

## Party Committees

This page provides answers to frequently asked questions pertaining to party committees. If you don't find an answer to your question here, please contact the FEC's Information Division, toll free at 800-424-9530 or by e-mail at [info@fec.gov](mailto:info@fec.gov). Committee staff may also speak with the Campaign Finance Analyst who reviews the committee's reports by calling the Reports Analysis Division, toll free at 800-424-9530 (press 5). Additionally, electronic filers may contact the Commission's Electronic Filing Office for technical assistance, toll free at 800-424-9530 (press 4).

Resources for Party Committees				
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<a href="#">Independent Expenditure Time Frames (2016)</a>	<a href="#">Federal Election Activity Time Frames (2016)</a>	<a href="#">FECFile Manual (pdf)</a>	<a href="#">Coordinated Party Expenditure Limits (2016)</a>	<a href="#">Pre-Election Reporting Deadlines (2016)</a>

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### **Answers to General Party Questions**

#### **When are my reports due?**

Monthly filing is mandatory for national party committees and for State, district and local party committees with receipts or disbursements for [Federal Election Activity](#). Party committees that file quarterly must switch to monthly with the first report covering when the FEA occurs. (11 CFR §§104.5(c)(3) and 300.36(c)(1))

<a href="#">Monthly Filing Schedule</a>	<a href="#">Quarterly Filing Schedule</a>
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#### **What are the time frames for 24/48-Hour Reports of Independent Expenditure?**

24-Hour Reports must be filed within 24 hours of dissemination of independent expenditures aggregating \$1,000 or more (per election, per office sought) made less than 20 days but more than 24 hours before the day of an election. (11 CFR §104.4(c))

48-Hour Reports must be filed within 48 hours of dissemination of independent expenditures that aggregate \$10,000 or more (per election, per office sought) anytime during a calendar year up to and including the 20th day before an election. (11 CFR §104.4(b))

As states establish their election schedules, the Commission calculates the applicable 24/48-Hour Report periods which can be found [here](#).

For more information on Independent Expenditures please consult the [Campaign Guide for Party Committees](#) [PDF].

#### **What are the contribution limits to a political party committee?**

Contribution limits for a state, district or local party committee:

- Individual: \$10,000 per calendar year
- Multicandidate PAC: \$5,000 per calendar year
- Non- Multicandidate PAC: \$10,000 per calendar year
- Other party committees: No limit
- Candidate committees: no limit

For more information, please consult the [Contribution Limits for 2017-2018 Chart](#) [PDF].

#### **What state should be disclosed for the "in the state of" field on the 12 Day Pre-General and 30 Day Post-General Reports?**

When filing the 12 Day Pre-General and 30 Day Post-General Reports, you will need to complete the "in the state of" field. Please note that since the general election is held nationwide, you may enter any state in the field.

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### **RECEIPTS (SCHEDULE A)**

#### **What receipts need to be itemized on Schedule A?**

All receipts from individuals which aggregate over \$200 in the calendar year (either by themselves or when combined with other receipts from the same source) must be itemized on a separate Schedule A supporting Line 11(a)(i).

### How do I report an in-kind contribution received by our committee?

In order to avoid inflating/deflating the cash on hand amount, the amount of an in-kind contribution from an individual should be disclosed as a receipt on Line 11(a) of the Detailed Summary Page (Contributions from Individuals/Persons) and a disbursement on Line 21(b) of the Detailed Summary Page (Other Federal Operating Expenditures).

If the in-kind contribution must be itemized on Schedule A, supporting Line 11(a)(i) (i.e. individual's aggregate contributions are greater than \$200 during the calendar year), then it must also be itemized on Schedule B.

-For more information, please consult the [In-kind contribution example in the Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

### How do we establish "best efforts" for obtaining required information from our contributors?

To establish "best efforts" a committee should submit (electronically for electronic filers) an explanation of the procedures it uses to obtain the required information from its contributors. [These procedures must be clarified each election cycle.](#)

The procedures must include all of the following steps (11 CFR §104.7): A clear and conspicuous request for the contributor information on the original solicitation and must also inform the contributor of the requirements of federal law for the reporting of such information. If the information is not provided, you must make one follow-up, stand alone effort to obtain this information, regardless of whether the contribution(s) was solicited or not. This effort must occur no later than 30 days after receipt of the contribution and may be in the form of a written request or an oral request documented in writing. The request must:

- *clearly ask for the missing information, without soliciting a contribution,*
- *inform the contributor of the requirements of federal law for the reporting of such information, and*
- *if the request is written, include a pre-addressed post card or return envelope.*

If you receive contributor information after the contribution(s) has been reported, you shall either a) file with your next regularly scheduled report, an amended memo Schedule A listing all the contributions for which additional information was received; or b) file on or before your next regularly scheduled reporting date, amendments to the report(s) originally disclosing the contribution(s).

Providing a detailed description of "best efforts" procedures in accordance with the regulations (11 CFR §104.7) will prevent subsequent inquiries for missing contributor information during an election cycle.

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### How do we report refunds of contributions received?

Contributions refunded back to individuals should be disclosed on Line 28(a) of the Detailed Summary Page (Refunds of contributions to individuals/persons other than political committees).

If the original receipt(s) from the individual was itemized on Schedule A, the refund must be itemized on Schedule B, supporting Line 28(a). If the refund is for a contribution(s) received in a prior year(s), the amount of the refund should not be included in the calculation of the individual's aggregate year to date total for the current year. Negative entries on Schedule A should only be used to disclose returned or bounced contribution checks and not for refunds made by the committee.

