

JULY 2020



# CHECKING IN

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A MONTHLY CAMPAIGN FINANCE NEWSLETTER FOR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICIALS

## OCPF GUIDANCE: MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Appointed municipal employees will get involved in the 2020 election by supporting and opposing candidates on social media — on both the state and federal levels. Some will also get involved in statewide ballot questions.

As a local election official, it may be helpful to familiarize yourself with the campaign finance rules concerning public employees and social media use. The general rule — appointed public employees may not solicit money for any political purpose on social media, such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. [Click here](#) for state regulations concerning social media. [Click here](#) for OCPF's social media educational video.

### PUBLIC EMPLOYEE SOCIAL MEDIA "DON'TS"

- Solicit contributions using a website or social media account
- Share, retweet or "tag" a social media post that solicits political contributions
- Invite people to fundraisers

### PERMITTED SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- Support/oppose candidates (no soliciting)
- "Like" a social media post, even if it involves fundraising
- Follow a candidate or committee
- Contribute in response to a social media post

*Note: Elected officials are exempt from these restrictions*



Many unsuccessful municipal candidates **dissolve** after an election, but they can stay organized for the next cycle if they choose. However, they would need to file a year-end report in January, 2021.



**FAQ:** As a candidate, am I required to have "paid for by" language on my mailers and ads?

**ANSWER:** We highly recommend "paid for by" language on candidate materials. However, it is not generally required by the campaign finance law.

[Click here for OCPF's short educational video on the issue.](#)

OCPF staffers continue to work remotely. You can contact us at [OCPF@cpf.state.ma.us](mailto:OCPF@cpf.state.ma.us)

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