



*The Best Place
For All*

Public Campaign Financing System

Summary Guide

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Introduction

In 2011, the General Assembly established the Commission to Study Campaign Finance Law. On December 31, 2012, the General Assembly issued its final report. It recommended that the counties be authorized to establish their own public financing programs for county offices. In 2013, the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed HB 1499, the Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2013, giving county governments the authority to implement a public financing program. Many provisions of the bill did not become effective until January 1, 2015.

Pursuant to Maryland Election Law § 13-505, any county in the State may elect to establish a system of public campaign financing for elective offices in the executive and legislative branches of the County's government. Any public campaign financing fund established under this provision is to be administered by the chief financial officer of the county and subject to regulation and oversight by the Maryland State Board of Elections to ensure conformity with State law and practices.

Each county shall determine the criteria that candidates must satisfy to become eligible for participation in a Public Campaign Financing Program. Participation is voluntary, and one can only participate if running for a covered county elective office. A county's program may have stricter regulations on campaign financing, contributions, expenditures, reporting, and campaign material than that of State law.

Anne Arundel County adopted legislation in 2023 which established the Public Campaign Financing Fund ("PCFF" or the "Fund") in July 2023 for the 2026 election cycle. The program will be open to candidates for County Council and County Executive. The approved County budget for Fiscal Year 2025 appropriated \$1 million to the Fund.

Anne Arundel County's PCFF consists of: (1) all funds appropriated to it by the Anne Arundel County Council; (2) any unspent money remaining in a participating candidate's publicly funded campaign account after the candidate is no longer a candidate for a covered office; (3) any public contributions plus interest returned to the Fund by a participating candidate who withdraws from participation; (4) all interest earned on funds in the Fund; and (5) voluntary donations made directly to the Fund. (County Code, § 1-12-102)

Important Terms and Definitions

Terms defined in the Anne Arundel County Code (the “County Code”), § 1-12-101:

- (1) “Applicant candidate” means a person who is running for a covered office and who is seeking to be a certified candidate in a primary or general election.
- (2) “Board” means the Maryland State Board of Elections.
- (3) “Campaign finance entity” means a political committee established under Title 13 of the Election Law Article of the State Code.
- (4) “Certified candidate” means a candidate running for a covered office who is certified as eligible for public campaign financing from the Fund.
- (5) “Consumer Price Index” means the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI) for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, or a successor index.
- (6) “Contested election” means an election in which there are more candidates for an office than the number who can be elected to that office. Contested election includes a special election held to fill a vacancy under § 205 or § 402 of the Charter.
- (7) “Contribution” means the gift or transfer, or promise of gift or transfer, of money or other thing of value to a campaign finance entity to promote or assist in the promotion of the success or defeat of a candidate, political party, or question. Contribution includes proceeds from the sale of tickets to a campaign fund-raising event as defined in § 1-101 of the Election Law Article of the State Code.
- (8) “Controller” means the County Controller or the County Controller’s designee.
- (9) “County Board” means the Anne Arundel County Board of Elections.
- (10) “Covered office” means the Office of County Executive or County Councilmember.
- (11) “Disbursement period” means the period of time beginning 365 days before the primary election for the covered office the candidate seeks and ending 15 days after the date of the general election.
- (12) “Election cycle” means the primary and general election for the same term of a covered office.
- (13) “Eligible contribution” means an aggregate donation in a four-year election cycle of no more than \$250 from an individual, including an individual who does not reside in the County.
- (14) “Fund” means the Public Campaign Financing Fund.
- (15) “Non-certified candidate” means a person who is running for a covered office who either: chooses not to apply to be a certified candidate; or applies to be a certified candidate but fails to qualify.
- (16) “Non-participating candidate” means a person who is running for a covered office who is either a certified candidate who declines to accept a public contribution or a non-certified candidate.
- (17) “Participating candidate” means a certified candidate who has received a public contribution from the Fund for a primary or general election.
- (18) “Public Campaign Financing System Commission” means the Commission established in § 1-12-110.
- (19) “Public contribution” means money disbursed from the Fund to a certified candidate.
- (20) “Publicly funded campaign account” means a campaign finance account established by a candidate for the exclusive purpose of receiving eligible contributions and spending funds in accordance with this title.
- (21) “Qualifying contribution” means an eligible contribution of at least \$5 but no more than \$250 in support of an applicant candidate or a certified candidate that is: made by a County resident; made after the beginning of the qualifying period, but no later than the

primary election or, if the candidate, advances, the general election; and acknowledged by a receipt that identifies the contributor's name and residential address and signed by the contributor directly or by a digital signature using a method approved by the State Board.