### How do I report receipts from a joint fundraiser?

The transfer-in of net proceeds from the joint fundraising representative should be disclosed on Schedule A, supporting Line 12 (Transfers From Affiliated/Other Party Committees).

The original contributors to the joint fundraiser should be itemized as MEMO entries on Schedule A (11 CFR §102.17(c)(8)).

The Date of Receipt is the date the joint fundraising representative received the contribution(s) from the original contributor(s).

The Amount of Each Receipt this Period is the total (gross) amount of the contribution to the party committee.

Receipts from individuals that do not require itemization on Schedule A (i.e. aggregate is not more than \$200 during calendar year), should be aggregated together and disclosed in a MEMO entry indicating "unitemized joint fundraising receipts."

The MEMO entries should clearly identify which joint fundraising committee they relate to.

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**How do I report receipts from a federal candidate committee?**

Receipts from candidate committees should be disclosed on Schedule A. The line number is dependent on the type of receipt:  
Transfers/contributions should be disclosed on Line 11(c) (Contributions from Other Political Committees)  
The entry should specify the nature of the transaction (i.e. "transfer," "transfer of excess funds," or "contribution")

Direct reimbursements from candidates for goods/services paid to a vendor by your committee should be disclosed on Schedule A, supporting Line 15 (Offsets to Operating Expenditures)  
The entry should specify the original vendor and date of disbursement to the vendor.

Proceeds from sale of Party goods/services to the candidate should be disclosed on Line 17 (Other Federal Receipts)  
The party must charge the usual/normal price for the good/service provided. If less than the usual/normal charge is assessed, the difference between the two is considered an in-kind contribution to the federal candidate committee. (11 CFR §§100.52(d)(1) and (2))

**From other entities:****How do I report a refund or rebate received for a previous disbursement?**

When the original disbursement was disclosed on Schedule B:  
The rebate/refund should be disclosed on Schedule A, supporting Line 15 (Offsets of Operating Expenditures) and should indicate the nature of the transaction (refund, rebate, etc)  
Itemize offsets to operating expenditures when they aggregate over \$200 per calendar year from the same source.  
It is also recommended to include the date and/or report of original disbursement in the additional text field.

For more information, please consult the [Offset example in the Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

When the original disbursement was allocated on Schedule H4: [See Federal and Non-Federal Allocation](#)

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**How do I report the sale of our party's voter list or other goods/services?**

Party committees can sell voter lists, rent office space and sell other committee goods/services to other committees (registered or unregistered), candidates, corporations or labor organizations so long as the committee assesses the usual and normal charge for the goods and/or services provided. If less than the usual/normal charge is assessed, the difference between the two is considered an in-kind contribution to the federal committee/candidate. (11 CFR §§100.52(d)(1) and (2) and AO 1979-18)

If more than usual/normal charge is assessed, the difference between the two is considered an in-kind contribution to the Party committee.  
In-kind contributions made and received are subject to the limits and prohibitions set forth at 52 U.S.C. 30116 and 52 U.S.C. 30118.  
Proceeds from the sale of Party goods/services should be disclosed on Line 17 (Other Federal Receipts).

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**DISBURSEMENTS (SCHEDULE B)****Administrative Expenses****What line are administrative expenses reported on?**

Administrative expenses paid solely from the federal account and not [allocated](#) between the federal and non-federal account should be reported on Schedule B, supporting Line 21(b) of the Detailed Summary Page (Other Federal Operating Expenditures).

Note that salary that qualifies as [Federal Election Activity](#) should be disclosed on Schedule B, supporting Line 30(b)

Administrative expenses allocated between the federal and non-federal accounts should be disclosed in the "Administrative" category on Schedule H4. (11 CFR §106.7(c)(2))

For more information on allocating expenses between the [federal and non-federal account](#).

#### **Is there a list of accepted "purposes of disbursement?"**

Yes, a non-exhaustive list of purposes that the Commission deems inadequate can be found [here](#). See also the Federal Register Notice: [Commission's Statement of Policy on Purpose of Disbursement](#). A non-exhaustive list of acceptable purposes can be found [here](#).

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#### **How do we report credit card payments or reimbursements to individuals?**

##### **Credit card payments:**

Schedule B, Line 21(b) (Other Federal Operating Expenditures):

The payment to the credit card company should be disclosed on Line 21(b) and MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required if payments to the vendor(s) exceed \$200 during the calendar year. (11 CFR §104.9(a) and (b))

Schedule B, Line 30(b) (Federal Election Activity Paid Entirely With Federal Funds):

The payment to the credit card company should be disclosed on Line 30(b) and MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required if payments to the vendor(s) equal \$200 or more during the calendar year. (11 CFR §300.36(b))

If there are multiple credit card payments on a report you should clearly identify which payment each memo entry relates to.

##### **Reimbursements to individuals for TRAVEL/SUBSISTENCE expenses:**

Schedule B, Line 21(b): The reimbursement to the individual should be disclosed on Line 21(b) and the purpose should indicate that it is for travel/subsistence reimbursement. If the travel/subsistence reimbursement is greater than \$500, MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required if payments to the vendor(s) exceed \$200 during the calendar year. (11 CFR §104.9(a) and (b); Advisory Opinions 1992-1 and 1996-20, footnote 3)

Schedule B, Line 30(b): The reimbursement to the individual should be disclosed on Line 30(b) and the purpose should indicate that it is for travel/subsistence reimbursement. If the travel/subsistence reimbursement is greater than \$500, MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required if payments to the vendor(s) equal \$200 or more during the calendar year. (11 CFR §300.36(b) and Advisory Opinion 1996-20, footnote 3)

If there are multiple reimbursements on a report you should clearly identify which reimbursement each memo entry relates to.

