

3517.102 Dollar limits on campaign contributions.

(A) Except as otherwise provided in section 3517.103 of the Revised Code, as used in this section and sections 3517.103 and 3517.104 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Candidate" has the same meaning as in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code but includes only candidates for the offices of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, auditor of state, treasurer of state, attorney general, member of the state board of education, member of the general assembly, chief justice of the supreme court, and justice of the supreme court.

(2) "Statewide candidate" or "any one statewide candidate" means the joint candidates for the offices of governor and lieutenant governor or a candidate for the office of secretary of state, auditor of state, treasurer of state, attorney general, member of the state board of education, chief justice of the supreme court, or justice of the supreme court.

(3) "Senate candidate" means a candidate for the office of state senator.

(4) "House candidate" means a candidate for the office of state representative.

(5)

(a) "Primary election period" for a candidate begins on the beginning date of the candidate's pre-filing period specified in division (A)(9) of section 3517.109 of the Revised Code and ends on the day of the primary election.

(b) In regard to any candidate, the "general election period" begins on the day after the primary election immediately preceding the general election at which the candidate seeks an office specified in division (A)(1) of this section and ends on the thirty-first day of December following that general election.

(6) "State candidate fund" means the state candidate fund established by a state or county political party under division (D)(3)(c) of section 3517.10 of the Revised Code.

(7) "Postgeneral election statement" means the statement filed under division (A)(2) of section 3517.10 of the Revised Code by the campaign committee of a candidate after the general election in which the candidate ran for office or filed by legislative campaign fund after the general election in an even-numbered year.

(8) "Contribution" means any contribution that is required to be reported in the statement of contributions under section 3517.10 of the Revised Code.

(9)

(a) Except as otherwise provided in division (A)(9)(b) of this section, "designated state campaign committee" means:

(i) In the case of contributions to or from a state political party, a campaign committee of a statewide candidate, statewide officeholder, senate candidate, house candidate, or member of the general assembly.

(ii) In the case of contributions to or from a county political party, a campaign committee of a senate candidate or house candidate whose candidacy is to be submitted to some or all of the electors in that county, or member of the general assembly whose district contains all or part of that county.

(iii) In the case of contributions to or from a legislative campaign fund, a campaign committee of any of the following:

(I) A senate or house candidate who, if elected, will be a member of the same party that established the legislative campaign fund and the same house with which the legislative campaign fund is associated;

(II) A state senator or state representative who is a member of the same party that established the legislative campaign fund and the same house with which the legislative campaign fund is associated.

(b) A campaign committee is no longer a "designated state campaign committee" after the campaign committee's candidate changes the designation of treasurer required to be filed under division (D)(1) of section 3517.10 of the Revised Code to indicate that the person intends to be a candidate for, or becomes a candidate for nomination or election to, any office that, if elected, would not qualify that candidate's campaign committee as a "designated state campaign committee" under division (A)(9)(a) of this section.

(B)

(1)

(a) No individual who is seven years of age or older shall make a contribution or contributions aggregating more than:

(i) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one statewide candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(ii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one house candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iv) Ten thousand dollars to a county political party of the county in which the individual's designated Ohio residence is located for the party's state candidate fund in a calendar year;

(v) Fifteen thousand dollars to any one legislative campaign fund in a calendar year;

(vi) Thirty thousand dollars to any one state political party for the party's state candidate fund in a calendar year;

(vii) Ten thousand dollars to any one political action committee in a calendar year;

(viii) Ten thousand dollars to any one political contributing entity in a calendar year.

(b) No individual shall make a contribution or contributions to the state candidate fund of a county political party of any county other than the county in which the individual's designated Ohio residence is located.

(c) No individual who is under seven years of age shall make any contribution.

(2)

(a) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no political action committee shall make a contribution or contributions aggregating more than:

(i) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one statewide candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(ii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one house candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iv) Fifteen thousand dollars to any one legislative campaign fund in a calendar year;

(v) Thirty thousand dollars to any one state political party for the party's state candidate fund in a calendar year;

(vi) Ten thousand dollars to another political action committee or to a political contributing entity in a calendar year. This division does not apply to a political action committee that makes a contribution to a political action committee or a political contributing entity affiliated with it. For purposes of this division, a political action committee is affiliated with another political action committee or with a political contributing entity if they are both established, financed, maintained, or controlled by, or if they are, the same corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, including any parent, subsidiary, division, or department of that corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person.