- (22) "Qualifying period" means the period of time beginning on January 1 following the last election for the covered office the candidate seeks and ending 45 days before the date of the primary election.
- (23) "Slate" means a political committee of two or more candidates who join together to conduct and pay for joint campaign activities.

The following terms are defined by the State Board of Elections:

- (1) "Receipt" means a documented acknowledgement of a contribution that must identify the full name of the candidate for the County elective office, the contributor's name and residential property address in Anne Arundel County, amount of contribution, date of contribution, and be signed by the contributor directly or by a digital signature using a method approved by the Board. By State Law, the treasurer of a campaign finance entity shall keep a detailed and accurate account book of all assets received, expenditures made, and obligations incurred by or on behalf of the entity. As to each asset received (except for anonymous contributions and money received from gaming activity), the account book shall state: (i) its amount or value; (ii) the date of the receipt or expenditure; (iii) the name and address of the person from whom the asset was received or to whom the expenditure was made; and (iv) a description of the asset received or the purpose for which the expenditure was made." (Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 13-221 (a))
- (2) "Receipt Submission Period" means a period in which certified candidates may submit receipts for qualifying contributions to receive public contributions from the Fund. This period begins 365 days before the primary election and ends the date of either the primary election or the general election.
- (3) "Digital Signature" means an electronic signature where the donor makes an affirmative action acknowledging the contribution to a publicly financed candidate. The affirmative action may not be checking a box to confirm the act of contributing. The supporting documentation of a digital signature may include a record with the donor's initials and time stamp when the action occurred. By State law, the State Board may accept an electronic signature for any form, document, report, or affidavit required by the State Board under the Campaign Finance title of the Election Law Article of the State Code. (Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 13-104)

Section I

Anne Arundel County Public Campaign Financing System

A. How to Begin

Candidates are required to follow State Law and the instructions of the State Board of Elections for establishing a Political Committee. Title 13 of the Election Law Article of the Maryland Code includes requirements for the Political Committee organization and officers. See Md. Ann. Code, Elec. Law, §§ 13-201, et seq (Subtitle 2, Campaign Finance Organization and Activity). The “State Board of Elections Summary Guide: Maryland Candidacy & Campaign Finance” describes the requirements for establishing a committee, including a statement of organization and responsible officers (Chapter 3). The Guide is available from the State Board of Elections, here is a [link](#).

Before raising any contribution for office, an applicant candidate shall file Notice of Intent with the State Board of Elections on or before April 15 of the year of the election. The notice shall be filed on a form prescribed by the Board. (County Code, § 1-12-103(a)(2))

In addition, before raising contributions, an applicant candidate shall establish a publicly funded campaign account for the purpose of receiving eligible contributions and spending funds in accordance with the County Code. (County Code, § 1-12-103(a)(2))

No contributions made prior to filing the candidate’s Notice of Intent will be considered a qualifying contribution under the program. (County Code, § 1-12-103(a)(1)).

B. Contribution Requirements

All contributions, whether qualifying or eligible, shall be deposited into the applicant candidate’s publicly funded campaign account. (County Code, § 1-12-104(b)) Each qualifying contribution shall have a proof of receipt that will be submitted to the State Board of Elections at the time of requesting a public contribution. (County Code, § 1-12-104(b))

C. Contribution Types

1. Qualifying Contributions

A contribution is a qualifying contribution if it is an eligible contribution of at least \$5 but no more than \$250 in support of an applicant candidate or a certified candidate that is:

- (i) made by a County resident;
- (ii) made after the beginning of the qualifying period, but no later than the primary election or, if the candidate, advances, the general election; and
- (iii) acknowledged by a receipt that identifies the contributor’s name and residential address and signed by the contributor directly or by a digital signature using a method approved by the State Board of Elections.