##### **Reimbursements to individuals for NON-TRAVEL expenses:**

Schedule B, Line 21(b): The reimbursement to the individual should be disclosed on Line 21(b) and MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required if payments to the vendor(s) exceed \$200 during the calendar year. (11 CFR §104.9(a) and (b); Advisory Opinions 1992-1 and 1996-20, footnote 3)

Schedule B, Line 30(b): The reimbursement to the individual should be disclosed on Line 30(b) and MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required if payments to the vendor(s) equal \$200 or more during the calendar year. (11 CFR §300.36(b) and Advisory Opinions 1992-1 and 1996-20, footnote 3)

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## Federal Election Activity

### What is Federal Election Activity (FEA)?

**Voter Registration Activity** during the 120 days before a regularly scheduled federal election and ending on the day of the election. Contacting individuals by telephone, in person, or by any other means to assist them in registering to vote. Activity includes, but is not limited to, printing and distributing registration and voting information, providing individuals with voter registration forms and assisting individuals with completing and filing these forms. (11 CFR §100.24(a)(2))

**Voter Identification (Voter ID)** in connection with an election in which a federal candidate appears on the ballot. Creating or enhancing voter lists by adding information about voters' likelihood of voting in a particular election or voting for a particular candidate. (11 CFR §100.24(a)(4))  
The purchase of voter list constitutes FEA Voter ID if purchased during FEA time period.  
Subsequent use of a voter list during FEA period will not be considered a separate FEA cost unless the committee is also enhancing the list by verifying or adding information.

**Get-Out-the-Vote activity (GOTV)** in connection with an election in which a federal candidate appears on the ballot. Contacting registered voters by telephone, in person or by any other means in order to assist them in voting. Activity includes, but is not limited to, providing individual voters with information about when and where polling places are open, and transporting, or offering to transport, voters to polling places. (11 CFR §100.21(a)(3))

**Generic Campaign Activity** in connection with an election in which a federal candidate appears on the ballot.  
A public communication that promotes or opposes a political party and does not promote or oppose a clearly identified federal candidate or a non-federal candidate. (11 CFR §100.25)

**Employee Salaries and wages** of an employee of a state/district/local party committee who spends more than 25% of his/her compensated time on federal activity, including FEA, at any time during a calendar year. (11 CFR §100.24(b)(4))

**Public Communications** that promote, attack, support or oppose (PASO) a clearly identified federal candidate at any time during the calendar year. (11 CFR §100.24(b)(3))

### When are the FEA time frames?

Voter Registration activities: 120 days before a regularly scheduled primary or general election including the Election Day itself. (11 CFR §100.24(b)(1))

Voter ID/GOTV/Generic Campaign activities: the period beginning on the filing deadline for primary election ballot access for federal candidates under state law – or January 1st of the election year for states that do not hold primaries – and ending on the day of the general election (or of the general election runoff if one is held). For special elections, it means the period beginning on the day that the date is set for the special election and ending on the day of that election. (11 CFR §§100.24(a)(1) and 100.24(b)(2))

Please consult the Commission's [FEA Dates for 2016](#) for the FEA time frames for the current election cycle.

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### How do I report FEA?

Salaries, wages and fringe benefits for employees who devote more than 25 percent of their compensated time in a month on activities in connection with a federal election should be disclosed on Schedule B, supporting Line 30(b).

Salaries, wages and fringe benefits for employees who devote less than 25% of their compensated time in a month on activities in connection with a federal election can be allocated according to the fixed ratio determined by the state in which the committee operates. See [allocation guidelines](#) for more information.

Public communications that refer to a clearly identified federal candidate and that promote, attack, support, or oppose any federal candidate but do not expressly advocate the election/defeat of the federal candidate should be disclosed on Schedule B, supporting Line 30(b) and should

include the identity of the candidate,

Public communications that refer to a clearly identified federal candidate and expressly advocate the election/defeat of the federal candidate and do not qualify as exempt party activity should be disclosed as an in-kind contribution on Schedule B, supporting Line 23, an independent expenditure on Schedule E, supporting Line 24, or a coordinated party expenditure on Schedule F, supporting Line 25.

Public communications that refer to a clearly identified federal candidate and expressly advocate the election/defeat of the federal candidate and qualify as exempt party activity should be disclosed on Schedule B, supporting Line 30(b) and should include the identity of the candidate.

GOTV/Voter ID/Voter Registration/Generic Campaign activity that meets the definition of FEA and is paid for with 100% federal funds should be disclosed on Schedule B, supporting Line 30(b).

GOTV/Voter ID/Voter Registration/Generic Campaign activity that meets the definition of FEA and is allocated between Federal and Levin Funds should be disclosed on Schedule H6, supporting Lines 30(a)(i) and 30(a)(ii).

*-Note that FEA activity that refers to a clearly identified federal candidate cannot be allocated between federal and with Levin funds. 100% federal funds must be used. (11 CFR §300.32(c)(1))*

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## EXEMPT ACTIVITY

### What is exempt party activity?

State/Local Parties may spend unlimited amounts for certain activities that benefit federal candidates but that are exempt from the definitions of contribution and expenditure.

Exempt party activities are required to carry a "paid for by" disclaimer.

