close that window. Schedule B supporting Line 19(a) or 19(b) and Schedule C supporting Line 10 will now have amounts reflected on the Summary Page and the corresponding schedules will be created on the report.



Closing/Uploading/Amending

Closing a Report and Entering Treasurer Signature Date



1. Go to the "Reports" tab.
2. Right click on the report and click *Close Report*.
3. Enter today's date in the "Date closed" field and click *OK*. (Note: a Filing ID is only required when filing amendments and should be left blank for new reports.)

Validating and Uploading a Report

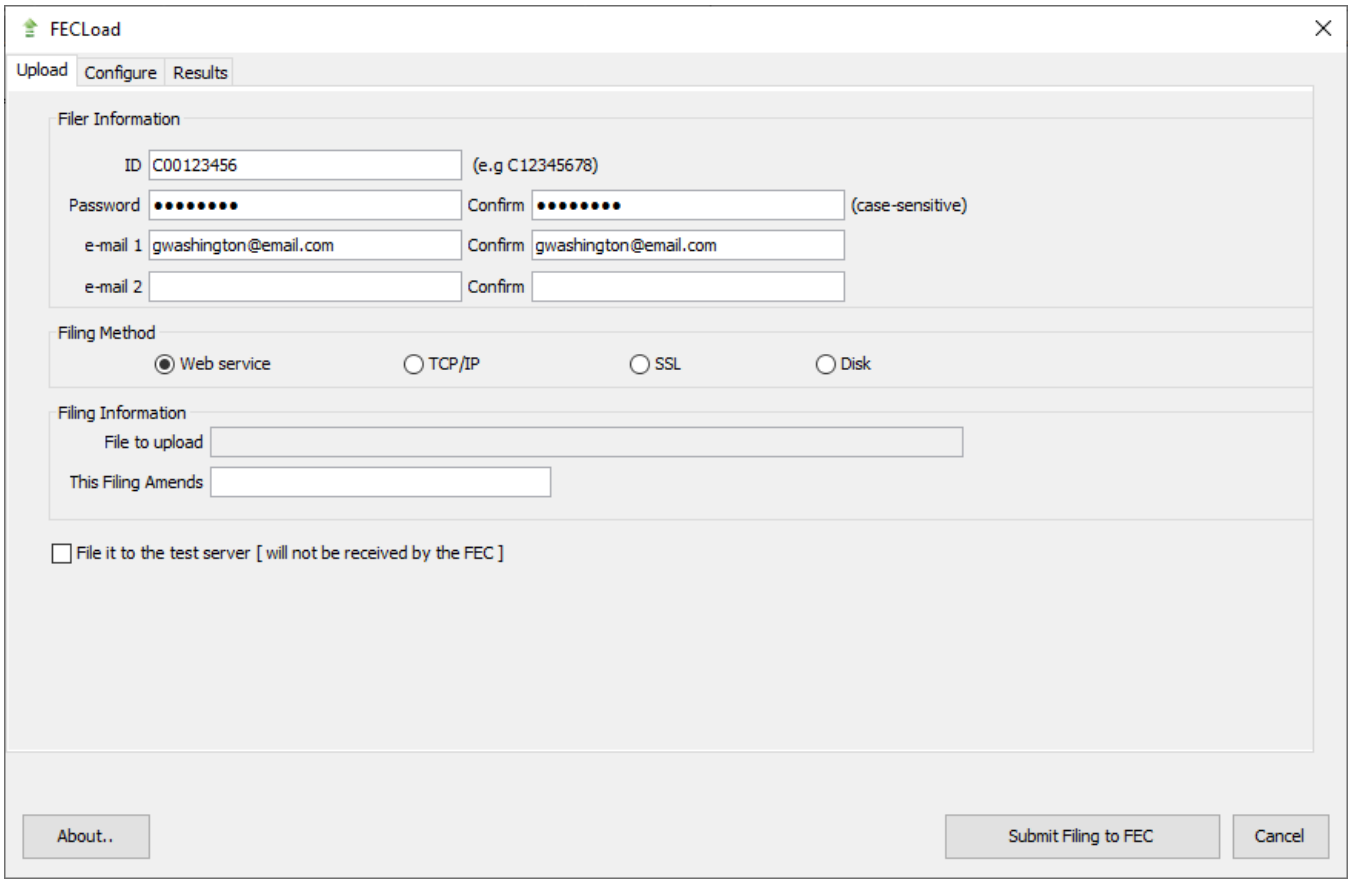
1. First, follow the directions above for closing a report. Closed reports should appear in pink/purple in the "Reports" tab. **Note:** You will receive the following valdiation error message if you don't close the report: "Treasurer Signature Date is Required, but field is empty."