A certified candidate may continue to collect qualifying contributions and receive a matching public contribution up to the primary election or, if the certified candidate advances, the general election. A qualifying contribution may not exceed \$250 from any individual in the aggregate during an election cycle.

(County Code, §§ 1-12-101(21); 1-12-106(c))

2. Eligible Contributions

An eligible contribution means an aggregate donation in a four-year election cycle of no more than \$250 from an individual, including an individual who does not reside in the County.

The only exception to the dollar limit of eligible contributions is a contribution or loan from the applicant candidate or the applicant candidate's spouse.

(County Code, §§ 1-12-101(13); 1-12-103(b))

3. Impermissible Contribution Sources

An applicant, certified, or participating candidate may not accept a private contribution from a group or organization, including a political action committee, a corporation, a labor organization, or a State or local central committee of a political party. (County Code, § 1-12-109(1))

Under State law, if a campaign finance entity receives a contribution from an anonymous source, the campaign finance entity may not use the contribution for any purpose, and shall remit the contribution to the Fair Campaign Financing Fund established under § 15-103 of the Election Law Article of the Maryland Code. (Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 13-239)

4. Form of Money Contributions

By State law, a contribution of money may be made only by check, credit card, cash (if the contribution does not exceed \$100 in an election cycle), or an electronic method that the State Board of Elections authorizes by regulation. (Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 13-234)

5. In-kind Contributions

A public financing candidate may accept in-kind donations if they meet the definition of eligible contributions. Like monetary contributions, in-kind donations made by an individual to a candidate over the course of a four-year election cycle, may not be worth more than \$250 in the aggregate.

In-kind contributions, such as property, goods, or services, are not eligible to receive public election matching dollars. (County Code, § 1-12-106(b)(2))

The maximum contribution amount allowed to a public financed candidate is \$250 either from contributions or in-kind contributions.

6. Loans to Candidates

A candidate who is an applicant for public campaign financing may not accept a loan from anyone other than the applicant candidate or the applicant candidate's spouse. An applicant candidate or applicant candidates' spouse may lend a combined total of up to \$12,000.00 to the candidate's

publicly funded campaign account during the four-year election cycle. (County Code, § 1-12-103(3)). However, loans or contributions from a candidate or the candidate's spouse to the candidate's campaign are not eligible to receive public election matching dollars. (County Code, § 1-12-106(b)(1))

D. Certification

The State Board of Elections shall certify an applicant candidate if the Board finds that the applicant candidate has received the required number of qualifying contributions and the required aggregate total dollars for the office no later than 10 business days after receiving the necessary submissions. The necessary submissions include a declaration from the applicant candidate agreeing to follow the regulations governing the use of a public contribution; a campaign finance report, and a certificate of candidacy for a covered office.

The campaign finance report shall include a list of each qualifying contribution received, a list of each expenditure made by the applicant candidate during the qualifying period, and the receipt associated with each contribution and expenditure. If the State Board of Elections certifies a candidate, the Board shall authorize the Controller to disburse a public contribution to the certified candidate's publicly funded campaign account.

A candidate may submit only one application for certification for any election. An applicant candidate may correct any mistakes in the application for certification within the earlier of ten (10) business days after receiving notice that the State Board of Elections denied the application; or the end of the qualifying period. After the timing for corrections has passed, the decision by the Board is final.

(County Code, § 1-12-105)

1. Qualification

To qualify as a certified candidate, applicants must gather a certain number and amount of contributions. An applicant candidate for County Executive shall collect from County residents at least 500 qualifying contributions and an aggregate total of at least \$40,000. An applicant candidate for Councilmember shall collect from County residents at least seventy-five (75) qualifying contributions; and an aggregate total of at least \$7,500. (County Code, § 1-12-104(a))

2. Receipt of Funds

An applicant candidate shall deposit all eligible contributions received into the applicant candidate's publicly funded campaign account. An applicant candidate shall deliver to the State Board of Elections a copy of a receipt for each qualifying contribution. (County Code, § 1-12-104(b))

3. Qualifying Period for Certification

An applicant candidate shall apply to the State Board of Elections for certification during the qualifying period, which is the period of time beginning on January 1 following the last election for

the covered office the candidate seeks and ending 45 days before the date of the primary election. (County Code, §§ 1-12-104(c); 1-12-101(22))

4. Restrictions on Candidates for Public Financing

A participating candidate may not be a member of a slate. (County Code, § 1-12-109(4))

An applicant, certified, or participating candidate may not accept a private contribution from a group or organization, including a political action committee, a corporation, a labor organization, or a State or local central committee of a political party. (County Code, § 1-12-109(1))

E. Distribution of Public Funds

1. Amount of Disbursements

The County Controller shall disburse a public contribution from the Fund to each certified candidate in a contested election only during the disbursement period.