(b) No political action committee shall make a contribution or contributions to a county political party for the party's state candidate fund.

(3) No campaign committee shall make a contribution or contributions aggregating more than:

(a) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one statewide candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(b) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(c) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one house candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(d) Ten thousand dollars to any one political action committee in a calendar year;

(e) Ten thousand dollars to any one political contributing entity in a calendar year.

(4)

(a) Subject to division (D)(3) of this section, no political party shall make a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars to any one political action committee or to any one political contributing entity in a calendar year.

(b) No county political party shall make a contribution or contributions to another county political party.

(5)

(a) Subject to division (B)(5)(b) of this section, no campaign committee, other than a designated state campaign committee, shall make a contribution or contributions aggregating in a calendar year more than:

(i) Thirty thousand dollars to any one state political party for the party's state candidate fund;

(ii) Fifteen thousand dollars to any one legislative campaign fund;

(iii) Ten thousand dollars to any one county political party for the party's state candidate fund.

(b) No campaign committee shall make a contribution or contributions to a county political party for the party's state candidate fund unless one of the following applies:

(i) The campaign committee's candidate will appear on a ballot in that county.

(ii) The campaign committee's candidate is the holder of an elected public office that represents all or part of the population of that county at the time the contribution is made.

(6)

(a) No state candidate fund of a county political party shall make a contribution or contributions, except a contribution or contributions to a designated state campaign committee, in a primary election period or a general election period, aggregating more than:

(i) Two hundred fifty thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one statewide candidate;

(ii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate;

(iii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one house candidate.

(b)

(i) No state candidate fund of a state or county political party shall make a transfer or a contribution or transfers or contributions of cash or cash equivalents to a designated state campaign committee in a primary election period or in a general election period aggregating more than:

(I) Five hundred thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one statewide candidate;

(II) One hundred thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate;

(III) Fifty thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one house candidate.

(ii) No legislative campaign fund shall make a transfer or a contribution or transfers or contributions of cash or cash equivalents to a designated state campaign committee aggregating more than:

(I) Fifty thousand dollars in a primary election period or one hundred thousand dollars in a general election period to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate;

(II) Twenty-five thousand dollars in a primary election period or fifty thousand dollars in a general election period to the campaign committee of any one house candidate.

(iii) As used in divisions (B)(6)(b) and (C)(6) of this section, "transfer or contribution of cash or cash equivalents" does not include any in-kind contributions.

(c) A county political party that has no state candidate fund and that is located in a county having a population of less than one hundred fifty thousand may make one or more contributions from other accounts to any one statewide candidate or to any one designated state campaign committee that do not exceed, in the aggregate, two thousand five hundred dollars in any primary election period or general election period. As used in this division, "other accounts" does not include an account that contains the public moneys received from the Ohio political party fund under section 3517.17 of the Revised Code.

(d) No legislative campaign fund shall make a contribution, other than to a designated state campaign committee or to the state candidate fund of a political party.

(7)

(a) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no political contributing entity shall make a contribution or contributions aggregating more than:

(i) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one statewide candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(ii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one senate candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iii) Ten thousand dollars to the campaign committee of any one house candidate in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iv) Fifteen thousand dollars to any one legislative campaign fund in a calendar year;

(v) Thirty thousand dollars to any one state political party for the party's state candidate fund in a calendar year;

(vi) Ten thousand dollars to another political contributing entity or to a political action committee in a calendar year. This division does not apply to a political contributing entity that makes a contribution to a political contributing entity or a political action committee affiliated with it. For purposes of this division, a political contributing entity is affiliated with another political contributing entity or with a political action committee if they are both established, financed, maintained, or controlled by, or if they are, the same corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, including any parent, subsidiary, division, or department of that corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person.

(b) No political contributing entity shall make a contribution or contributions to a county political party for the party's state candidate fund.

(C)

(1)

(a) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no campaign committee of a statewide candidate shall do any of the following:

(i) Knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age;

(ii) Accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from any one individual who is seven years of age or older, from any one political action committee, from any one political contributing entity, or from any one other campaign committee in a primary election period or in a general election period;

(iii) Accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than two hundred fifty thousand dollars from any one or combination of state candidate funds of county political parties in a primary election period or in a general election period.

(b) No campaign committee of a statewide candidate shall accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than two thousand five hundred dollars in a primary election period or in a general election period from a county political party that has no state candidate fund and that is located in a county having a population of less than one hundred fifty thousand.