2. **IMPORTANT: Save the file before validating and uploading!**
3. Click the "File" menu and select *Validate a Report* or click the Validate icon.

4. The validation program will notify you if there are serious errors that will prevent you from filing the report. For more help with Validation Errors, please consult page 30.

5. **Note: A report that has errors will not be allowed to upload**. A report with warnings will upload, but be advised that warnings indicate some missing information that may be required. If no errors are found or you wish to file the report with warnings, then click the "File" menu and select *Upload a Report*, or click the Upload icon, which is located directly to the right of the Validate icon.

6. Enter the password (please consult page 2), 9-digit committee ID number, and email address. You must confirm the password and email address by entering them a second time or the report will not upload.
7. Unless otherwise directed by the FEC's Electronic Filing Office, leave "Web service" as the Filing Method and then click *Submit Filing to FEC*. (Note: "This filing amends" field should not be filled in for new reports.)
8. Save and back up the committee file after the report uploads.
9. You will receive a confirmation email if the report is successfully uploaded. If you don't received a confirmation email or are unsure if the report was successfully uploaded, please contact the Reports Analysis Division (800-424-9530, Menu Option #5). Successfully filed report can be viewed here: https://www.fec.gov/data/filings/?data_type=efiling

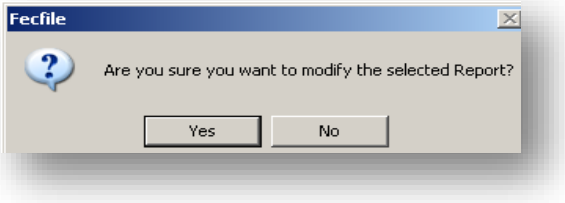


Amending a Report

Creating an Amendment:

1. Go to the "Reports" tab.
2. Right click the report to be amended and then click *Amend*.
3. Click *OK* on the "Report Information" box.
   a. The report will now have an A1, A2, etc. in front of it. A1 is for the first amendment, A2 is for the second amendment, and so on. If the user has filed any reports with coverage dates following the amendment, FECFile will automatically generate amendments for those reports. For instance, if the April Quarterly report is amended in November, FECFile will also generate amendments for the July Quarterly and October Quarterly reports.
   b. Note: these reports will automatically be generated, but not automatically uploaded. Also, these additional amendments need not be uploaded unless there is a change in any of the dollar figures (most commonly: election cycle-to-date, cash-on-hand totals, or aggregate totals). If there are any changes in the dollar figures for subsequent reports, please upload those reports as well (please consult page 25).

Modifying Transactions for the Amendment:

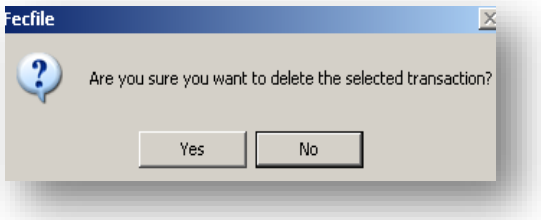


1. Locate the transaction to modify.
2. Double click on the transaction.
3. Make the desired changes to the transaction and click *OK*.
4. When prompted, click *Yes* to modify the selected report.

Adding New Transactions for the Amendment:

As with a new report, go to the "Summary Page" view and double click on the appropriate line for that transaction.