### Types of exempt activity and restrictions:

#### -Slate Cards and Sample Ballots (11 CFR §§100.80 and 100.140)

Must name 3 or more candidates for any public office

No general public political advertising (except direct mail)

Content restricted to identification of candidates, office currently held, office sought, and party affiliation

#### -Campaign Materials (11 CFR §§100.87 and 100.147)

Must be distributed by volunteers

No public political advertising or direct mail

Payment must be made by party committee

Payment must not be made from funds designated for particular candidate

Payment may not be made from transfers from a National Party to specifically fund the activity nor can National Party provide materials

Must be conducted on behalf of party's nominees in the general election (not for candidates in primary elections)

#### Presidential Voter Registration and Get-Out-the-Vote Drives (11 CFR §100.89, 100.149 and 106.1(c)(3))

Only the presidential and vice presidential nominees may be specifically mentioned

No public political advertising or direct mail

Phone bank must be operated by volunteers

Payment must not be made from funds designated for particular candidate

Payment may not be made from transfers from a National Party to specifically fund the activity

If activity is also on behalf of other specifically identified candidates, the cost allocable to the candidate(s) must be in-kind contribution or coordinated party expenditure

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**How do I report exempt party activity?**

If the Exempt Activity also meets the definition of Federal Election Activity (FEA), then it must be paid for with 100% federal funds and disclosed as FEA on Schedule B, supporting Line 30(b)  
 Note that FEA activity (exempt or not) that refers to a clearly identified federal candidate cannot be allocated between federal and Levin funds. (11 CFR §300.32(c)(1))

If the Exempt Activity does not meet the definition of FEA it may be allocated between the federal and non-federal accounts if it benefits both federal and non-federal candidates. It should be disclosed on Schedule H4 in the "exempt" category.

If the Exempt Activity does not meet the definition of FEA and mentions ONLY federal candidates, then it cannot be allocated with federal and non-federal funds and should be disclosed on Schedule B, supporting Line 21(b).

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**INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES (SCHEDULE E)****What is an independent expenditure?**

An Independent expenditure is a payment for a communication which expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified federal candidate and is not [coordinated](#) with a candidate, candidate's committee or their agents. (11 CFR §100.16)

**What is the definition of "express advocacy?"**

From 11 CFR §100.22:

"Expressly advocating means any communication that (a) Uses phrases such as "vote for the President," "re-elect your Congressman," "support the Democratic nominee," "cast your ballot for the Republican challenger for U.S. Senate in Georgia," "Smith for Congress," "Bill McKay in '94," "vote Pro-Life" or "vote Pro-Choice" accompanied by a listing of clearly identified candidates described as Pro-Life or Pro-Choice, "vote against Old Hickory," "defeat" accompanied by a picture of one or more candidate(s), "reject the incumbent," or communications of campaign slogan(s) or individual word(s), which in context can have no other reasonable meaning than to urge the election or defeat of one or more clearly identified candidate(s), such as posters, bumper stickers, advertisements, etc. which say "Nixon's the One," "Carter '76," "Reagan/Bush" or "Mondale!"; or (b) When taken as a whole and with limited reference to external events, such as the proximity to the election, could only be interpreted by a reasonable person as containing advocacy of the election or defeat of one or more clearly identified candidate(s) because-- (1) The electoral portion of the communication is unmistakable, unambiguous, and suggestive of only one meaning; and (2) Reasonable minds could not differ as to whether it encourages actions to elect or defeat one or more clearly identified candidate(s) or encourages some other kind of action."

-For further examples of "express advocacy", please see the [Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]. (11 CFR §100.22)

**When do I have to file 24/48-Hour Reports?**

24-Hour Reports must be filed within 24 hours of dissemination of independent expenditures aggregating \$1,000 or more (per election, per office sought) made less than 20 days but more than 24 hours before the day of an election. (11 CFR §104.4(c))

48-Hour Reports must be filed within 48 hours of dissemination of independent expenditures that aggregate \$10,000 or more (per election, per office sought) anytime during a calendar year up to and including the 20th day before an election. (11 CFR §104.4(b))

As states establish their election schedules, the Commission calculates the applicable 24/48-Hour reporting periods: [2016 24/48 Hour Report Schedule](#)

For additional information, please refer to the Campaign Guide ([pages 87-89 \[PDF\]](#))

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### What should be included on a 24/48-Hour Report?

Once a committee's independent expenditures reach or exceed \$10,000 in the aggregate during the 48-Hour time period, or \$1,000 in the aggregate during the 24-Hour time period with respect to a given election during the calendar year, a 24/48-Hour report is required. The report must disclose all independent expenditures leading up to the \$10,000 or \$1,000 threshold, as appropriate; however, expenditures that have already been disclosed in a previous quarterly or monthly report do not have to be included on the 24- or 48-Hour Report.

Example: an independent expenditure totaling \$9,000 was made on 6/25/10 (within 48-Hour time frame) for a Virginia Senate candidate in the general election. No prior expenditures were made for this election. The expenditure does not require a 48-Hour Report and is disclosed on the July Monthly Report (covering 6/1/10 - 6/30/10). On 7/25/10, a \$5,000 independent expenditure was made for the Virginia Senate candidate in the general election. A 48-Hour Report is required because the independent expenditures for the Virginia Senate general election aggregate over \$10,000 (\$9,000 + \$5,000 = \$14,000). The Report should disclose the \$5,000 expenditure from 7/25/10 but need not include the \$9,000 expenditure that was already reported on the July Monthly Report.

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### How do I report an independent expenditure that is disseminated on a different day than payment to the vendor?

#### If payment is BEFORE dissemination

##### **Option 1:**

Disclose the pre-payment on Schedule B, Line 21(b) (Other Federal Operating Expenditures). Purpose should indicate it is a pre-payment for future communications.

