



WILLIAM C. CAMPBELL
DIRECTOR

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN & POLITICAL FINANCE
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, ROOM 411
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

TEL: (617) 979-8300
FAX: (617) 727-6549
OCPF@CPF.STATE.MA.US

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MEMORANDUM

To: Local Election Officials
From: William C. Campbell, Director
Subject: Posting municipal campaign finance reports to city or town websites

The campaign finance law requires local election officials to post locally-filed campaign finance reports on their municipal website if the report discloses activity in excess of \$1,000 during a reporting period in one or more of the following categories: 1. contributions received; 2. expenditures made; 3. liabilities incurred; 4. assets acquired; or 5. assets disposed of.¹ The statute requires campaign finance reports be posted within 30 days of a filing deadline. See M.G.L. c. 55, §26.² Reports must remain posted on a municipal website until Dec. 31 of the sixth year following the date the statement or report was filed. See 970 CMR 1.15.

The statute does not specify how the posted reports are to be displayed on municipal websites. However, Section 26 requires “convenient public inspection” of reports. The best practice would be for the local election official to scan the paper campaign finance reports and display copies of the reports in a layout that accommodates visitors to their municipal websites. The reports could be displayed alphabetically by candidate or committee, and/or could be separated by reporting period, office or type.

¹ All mayoral candidates and those city council candidates in cities with a population of 65,000 or more file reports electronically with OCPF and not with the local election officials. Cities with a population of 65,000 or more are currently Boston, Brockton, Cambridge, Fall River, Framingham, Haverhill, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, New Bedford, Newton, Quincy, Somerville, Springfield, Waltham, Worcester

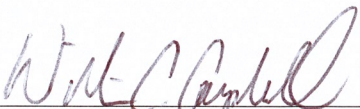
² If a municipality does not have an official website, the local election official is not required to post campaign finance reports.

City and town clerks are required to post the following reports on the municipal website if any of the following documents disclose activity of more than \$1,000 in a reporting period as described above and as set forth in Section 26:

1. Campaign Finance Report Municipal Form for candidates/candidate committees, ballot question committees, and political action committees (CPF M 102); and
2. Any supplemental reports, including the Itemization of Reimbursements (CPF R-1); Report of Subvendor Payments (CPF SV-1 M) and Amendment to Campaign Finance Report (CPF M 102A).

Further, there is nothing in the campaign finance law to preclude local election officials from posting campaign finance reports that do not meet the \$1,000 threshold. In view of the number of inquiries received related to local campaign finance activity, and in order to provide maximum public disclosure, OCPF recommends all locally filed reports be posted to the municipal website, including the following additional reports:

1. Any of the above reports with less than \$1,000 of applicable activity;
2. Certification of No Financial Activity during Reporting Period (CPF M102-0);
3. Statement of Candidate Not Raising or Expending Campaign Funds (CPF M109);
4. Report of Ballot Question Expenditures by Corporation, Organization or Individual (CPF M 22);³
5. Report of Independent Expenditures Promoting Election or Defeat of Candidate(s) (CPF M18A);
6. Report of Independent Expenditures Promoting Election or Defeat of Candidate(s) by Independent Expenditure PAC (CPF M102 IEPAC);
7. Report of Governmental Treasurer (CPF 22A);
8. Report of Legal Defense, Inauguration, Recount Fund (CPF M18E); and
9. Report of Electioneering Communication Expenditure (CPF M18F).



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³ Section 22 requires individuals making expenditures of \$250 or more, in the aggregate, to influence or affect the vote on a ballot question to file a report disclosing the expenditures. Corporations, groups, and associations making any expenditure to influence or affect the vote on a ballot question must file a report to disclose the expenditures, even those less than \$250.