

May 2021



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# CHECKING IN

A MONTHLY CAMPAIGN FINANCE NEWSLETTER FOR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICIALS

## TOP 3 QUESTIONS ASKED BY TOWN & CITY CANDIDATES WHO FILE LOCALLY

### 1. Do I have to file campaign finance reports if I don't raise money for my campaign?

**Answer:** All candidates who appear on the ballot file campaign finance reports. If you spend your personal funds, those transactions are disclosed on campaign finance reports (see the next question). If you did not raise or spend money, please enter "zeros" on the report, then sign and submit it to the municipal clerk.

### 2. I ran for office in my town and spent my own personal funds. How do I report that activity?

**Answer:** You've made what we call "out-of-pocket" expenditures. You'll report the amount spent as a receipt, on Schedule A of the M102 campaign finance report. You'll also disclose the expenditure to the vendor on Schedule B. If it's a candidate loan, you'll list the expense as a liability (loan) to the candidate on Schedule D. [Click here](#) for a short tutorial on how to report out-of-pocket expenditures.

### 3. Do I need an EIN from the IRS to open a bank account?

**Answer:** According to federal tax laws and regulations, a political committee should obtain a federal tax ID to open a bank account. [Click here](#) for OCPF's instructions on how to obtain an EIN. [Click here](#) to access the IRS page for obtaining an EIN.



#### CITIES: ELECTION 2021 TRAINING

This year, rather than regional on-site training, OCPF will hold on-line training seminars for city candidates who file locally.

The **Zoom training** will last about an hour, and covers the ground rules related to public employees, public buildings and public resources, as well as information about how and when to file campaign finance reports. Each seminar will include the same issues, but candidates are welcome to attend as many sessions as they choose. The dates and times of seminars are as follows:

Friday, May 14, 9 a.m. / Monday, May 17, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 25, 5:30 p.m. / Monday, June 7, 9 a.m.

Monday, June 14, 6 p.m.

**Please share these dates with your candidates, including incumbents.** The information provided at these meetings will address most questions candidates have about the process. They can register for a specific date by sending an e-mail to Jason Tait at [jtait@cpf.state.ma.us](mailto:jtait@cpf.state.ma.us)

Town clerks: The seminars above are also helpful for your candidates, if you've not yet held your election.

DISSOLVING  
A  
COMMITTEE



If you had a town election, your unsuccessful candidates may decide to dissolve their committees. Please share [this tutorial](#) with those candidates.