In subsequent reporting period(s) when the independent expenditure(s) is made, disclose the independent expenditure on Schedule E, Line 24 and subtract it (i.e. disclose a negative entry) from Line 21(b). There should be a cross reference between the two transactions using the purpose and/or memo text fields.

##### **Option 2:**

Disclose the independent expenditure on Schedule E, Line 24 at the time the pre-payment is made.

There is no further reporting obligation except for any required 24/48-Hour Reports when dissemination occurs.

#### If payment is AFTER dissemination

*If dissemination and payment occur in the same reporting period:*

Disclose the independent expenditure as a single entry on Schedule E using the date of payment. If a 24/48-Hour Report is required, the date of dissemination should be used, and the payment on Schedule E of the report should disclose the date of dissemination in the purpose field or as an attached memo text.

*If payment occurs in a subsequent reporting period:*

The independent expenditure should be disclosed as a MEMO entry on Schedule E using the date of dissemination, and on a Schedule D if it is a reportable debt under 11 CFR §104.11.

The aggregate amount on Schedule E should include all contracts obligating funds for disbursements (i.e. MEMO Schedule E's).

When the payment is made, it should be disclosed as a regular entry on Schedule E using the payment date, as well as a payment on Schedule D (cross reference Schedule E).

Indicate the date of dissemination in the purpose box on Schedule E

To avoid inflating the aggregate amount on Schedule E, the payment amount should not be added into the "Calendar Year-To-Date Per Election for Office Sought" field again; however, if the payment amount is different than the original (estimated) debt/MEMO Schedule E amount, the aggregate should be adjusted to show the correct aggregate total.

### How are Presidential Primary elections aggregated?

For the purpose of aggregating Independent Expenditures, each state's Presidential primary is considered a separate election (Advisory Opinion 2003-40).

The election state must be disclosed on Schedule E for any independent expenditure made on behalf of Presidential candidates in primary elections.

## How should an Independent Expenditure be reported when at the time of dissemination there is only an estimate of the cost?

The estimated amount at the time of dissemination should be used to determine if a 24/48-hour Report is required. If a Report is required, it should disclose the estimated amount and the purpose field or memo text should indicate "estimate."

At the time of the next regular report, the actual amount of the independent expenditure should be disclosed on Schedule E and the purpose field or memo text should indicate the expenditure is the actual amount for an independent expenditure originally estimated to be \$XX. In addition, the "Calendar Year-To-Date Per Election for Office Sought" field should be adjusted to show the correct aggregate total.

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## COORDINATED PARTY EXPENDITURES (SCHEDULE F)

### What is a coordinated party expenditure?

A coordinated party expenditure is a payment by a political party for a communication which has been coordinated with a federal candidate. There is a three-pronged test to determine if a communication has been coordinated with a federal candidate (11 CFR §109.21). For further information on this three-pronged test, please refer to the [Campaign Guide](#) [PDF] for more information.

### Who can make coordinated party expenditures?

#### 1. National Party Committees

May make coordinated party expenditures for Presidential, House, and Senate candidates in the General election. (11 CFR §109.32)  
National, Congressional and Senatorial campaign committees do not have separate limits.

#### 2. State Party Committees

May make coordinated party expenditures for House and Senate candidates in the General election in its own State (11 CFR §109.32)  
May be authorized by national committee to make expenditures on behalf of Presidential candidate that count against the national committee's limit. (11 CFR §109.33)

#### 3. Local Party Committees

May be authorized by state or national party to make expenditures against its limits for Presidential, House, and Senate candidates in the General election. (11 CFR §109.33)

### What are the limits for coordinated party expenditures?

Every year the Commission publishes the dollar amounts for the coordinated party expenditures limits in its newsletter, [the Record](#).  
-[Coordinated Party Expenditure Limits for 2016](#)

A Committee may designate another party to spend against its limit as long as it is done in advance and in writing (11 CFR §109.33).

### How are coordinated party expenditures reported?

Coordinated party expenditures are disclosed on Schedule F, supporting Line 25 of the Detailed Summary Page.

Coordinated party expenditures are aggregated per general election, per candidate

Authorization to spend against another committee's limit should be indicated on the report

For more information, please consult the [Example](#) [PDF]

### How should a coordinated party expenditure that is contracted/provided/disseminated in one reporting period, but paid in another be disclosed?

The coordinated party expenditure should be disclosed as a MEMO entry on Schedule F when the service is provided or the communication is publicly disseminated/distributed, and on a Schedule D if it is a reportable debt under 11 CFR §104.11.

When the payment is made, the report should show a payment on Schedule F and the same payment on Schedule D (cross referencing Schedule F).

Indicate the date of original service/ dissemination in the purpose box

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**FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL ALLOCATION (SCHEDULES H1, H2, H3, H4)****General****Do I have to allocate?**

Committees that have both a federal and a non-federal account may allocate certain expenses. Committees have the option to pay 100% of an allocable activity from the federal account without reimbursement from the non-federal account. 11 CFR §106.7(b)

**What expenses can be allocated?**

Administrative costs, including rent, utilities, and office equipment, office supplies, etc. (11 CFR §106.7(c)(2))

Salaries, wages and fringe benefits for employees who devote 25% or less of their compensated time in a month on activities in connection with a federal election. (11 CFR §106.7(c)(1))

Exempt party activities that are conducted in conjunction with non-federal activity and that are not FEA. (11 CFR §106.7(c)(3))

Voter drive activity that is neither FEA nor exempt party activity. (11 CFR §106.7(c)(5)) Voter drive activity includes voter registration, voter ID, GOTV, or generic party activity outside of FEA timeframes. Direct costs of fundraising programs and events where federal and nonfederal funds are collected by one committee. (11 CFR §106.7(c)(4))

**How does allocation work?**

The Committee will pay for all allocable expenses from its federal account. The allocable expenses will be disclosed on Schedule H4. The Committee can transfer into its federal account the non-federal portion of the expense up to 10 days before the payment or up to 60 days after the payment. The transfer-in is disclosed on Schedule H3. (11 CFR §106.7(f))

Allocable expenses should not be paid from the non-federal account and reimbursed by the federal account.