The total public contribution payable to a certified candidate for County Executive may not exceed \$750,000 in an election cycle. For a certified candidate for County Executive, the matching dollars shall equal:

- \$6 for each dollar of a qualifying contribution received for the first \$50 of each qualifying contribution;
- \$4 for each dollar of a qualifying contribution received for the second \$50 of each qualifying contribution; and
- \$2 for each dollar of a qualifying contribution received for the third \$50 of each qualifying contribution.

The total public contribution payable to a certified candidate for County Council may not exceed \$125,000 in an election cycle. For a certified candidate for County Council, the matching dollars shall equal:

- \$4 for each dollar of a qualifying contribution received for the first \$50 of each qualifying contribution;
- \$3 for each dollar of a qualifying contribution received for the second \$50 of each qualifying contribution; and
- \$2 for each dollar of a qualifying contribution received for the third \$50 of each qualifying contribution.

(County Code, § 1-12-106)

2. Complaints Against the Receipt of Public Funding

A complaint alleging an impermissible receipt of funds by a participating candidate shall be filed with the State Board of Elections. (County Code, § 1-12-107 (b))

3. Annual Review of Fund Balance

On or before July 1 of the year preceding a primary election, the Controller shall determine if the amount in the Fund is sufficient to meet the maximum public contributions reasonably expected to be required during the next election cycle. If the Controller determines that the total amount available for disbursement in the Fund is insufficient to meet the allocations required by this section, the Controller shall reduce each public contribution to a certified candidate based on the ratio of the amount in the Fund to the maximum public contributions reasonably expected to be required. (County Code, § 1-12-106 (d))

4. Continued Disbursement to Certified Candidates

Within three (3) business days after the State Board of Elections certifies the results of the primary election, the Board shall authorize the Controller to continue to disburse the appropriate public contribution for the general election to each certified candidate who is certified to be on the ballot for a contested election in the general election. (County Code, § 1-12-106 (e))

5. Nomination by Petition

A certified candidate nominated by petition may receive a public contribution for a contested election in the general election if the candidate's nomination is certified by the State Board of Elections, and the candidate did not participate in a primary election. (County Code, § 1-12-106 (f))

6. Proof of Qualifying Contributions

A participating candidate shall submit a receipt for each qualifying contribution to the State Board of Elections to receive a public contribution. The Controller shall disburse the appropriate public contribution into a participating candidate's publicly funded campaign account within three business days after the State Board of Elections authorizes the public contribution. (County Code, § 1-12-106 (g))

7. General Election Contributions

A candidate may receive a public contribution during the general election for a qualifying contribution received during the primary election after the candidate has received the maximum public contribution for the primary election if the candidate is otherwise eligible to receive public contributions during the general election. (County Code, § 1-12-106 (h))

F. Use of Public Contribution

1. Allowable Uses of Money

A participating candidate may only use qualifying contributions and public contributions for expenses incurred for a primary or general election. (County Code, § 1-12-107 (a))

2. Impermissible Uses of Money

A participating candidate may not pay in advance for goods and or services to be used after certification with non-qualifying contributions received before applying for certification. (County Code, § 1-12-107 (a))

An applicant, certified, or participating candidate may not transfer funds to the candidate's publicly funded campaign account from any other campaign finance entity established for the candidate; or from the candidate's publicly funded campaign account to any other campaign finance entity. (County Code, § 1-12-109 (5))

3. Violations

A violation of the Public Campaign Financing Title of the Anne Arundel County Code is a Class B civil offense subject to a civil fine of \$1,000 for the first violation; \$5,000 for the second violation; and \$10,000 for the third or any subsequent violation. Each day a violation exists is a separate offense. (County Code, §§ 1-12-112; 9-2-101)