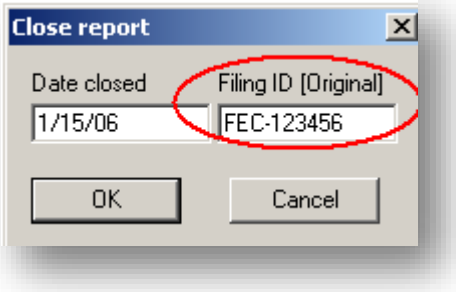
Deleting Transactions from an Amended Report:



1. Locate the transaction to delete.
2. Right click on the transaction and click *Delete.*
3. When prompted, click *Yes* to delete the selected transaction.

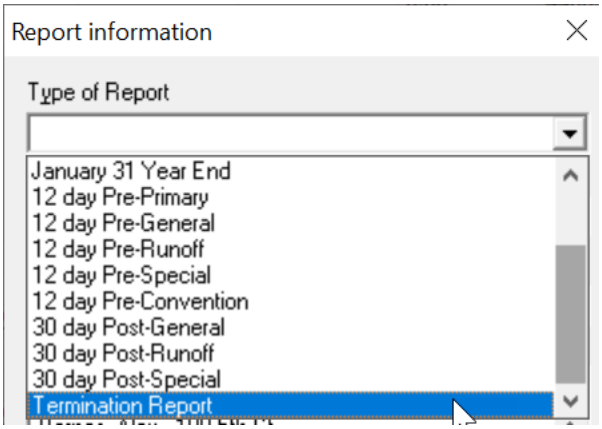
Filing an Amended Report:

1. An amended report is filed like a new report: Close the report, and then choose *Upload a Report* from the "File" menu (please consult page 25 for closing and uploading instructions).
2. If the original report was created using FECFile, the software will automatically fill out the "Filing ID" field.
    a. Do not alter this number unless instructed by an FEC analyst or the FEC's Electronic Filing Office.
    b. If instructed to alter the number, or if the number does not appear in the box, the filing ID is located on the FEC's website (https://www.fec.gov/data/filings/). Search the committee's name or ID number. The Filing ID appears under the "Version" column.



Filing a Termination Report

To close down committee operations, a committee must file a Termination Report. Committees can file a Termination Report when the committee no longer receives (or intends to receive) contributions and no longer makes (or intends to make) expenditures. If a committee is involved in an FEC enforcement action, audit or litigation, it cannot terminate. The committee must continue to file reports until that matter is resolved. Once the FEC notifies a committee by sending a termination approval letter, the committee can stop filing campaign finance reports with the FEC.



1. In the "View" menu, click *Reports*.
2. In the "Edit" menu, click *New*, or right click anywhere in the Reports window and click *New*.
3. Select "Report of Receipts and Disbursements (Form F3)" and click *OK*. This is the same form used to file previous campaign finance reports.
4. From the *Type of Report* menu, select "Termination Report."
5. Enter the "Date From" and "Date Thru." The "Date From" will be the day after the ending coverage date of the committee's last filed report. The "Date Thru" can be the date of last activity by the committee or the ending coverage date of the next scheduled report (whichever date is later).
6. Select the election cycle. Please consult page 4 for more information.
7. To sign the report, click in the *Signed by* box. Enter the treasurer's name (last name, first name). If the treasurer's name has not already been entered into FECFile, press the Tab key or Enter key.
8. After all the information is entered, click *OK*.
9. Enter transactions on to this report. When finished, you will follow the steps to Close, Validate and Upload the report (please consult pages 25-26 for these instructions).

Secrets to FECFile

Common E-Filing Mistakes

Passwords

- Remember to obtain a password as soon as possible. Due to the extra security requirements, it may take up to two business days for the FEC to complete electronic filing password requests.
- Don't wait until the last minute to apply for a password or to apply for a new one if necessary.
- Remember the committee's password and keep it secure: the FEC cannot look up misplaced or forgotten passwords; the Treasurer must request a new one.
- Please visit the Electronic Filing Password page to request, change or retrieve a password: https://webforms.fec.gov/psa/getstarted.htm

Filing at the last minute

- Any problem, whether it's technical or non-familiarity with the software, can be difficult to deal with during the rush of a deadline week. It is advisable to always file as early as possible, especially the first time the committee files electronically.
- Be aware of upcoming reports and consult the Dates and Deadlines page.
- House and Senate candidate committees file quarterly reports, pre-election reports, 48-Hour Notices and post-general election reports.
- A committee's obligation to file regular financial disclosure reports continues (even if the candidate loses the election or is no longer seeking office) until the committee requests to terminate and that request is approved by the FEC.