For more information and an example of allocation of administrative and fundraising expenses, consult the [Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

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**Schedules H1 and H2****How do I determine what allocation ratio to use?**

-Administrative, salaries, voter drive, and exempt party activities: Ratio is disclosed on Schedule H1 on the first report of the calendar year where an allocable expense is disclosed on Schedule H4, and a fixed ratio should be used for the entire two-year election cycle. The percentage of federal funds is determined by the presence/absence of a Senate and/or Presidential candidate on the state's ballot in the next regularly scheduled federal general election. (11 CFR §106.7(d)(2))

*Fixed Percentage Ratios:*

Both President and Senate: 36% federal

President only: 28% federal

Senate only: 21% federal

Non Senate or President: 15% federal

*Fundraising activities:*

Ratio is disclosed on Schedule H2 on every report that discloses disbursements for the fundraiser

Costs are allocated according to the ratio of the federal funds received to total receipts for the event. (11 CFR §106.7(d)(4))

The ratio should be estimated prior to the event and revised, if necessary, within 60 days after the event.

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**Schedule H3**

**When can I transfer-in funds from our non-federal account?**

Transfers from the non-federal account must be made within a 70-day time period: no more than 10 days before or 60 days after the payment to the vendor.

**How do I determine how much I can transfer in?**

For each payment to the vendor, the committee must transfer funds from the non-federal account in an amount equal to, or less than, the non-federal share of the expenses.

Transfers from the non-federal account into the federal account are disclosed on Schedule H3.

**Schedule H4****How do I report credit card payments or reimbursements to individuals?***Credit card payments:*

The payment to the credit card company should be allocated on Schedule H4 and MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required regardless of the payment amount.

If there are multiple credit card payments on a report, you should clearly identify which payment each memo entry relates to.

*Reimbursements to individuals for TRAVEL/SUBSISTENCE expenses:*

The reimbursement to the individual should be disclosed on Schedule H4 and the purpose should indicate that it is for travel/subsistence reimbursement. If the travel/subsistence reimbursement is greater than \$500, MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required regardless of the amount. (11 CFR §§104.10 and 104.17, and Advisory Opinion 1996-20, footnote 3)

If there are multiple reimbursements on a report, you should clearly identify which reimbursement each memo entry relates to.

*Reimbursements to individuals for non-travel expenses:*

The reimbursement to the individual should be allocated on Schedule H4 and MEMO entries to identify the original vendor(s) are required regardless of the payment amount. (11 CFR §§104.10 and 104.17, and Advisory Opinions 1992-1 and 1996-20, footnote 3)

If there are multiple reimbursements on a report, you should clearly identify which reimbursement each memo entry relates to.

To see how a credit card payment on H4 should be disclosed, please consult the [Example](#) [PDF]

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**How do I report refunds/rebates of disbursements originally disclosed on Schedule H4?**

When the original disbursement was allocated on Schedule H4:

Refunds/rebates received must be allocated between the federal and non-federal accounts according to the same ratio used to allocate the original disbursement.

**Method 1:** Disclose the full refund/rebate as a negative entry allocated between the federal and non-federal accounts on Schedule H4. The purpose field should specify the nature of the transaction (refund, rebate, etc) and it is also recommended to include the date and/or report of original disbursement.

**Method 2:** Disclose the full refund/rebate on Schedule A, supporting Line 15. Disclose the federal account's transfer to the non-federal account for the nonfederal share of the refund/rebate on Schedule H4.

The transfer on H4 should be 100% federal and should not be allocated

The purpose/additional text field should specify the nature of the transaction (refund, rebate, etc) and it is also recommended to include the date and/or report of original disbursement.

To see how a refund/rebate should be disclosed, please consult the [example from the Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

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**LEVIN ACTIVITY (SCHEDULES L, L-A, L-B, H-1, H-5, H-6)**

**General****Who can raise/spend Levin funds?**

State, District, and Local party committees can raise and spend Levin funds.  
Each committee must raise and spend its own Levin funds on FEA. (11 CFR §300.34(a)(1))  
National party committees cannot raise or spend Levin funds. (11 CFR §300.31(e))

**What activities can be allocated between federal and Levin funds ?**

FEA Voter Registration, Voter Identification, Get-Out-the-Vote and Generic Campaign Activity that does NOT mention a federal candidate may be allocated between the federal and Levin accounts. (11 CFR §300.33(a)(1) and (2))  
Note that FEA employee salary (those spending more than 25% of their time on FEA) cannot be paid for with Levin funds.

**How does allocation work?**

The Committee will pay for all FEA allocable expenses from its federal account. The FEA allocable expenses will be disclosed on Schedule H6. The Committee can then transfer into its federal account the Levin portion of the expense (within a 70 day window). (11 CFR §300.33)  
Allocable expenses should not be paid from the Levin account and reimbursed by the federal account.

