



CHECKING IN

Monthly Informational Mailer for Local Election Officials

617-979-8300

OCPF has summarized the campaign finance law in a guide for local candidates

Before an election, it's a good idea to educate candidates and committees about their campaign finance filing responsibilities.

One option for municipal election officials is to provide local candidates with OCPF's [trifold guide](#) when they come to your office for nomination papers.

The guide summarizes the campaign finance law, explaining limits, restrictions and filing responsibilities. The guide is attached in a Microsoft Word document (please remember to choose double-sided printing).

Equal Access: When does it apply?

Equal access means that a candidate, or a group supporting or opposing a ballot question, can use government buildings or land for a political purpose, so long as a candidate or committee on the opposing side is given the opportunity to have a similar meeting on the same terms and conditions.

For example, if a candidate for state representative is given permission to bring coffee and doughnuts to the senior center to speak with seniors about her campaign, then similar events can be requested by other candidates.

We have been asked whether a local party committee can set up a table on a town common during a larger town event. According to the equal access rule, that's permitted, so long as the opposing party has the same access, if requested.

We recommend that local communities develop equal access policies outlining what is permitted or prohibited.

Just a reminder: campaign funds can never be solicited or received in government buildings.

PAC vs. Ballot Question

We are sometimes asked whether a certain group needs to organize as a political action committee or a ballot question committee.

If the group is forming to support or oppose a ballot question, it would organize a ballot question committee.

PACs are formed to support or oppose candidates.

Recall elections have both elements – a question and candidate election. OCPF has said that a group that is organized to recall a local candidate must organize and file reports as a PAC, not a ballot question committee.

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