Email receipts confirm filing has been received.

- After uploading the report electronically, a receipt will be sent to the email address entered when uploading the report. Assume that the report was not successfully filed if no receipt is received. Call the Electronic Filing Office (202-694-1642, Option #3) if more than a few minutes pass without receiving a receipt.
- The receipt is proof of filing. Print it out and keep it.
- You can look up your committee's filings at any time using the FEC website: https://www.fec.gov/data/filings/?data_type=efiling

Save and validate data set early and often

- Doing this through the process of report creation will ensure proper and consistent data entry as well as preventing the loss of work due to unforeseen computer problems, i.e. freezes, crashes etc.

Back up the data file!

- The file that contains all of the committee's reports, the "Data File" (.dcf), should be backed up to an external source.
- The FEC does **NOT** have a copy of your data file!
- It is very difficult and time consuming to recreate the committee file if it is lost.

Common Validation Errors and How to Fix Them

Warning vs. Error Messages

There are two different types of validation errors: **warning messages** and **error messages**.

Warning messages:

These messages are a result of possible incorrect/missing information in the report so the user can correct the issues (if necessary) before uploading the report. However, they do not prevent the committee from uploading a report.

Error messages:

These messages result from more serious problems with the report and prevent the user from uploading the report until the errors are corrected.

Reading and Understanding a Validation Message

Each warning or error message contains basic information that allows the user to pinpoint which transaction is causing the issue. It also gives a brief description of the error. For example:

Form{Item}: SA11AI {Johnson, Jane}

Field Name: #012 Employer

Warning Conditionally Required Field is Empty

The **Form {Item}** field identifies where the transaction causing the error is on the report. In the example above, the transaction is on **S**chedule **A,** Line **11(a)(i)** and is specifically identified as "Johnson, Jane." **Field Name** identifies the aspect of the transaction – in this case the employer field – that is causing the problem. The last line identifies what type of message this is (**Warning**) and describes what caused the problem (**Required field is Empty**).

In order to correct this problem, the user should find the specific transaction and edit it to disclose Jane Johnson's employer.

The FEC's website includes a more extensive list of commonly found warning and error messages along with brief descriptions and solutions:

https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/validation-errors-explained/

Common Error Messages

Below is a list of common error messages that committees encounter and the steps that need to be taken in order to correct the errors. Please remember that all error messages must be corrected before you can upload your report.

Treasurer Signature Date is Required, but field is empty

- This error indicates that you have not closed the report. From the Reports tab, highlight and right-click on your report, and chose "Close Report…". The Close Report window will appear where you must enter a date, generally the day you close and submit the report (please see page 25)

Treasurer: Last Name is Required, but field is empty

Treasurer: First Name is Required, but field is empty

- This error indicates the treasurer's name was not selected. From the Reports tab, highlight and right-click on your report and click "Modify." Enter or select the treasurer's name in the "Signed by" field.

{Contributor First Name} is Required, but field is Empty

- Contributions from individuals (Schedule A transactions) must contain a first and last name. If this error has occurred, the first name of the contributor has been omitted or incorrectly submitted in conjunction with the wrong Entity Type (individual, organization, business, etc.). Locate the transaction and correct the name.
- From the "Individual/Organizations and Events" tab, scroll down (listings are alphabetical) until you find your contributor. Double-click to open up the profile. Enter in the first name of the contributor if missing or check the first field to verify that you have chosen from the drop-down menu the entity type of "Individual other than candidate".

{Recipient First Name} is Required, but field is Empty

- Disbursements to individuals (Schedule B transactions) must contain a first and last name. If this error has occurred, the first name of the individual has been omitted or incorrectly submitted in conjunction with the wrong Entity Type (individual, organization, business, etc.). Locate the transaction and correct the name.
- From the "Individual/Organizations and Events" tab, scroll down (listings are alphabetical) until you find your individual. Double-click to open up the profile. Enter in the first name of the individual if missing or check the first line to verify that you have chosen from the drop-down menu the entity type of "Individual other than candidate".