(2)

(a) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section and except for a designated state campaign committee, no campaign committee of a senate candidate shall do either of the following:

(i) Knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age;

(ii) Accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from any one individual who is seven years of age or older, from any one political action committee, from any one political contributing entity, from any one state candidate fund of a county political party, or from any one other campaign committee in a primary election period or in a general election period.

(b) No campaign committee of a senate candidate shall accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than two thousand five hundred dollars in a primary election period or in a general election period from a county political party that has no state candidate fund and that is located in a county having a population of less than one hundred fifty thousand.

(3)

(a) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section and except for a designated state campaign committee, no campaign committee of a house candidate shall do either of the following:

(i) Knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age;

(ii) Accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from any one individual who is seven years of age or older, from any one political action committee, from any one political contributing entity, from any one state candidate fund of a county political party, or from any one other campaign committee in a primary election period or in a general election period.

(b) No campaign committee of a house candidate shall accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than two thousand five hundred dollars in a primary election period or in a general election period from a county political party that has no state candidate fund and that is located in a county having a population of less than one hundred fifty thousand.

(4)

(a)

(i) Subject to division (C)(4)(a)(ii) of this section and except for a designated state campaign committee, no county political party shall knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age, or accept a contribution or contributions for the party's state candidate fund aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from any one individual whose designated Ohio residence is located within that county and who is seven years of age or older or from any one campaign committee in a calendar year.

(ii) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no county political party shall accept a contribution or contributions for the party's state candidate fund from any individual whose designated Ohio residence is located outside of that county and who is seven years of age or older, from any campaign committee unless the campaign committee's candidate will appear on a ballot in that county or unless the campaign committee's candidate is the holder of an elected public office that represents all or part of the population of that county at the time the contribution is accepted, or from any political action committee or any political contributing entity.

(iii) No county political party shall accept a contribution or contributions from any other county political party.

(b) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no state political party shall do either of the following:

(i) Knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age;

(ii) Accept a contribution or contributions for the party's state candidate fund aggregating more than thirty thousand dollars from any one individual who is seven years of age or older, from any one political action committee, from any one political contributing entity, or from any one campaign committee, other than a designated state campaign committee, in a calendar year.

(5) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no legislative campaign fund shall do either of the following:

(a) Knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age;

(b) Accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than fifteen thousand dollars from any one individual who is seven years of age or older, from any one political action committee, from any one political contributing entity, or from any one campaign committee, other than a designated state campaign committee, in a calendar year.

(6)

(a) No designated state campaign committee shall accept a transfer or contribution of cash or cash equivalents from a state candidate fund of a state political party aggregating in a primary election period or a general election period more than:

(i) Five hundred thousand dollars, in the case of a campaign committee of a statewide candidate;

(ii) One hundred thousand dollars, in the case of a campaign committee of a senate candidate;

(iii) Fifty thousand dollars, in the case of a campaign committee of a house candidate.

(b) No designated state campaign committee shall accept a transfer or contribution of cash or cash equivalents from a legislative campaign fund aggregating more than:

(i) Fifty thousand dollars in a primary election period or one hundred thousand dollars in a general election period, in the case of a campaign committee of a senate candidate;

(ii) Twenty-five thousand dollars in a primary election period or fifty thousand dollars in a general election period, in the case of a campaign committee of a house candidate.

(c) No campaign committee of a candidate for the office of member of the general assembly, including a designated state campaign committee, shall accept a transfer or contribution of cash or cash equivalents from any one or combination of state candidate funds of county political parties aggregating in a primary election period or a general election period more than:

(i) One hundred thousand dollars, in the case of a campaign committee of a senate candidate;

(ii) Fifty thousand dollars, in the case of a campaign committee of a house candidate.

(7)

(a) Subject to division (D)(3) of this section, no political action committee and no political contributing entity shall do either of the following:

(i) Knowingly accept a contribution or contributions from any individual who is under seven years of age;

(ii) Accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from any one individual who is seven years of age or older, from any one campaign committee, or from any one political party in a calendar year.

(b) Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no political action committee shall accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from another political action committee or from a political contributing entity in a calendar year. Subject to division (D)(1) of this section, no political contributing entity shall accept a contribution or contributions aggregating more than ten thousand dollars from another political contributing entity or from a political action committee in a calendar year. This division does not apply to a political action committee or political contributing entity that accepts a contribution from a political action committee or political contributing entity affiliated with it. For purposes of this division, a political action committee is affiliated with another political action committee or with a political contributing entity if they are both established, financed, maintained, or controlled by the same corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, including any parent, subsidiary, division, or department of that corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person.