For more information, please consult the [example in the Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

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**Schedules H1****How do I determine what allocation ratio to use?**

The ratio used to allocate funds between the federal and Levin accounts is determined the same way as the ratio used to allocate funds between the federal and non-federal accounts. (11 CFR §300.33(b))  
FEA Voter Registration, Voter ID, GOTV, and generic campaign activity:  
Ratio is disclosed on Schedule H1 on the first report of each calendar year disclosing an allocable disbursement on Schedule H6.  
A fixed ratio used for the entire two-year election cycle.  
The percentage of federal funds is determined by the presence/absence of a Senate and/or Presidential candidate on the state's ballot in the next regularly scheduled federal general election.  
Both President and Senate: 36% federal  
President only: 28% federal  
Senate only: 21% federal  
Non Senate or President: 15% federal

**Schedule L****When do I file a Schedule L?**

Schedule L, the Levin Aggregation Page, is the "Detailed Summary Page" for the Levin account. The L Schedules do not affect totals on the actual Summary and Detailed Summary Pages for the Federal account. (FEC Form 3X)  
Schedule L should be filed with all reports that disclose Levin receipts or disbursements.

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**Schedule L-A**

**Who can contribute to the Levin account?**

Levin contributions are limited to \$10,000 in a calendar year from any person/entity (11 CFR §300.31).

Limits are separate from the committee's federal limits.

If state law limits donations to less than \$10,000, the lower limit applies.

Any federally permissible source can contribute to the Levin account as well as certain sources that are prohibited from contributing to the federal account (corporations, unions, federal government contractors, etc) except the following:

Foreign nationals

Federal candidates

National Party Committees

Any other national, state, district or local party committees

Any sources prohibited under State laws. (11 CFR §§300.31 and 300.34)

**How are Levin receipts reported?**

Contributions to the Levin Account aggregating \$200 or more in a calendar year are itemized Schedule L-A, supporting Line 1(a).

Receipts aggregating less than \$200 should be disclosed as unitemized on Line 1(b) of Schedule L (Levin Fund Aggregation Page).

Line 2 is used for other Levin receipts such as refunds received or interest accrued.

For more information, please consult the [example of Levin receipts](#) [PDF]

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**Schedule L-B****How do I disclose transfers to the federal account for allocated federal and Levin activity?**

Transfers from the Levin account to the Federal account are disclosed on two schedules:

Schedule L-B is used to disclose the disbursement of Levin Funds.

Transfers to the federal account for allocated activity should be disclosed on Line 4 and categorized by the type of FEA activity:

4(a): voter registration activity

4(b): voter ID activity

4(c): GOTV activity

4(d): generic campaign activity

Other disbursements from the Levin account (bank fees, refund of Levin contributions, etc) should be disclosed on Line 5.

Schedule H5 is used to disclose the receipt of Levin funds into the federal account.

The transfers-in to the federal account on Schedule H5 should always match the disbursements to the federal account on Schedule L-B.

The transfers-in are categorized by the type of FEA activity:

i): voter registration activity

ii): voter ID activity

iii): GOTV activity

iv): generic campaign activity

For more information, please consult the [example of transfers to the federal account for allocated federal and Levin activity from the Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

**What activities can be paid with 100% Levin funds?**

Costs associated with maintaining a bank account for Levin funds (bank fees, etc) can be paid with 100% Levin funds.

If permissible by State regulations, Levin funds can be used to pay for non-federal activity including the non-federal share of disbursements allocated between the federal and non-federal accounts on Schedule H4 (11 CFR §300.32(b)).

Disbursements of Levin funds for purposes other than transfers to the federal account for allocable FEA activity should be disclosed on Schedule L-B, Line 5.

**Schedule H-5****How do I disclose transfers-in from the Levin account?**

Transfers into the federal account from the Levin account are disclosed on two schedules:

Schedule L-B is used to disclose the disbursement of Levin Funds.

Transfers to the federal account for allocated activity should be disclosed on Line 4 and categorized by the type of FEA activity:

4(a): voter registration activity

4(b): voter ID activity

4(c): GOTV activity

4(d): generic campaign activity

Other disbursements from the Levin account (bank fees, refund of Levin contributions, etc) should be disclosed on Line 5.

Schedule H5 is used to disclose the receipt of Levin funds into the federal account.

The transfers-in to the federal account on H5 should always match the disbursements to the federal account on Schedule L-B.

The transfers-in are categorized by the type of FEA activity:

i): voter registration activity

ii): voter ID activity

iii): GOTV activity

iv): generic campaign activity

For more information, please consult the [example of Levin receipts from the Campaign Guide](#) [PDF]

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### **When can I transfer-in funds from our Levin account?**

Transfers from the Levin account must be made within a 70-day time period: no more than 10 days before or 60 days after the payment to the vendor. (11 CFR §300.33)

### **What amount of Levin funds can I transfer in?**

For each payment to the vendor, the committee must transfer funds from the Levin account in an amount equal to, or less than, the Levin share of the expenses. (11 CFR §300.33)

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## **Reporting Bitcoins**

### **Can my committee purchase bitcoins as an investment?**

Yes. In [Advisory Opinion 2014-02](#), the Commission concluded that a committee can purchase bitcoins with funds from its campaign depository for investment purposes. The bitcoins do not need to be deposited in a campaign depository within 10 days of receipt. Bitcoins may be received into and held in a bitcoin wallet until the committee liquidates them.

### **How do I report bitcoins purchased as an investment?**

When the committee sells any bitcoins purchased from funds transferred from a campaign depository, the committee must report any earnings or losses as an "other receipt" (Line 14 for Form 3 filers; Line 21 for Form 3P filers; Line 17 for Form 3X filers). Losses should be reported as a negative entry.