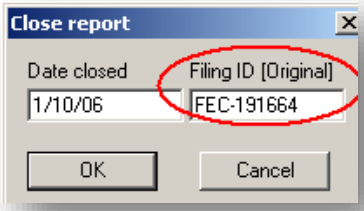
Filing must be in the current FEC format

- This indicates that you are using an outdated version of FECFile.

- FECFile users will need to download the latest version of the software from the FEC's website (https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/fecfile-software/).

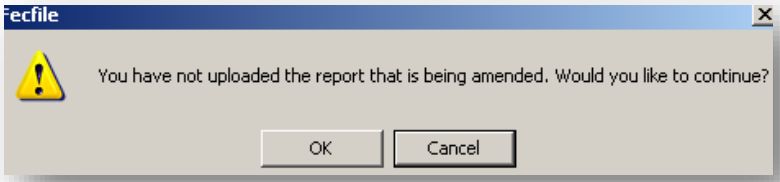
Amended filing must have an ID of the "Original"

- This indicates that the user is trying to submit an amendment absent the original report ID number. The original report ID number **must** be used. If you are properly amending existing reports in the committee file, the original filing ID should appear automatically.
- If the user cannot locate his receipt for the original report, the ID number can be located on the FEC's Electronic Filing Report Retrieval website under the "Version" column ((https://www.fec.gov/data/filings/).
- Once you have located the original filing ID, you will need to open, and then re-close your report so you can enter the filing ID.
- NOTE: If this original report ID number is entered incorrectly, system errors will occur on upload.

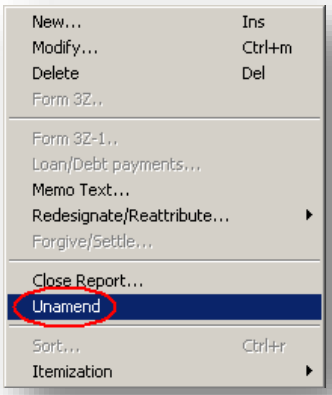


Amended filing must have an "Amendment Number"

- This means that either the amendment indicator is missing or incorrect. The first amendment will be A1, and each subsequent amendment will be numbered in sequence.



- This error most likely occurred because you did not properly create an amendment or amended a report before it was filed.
- Don't amend a report that you have not uploaded. FECFile will warn you with this message – click *Cancel*.
- In the "Reports" view, right click on the report you are trying to file. If the report is closed, unclose it. Right click again and click *Unamend*.



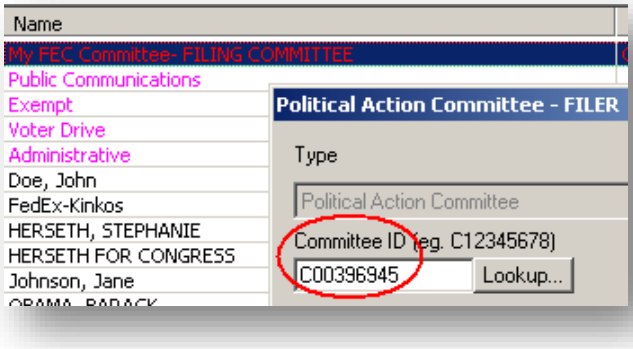
- Repeat this process until your report is at the correct numbered amendment

Validation terminated! – Over 32,000 problems found!

- This indicates that 32,000+ errors have been found. The threshold for total errors for the system is 32,000; therefore, the first 32,000 errors will be listed in accordance with their severity.
- If you receive this message please contact your FEC analyst or the FEC Electronic Filing Office.

ID#_____ NOT correct FEC ID# format

- This indicates that the committee ID number used is not in the correct format.
- To correct this error, you will need to edit your committee's information. To do this, go to the "Individuals/ Organizations" view and locate your committee. Double-click on your committee entry (it should be in red). Make sure the committee ID number is correct. It might help to use the FEC Lookup feature.
- NOTE: (correct example: C00123456) - The "C" must be capitalized.