(D)

(1)

(a) For purposes of the limitations prescribed in division (B)(2) of this section and the limitations prescribed in divisions (C)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), and (7)(b) of this section, whichever is applicable, all contributions made by and all contributions accepted from political action committees that are established, financed, maintained, or controlled by, or that are, the same corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, including any parent, subsidiary, division, or department of that corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, are considered to have been made by or accepted from a single political action committee.

(b) For purposes of the limitations prescribed in division (B)(7) of this section and the limitations prescribed in divisions (C)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), and (7)(b) of this section, whichever is applicable, all contributions made by and all contributions accepted from political contributing entities that are established, financed, maintained, or controlled by, or that are, the same corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, including any parent, subsidiary, division, or department of that corporation, organization, labor organization, continuing association, or other person, are considered to have been made by or accepted from a single political contributing entity.

(2) As used in divisions (B)(1)(a)(vii), (B)(3)(d), (B)(4)(a), and (C)(7) of this section, "political action committee" does not include a political action committee that is organized to support or oppose a ballot issue or question and that makes no contributions to or expenditures on behalf of a political party, campaign committee, legislative campaign fund, political action committee, or political contributing entity. As used in divisions (B)(1)(a)(viii), (B)(3)(e), (B)(4)(a), and (C)(7) of this section, "political contributing entity" does not include a political contributing entity that is organized to support or oppose a ballot issue or question and that makes no contributions to or expenditures on behalf of a political party, campaign committee, legislative campaign fund, political action committee, or political contributing entity.

(3) For purposes of the limitations prescribed in divisions (B)(4) and (C)(7)(a) of this section, all contributions made by and all contributions accepted from a national political party, a state political party, and a county political party are considered to have been made by or accepted from a single political party and shall be combined with each other to determine whether the limitations have been exceeded.

(E)

(1) If a legislative campaign fund has kept a total amount of contributions exceeding one hundred fifty thousand dollars at the close of business on the seventh day before the postgeneral election statement is required to be filed under section 3517.10 of the Revised Code, the legislative campaign fund shall comply with division (E)(2) of this section.

(2)

(a) Any legislative campaign fund that has kept a total amount of contributions in excess of the amount specified in division (E)(1) of this section at the close of business on the seventh day before the postgeneral election statement is required to be filed under section 3517.10 of the Revised Code shall dispose of the excess amount in the manner prescribed in division (E)(2)(b)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this section not later than ninety days after the day the postgeneral election statement is required to be filed under section 3517.10 of the Revised Code. Any legislative campaign fund that is required to dispose of an excess amount of contributions under this division shall file a statement on the ninetieth day after the postgeneral election statement is required to be filed under section 3517.10 of the Revised Code indicating the total amount of contributions the fund has at the close of business on the seventh day before the postgeneral election statement is required to be filed under section 3517.10 of the Revised Code and that the excess contributions were disposed of pursuant to this division and division (E)(2)(b) of this section. The statement shall be on a form prescribed by the secretary of state and shall contain any additional information the secretary of state considers necessary.

(b) Any legislative campaign fund that is required to dispose of an excess amount of contributions under division (E)(2) of this section shall dispose of that excess amount by doing any of the following:

(i) Giving the amount to the treasurer of state for deposit into the state treasury to the credit of the Ohio elections commission fund created by division (I) of section 3517.152 of the Revised Code;

(ii) Giving the amount to individuals who made contributions to that legislative campaign fund as a refund of all or part of their contributions;

(iii) Giving the amount to a corporation that is exempt from federal income taxation under subsection 501(a) and described in subsection 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(F)

(1) No legislative campaign fund shall fail to file a statement required by division (E) of this section.

(2) No legislative campaign fund shall fail to dispose of excess contributions as required by division (E) of this section.

(G) Nothing in this section shall affect, be used in determining, or supersede a limitation on campaign contributions as provided for in the Federal Election Campaign Act.

Amended by 130th General Assembly File No. 25, HB 59, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2013.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No.105, SB 295, §1, eff. 8/15/2012.

Amended by 129th General Assembly File No.40, HB 194, §1 Made subject to referendum in the Nov. 6, 2012 election. The version of this section thus amended was repealed by 129th General Assembly File No.105, SB 295, §1, eff. 8/15/2012.

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