### **Can I use bitcoins that the campaign buys as an investment to purchase goods or services?**

No, committees cannot use bitcoins to purchase goods or services. The committee must sell the bitcoins and deposit the proceeds into the campaign depository before using the funds to make disbursements for goods and services.

### **Can my committee receive bitcoins as contributions?**



Yes, a committee can receive bitcoins as contributions. The Act defines a "contribution" to include "any gift, subscription, loan, advance, or deposit of money or anything of value made by any person for the purpose of influencing any election for Federal office." In Advisory Opinion 2014-02, the Commission concluded that bitcoins are "money or anything of value" within the meaning of the Act.

Bitcoins may be received into and held in a bitcoin wallet until the committee liquidates them. Holding bitcoins in a bitcoin wallet does not relieve the committee of its obligations to return or refund a bitcoin contribution that is from a prohibited source, exceeds the contributor's contribution limit, or is otherwise not legal.

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#### **How do I determine the value of the bitcoins that I receive as a contribution?**

A political committee that receives a contribution in bitcoins should value that contribution based on the market value of bitcoins at the time the contribution is received.

#### **How do I report receiving contributions in bitcoins?**

The initial receipt of bitcoins as contributions should be reported like in-kind contributions. The committee will disclose the receipt of the contribution and also report the bitcoins as a disbursement. These offsetting entries allow the committee's reported cash-on-hand to remain unchanged while holding the bitcoins outside of a campaign depository. It is recommended to include the number of bitcoins that the committee received and that the bitcoins were not liquidated. Please see Advisory Opinion 2014-02, [Attachment 1](#) for an example of how to report receiving bitcoins as contributions.

Any usual and nominal fees that the processor charges should not be deducted from the reported value of the contribution. The committee should report the usual and nominal fees and commissions that it pays to an online processor as an operating expenditure.

#### **How do I report liquidating bitcoins?**

Reporting for liquidating bitcoins depends on whether the committee sells to a known purchaser or to an unknown purchaser.

##### *Selling to a known purchaser*

If the committee sells the bitcoins directly to a purchaser, and therefore knows the identity of the purchaser, the purchaser is considered to have made a contribution to the committee. The committee will report the purchaser's name, address, and employer/occupation information as well as the date of the purchase, the value of the bitcoins purchased, and the number of bitcoins purchased as a receipt on the committee's report. The committee will also report a memo entry disclosing the original contributor's information, date of contribution, original value of the bitcoins, and the number of bitcoins originally given to the committee. Please see Advisory Opinion 2014-02, [Attachment 2\(a\)](#) for an example of how to report selling bitcoins to a known purchaser.

##### *Selling to an unknown purchaser*

If the committee sells the bitcoins through an established market mechanism where the purchaser is not known, the purchaser is not considered to have made a contribution to the committee. The committee will report the market or exchange's name, and address information, as well as the date of the purchase and the value of the bitcoins purchased. The committee should also include a notation stating how many bitcoins were purchased and that the purchaser is unknown. The committee will also report a memo entry disclosing the original contributor's information, date of contribution, original value of the bitcoins, and the number of bitcoins originally given to the committee. Please see Advisory Opinion 2014-02, [Attachment 2\(b\)](#) for an example of how to report selling bitcoins to an unknown purchaser.

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#### **BUNDLING (FORM 3L)**

##### **When is Form 3L filed?**

Committees must disclose information about each Lobbyist/Registrant or Lobbyist/Registrant PAC that forwards, or is credited with raising, two or more bundled contributions aggregating in excess of \$16,200 (indexed for inflation) during a specific "covered" period. (11 CFR §104.22(b)(1))

This information is disclosed on a Form 3L.

Form 3L is only required if \$16,200 threshold is met in a given period.

Committees should file 3L on the same filing schedule as its current Form 3X schedule (monthly or quarterly).

Committees that are required to file 3X on a monthly basis can elect to switch the 3L filing to quarterly schedule.

Request must be in writing or electronically, if electronic filer.

##### **What are "covered" periods?**

**Monthly Filers:**

-Semi-Annual Periods

January 1 – June 30 AND July 1 – December 31

-Monthly Periods

Monthly reports are filed on the 20th of each month (please see the [filing schedule](#) for the due dates for the 12 Day Pre-General, 30 Day Post-General and Year-End Reports)

**Quarterly Filers (non-election year)**

-Semi-Annual Periods

January 1 – June 30 AND July 1 – December 31

Any applicable special election reporting periods

-Quarterly Filers (election year)

Semi-Annual Periods

January 1 – June 30 AND July 1 – December 31

Calendar quarters ending 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, and 12/31; AND

Applicable pre- and post- election reporting periods

11 CFR §104.22(a)(5))

**What information is disclosed on Form 3L?**

Schedule A: Used to disclose reportable contributions bundles by lobbyist/registrants and lobbyist/registrant PACs.

-Name of lobbyist/registrant or lobbyist/registrant PAC.

-Address of lobbyist/registrant or lobbyist/registrant PAC.

-Aggregate amount of bundled contributions received during the covered period. (11 CFR §104.22(b)(1))

Schedule B: Is only used to disclose bundled contributions that are deposited, reported, and later refunded.

-Name of lobbyist/registrant or lobbyist/registrant PAC

-Address of lobbyist/registrant or lobbyist/registrant PAC

-Aggregate amount of refunds made during covered period

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**National Party Committee Accounts****How do I report activity of national party committee accounts ("Convention Account," "Headquarters Account," "Recount Account")?**

Please see the following [interim reporting guidance](#) for how to disclose these types of activity on your reports.

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