Extraneous data follows last field

- This usually indicates a technical problem, generally involving invalid characters.
- You should call the Electronic Filing Office if you receive this error (202-694-1307).
- NOTE: Only characters between ASCII 22 and ASCII 126 are acceptable. The ASCII 32 - 126 used to be the only characters allowed; however, the foreign language alphabet and punctuation characters are also allowed. Specifically ASCII characters: 32 - 168 are allowed (excluding 127 and the series 157 through 159). Also, 173 is allowed.

Invalid double-quote surround text field – OR - Embedded double-quotes (") not allowed

- This indicates that there are a set quotes around a text field where there should not be.
- Locate the transaction/field and take out the quotes.
- NOTE: Quotes are used as part of the data delimiter. Since the introduction of a level-8 message that says "Embedded double-quotes (") not allowed", this message only applies to the very last field of a CSV string and only in the instance where a begin-quoted text is not terminated with an end-quote. (Example: falling within the maximum length of that last field.)
- ADDITIONAL NOTE: Any field can have begin/end quotes (they are necessary for text that has embedded commas). However, any field that has surrounding quotes may not also contain double quotes anywhere within the text. Validator is only trapping "embedded quotes" within "text fields" which have surrounding begin-quotes and end-quotes. For example [,"""",] is a case of an embedded double-quote, but [,",] is not.

Body of text exceeds maximum of 20,000 characters (F99 filings)

- F99 (Miscellaneous text document) filings are limited to 20,000 characters in length.
- To correct this, either shorten your Form 99 filing or file more than one.

Leading blanks {e.g. " TEXT"} not allowed

- This indicates that there are blanks prior to data; this is not allowed.
- Locate the transaction/field and delete the spaces that precede the first word in the file.

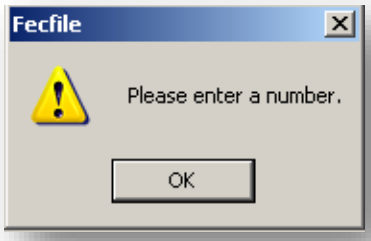
Bad date – _____ not YYYYMMDD format

- This indicates the user has entered a date in the incorrect format.
- Locate the transaction and re-enter the date trying this format: MM/DD/YYYY.

_____ is not a real date

- This indicates that the user has entered an invalid date.
- Locate the transaction and enter a valid date.

Invalid amount format: _____ – OR – Non-numeric data in numeric field



- This indicates that the user has entered values other than numbers and decimals.
- Locate the transaction and enter only numbers and one decimal point. FECFile will issue a warning before this error is made.
- NOTE: Dollar signs and commas are not permitted.

____ is an invalid year (CCYY) format

- This indicates the user has entered the year in the incorrect format.
- Locate the transaction and make sure the year referenced in the date field is in a four-digit format.

District "__" is not 2-digit numeric format

- This indicates the user failed to enter the congressional district as two digits.
- Locate the transaction, and make sure the congressional district field has two digits (ex: 04, 11). Using the FEC Lookup feature might make things easier.

Electronic Filing and Reporting Resources

Electronic Filing Resources

FECFile for Candidate Committees Video Tutorials: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yI8AYiaOErA&list=PLJr_nRe8SzD3ZnN8o-af5idxz2F9Ohk53

Electronic Filing Password: https://webforms.fec.gov/psa/getstarted.htm

Online Webforms: https://webforms.fec.gov/

Electronic Filing Overview: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/electronic-filing/

Importing Data into FECFile: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/importing-data-fecfile/

Rebuilding a Data File: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/rebuilding-data-file/

Validation Errors Explained: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/validation-errors-explained/

Upload Errors Explained: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/upload-errors/

Recently Filed Reports Search: https://www.fec.gov/data/filings/?data_type=efiling

Reporting Resources

Reporting Dates & Deadlines: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/dates-and-deadlines/

Help for Candidates and Committees: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/

Campaign Guide for Candidates and Committees: https://www.fec.gov/resources/cms-content/documents/candgui.pdf

Candidate Reporting Examples: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/filing-reports/#reporting-examples

Inadequate & Adequate Purpose of Disbursement Lists: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/purposes-disbursement/

FEC Training, Webinars and Conferences: https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/trainings/