G. Return of Funding by Candidate

1. End of Primary or General Election

Within 30 days after the County Board certifies the results of the primary election, a participating candidate who is not certified to be on the ballot for the general election shall return any unspent funds in the candidate's publicly funded campaign account to the Controller for deposit into the Fund. (County Code, § 1-12-106(i))

Within 30 days after the State Board of Elections certifies the results of the general election, a participating candidate shall return any unspent funds in the candidate's publicly funded campaign account to the Controller for deposit into the Fund. (County Code, § 1-12-107 (d))

2. Repayment of Funds Mistakenly Disbursed

If the Controller mistakenly disburses a public contribution to a candidate greater than the candidate was entitled to receive, the candidate shall repay the funds mistakenly disbursed within five business days after being notified of the mistake. Any unspent funds returned by a candidate

to the Controller after an election may be used as a credit against any repayment required for public contributions mistakenly disbursed to the candidate. (County Code, § 1-12-106 (j))

3. Withdrawal

A participating candidate may withdraw an application for a public contribution any time before the public contribution is disbursed to the candidate's publicly funded campaign account.

A participating candidate may withdraw from participation, if the candidate files a statement with the State Board of Elections and repays the full amount of the public contributions received, together with the applicable interest established by regulation, to the Controller for deposit into the Fund.

(County Code, § 1-12-108)

Candidates may contact the Maryland State Board of Elections for the appropriate form for their withdrawal statement.

Section II

State Board of Elections Processes, Systems, and Requirements

To become certified in the Public Campaign Financing System, an applicant candidate shall be an Anne Arundel County resident currently running for a covered office. The County Executive and County Council are covered offices.

To begin the certification process, an applicant candidate shall complete the following steps in order to participate in the Anne Arundel County Public Campaign Financing Fund:

- Register the Public Finance Committee via the electronic filing system (MDCRIS) prior to April 15, 2022. Detailed instructions are included in Section II “How to Register a Public Financing Committee in MDCRIS.”
- File the Notice of Intent to Qualify with the State Board of Elections. The Notice of Intent to Qualify is automatically generated at the time of establishing a public financing committee. Detailed instructions are included in the next section.
- Open a publicly funded campaign account with a bank. The purpose of this account is to receive deposits of all contributions, matching public distributions, and to make expenditures. Any other campaign finance entity associated with the candidate must be closed or be made inactive during the period the candidate seeks public funds. Detailed instructions are included below in Section D, “Documents Needed to Open a Publicly Funded Campaign Bank Account.”

A. HOW TO REGISTER A PUBLIC FINANCING COMMITTEE IN THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN REPORTING INFORMATION SYSTEM (MDCRIS)

Register a publicly funded campaign committee in MDCRIS by following the below instructions:

- Go to the Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System at <https://campaignfinance.maryland.gov>
- Step 1: At the Home Page, select Register Committee.
- Step 2: On the following screen, select Public Financing Committee.
- Step 3: The next screen advises that one of each of the following will be needed to complete the registration online:
 1. Driver’s license number;
 2. The last 4 numbers of Social Security Number; or
 3. Voter Registration ID number.
- Step 4: Select “Continue.”
- Step 5: The following information will be entered on the next screen which is the information for the Notice of Intent. Once entered, check the box at the bottom of the screen to verify the information and then select “Continue.”
 1. Election Type;
 2. Election Year;
 3. Office Type;
 4. Office Sought;
 5. Jurisdiction; and
 6. Party Affiliation.

- Step 6: The next screen is establishment of the Public Financing committee. Enter the following information and select “Continue.”
 1. Committee Name;
 2. Candidate Information: Name, Address, Date of Birth, email address, Phone & Fax;
 3. Chairperson Information: Name, Address, Date of Birth, email address, Phone & Fax;
 4. Treasurer Information: Name, Address, Date of Birth, email address, Phone & Fax;
 5. Additional Contact Information (Optional);
 6. Publicly Funded Campaign Account Information;
 Note: During initial registration, please list bank account number as 9999999999 as temporary placeholder if not opened. Once the account is opened with a bank, this account number must be updated. Detailed instructions on Editing Campaign Information are located in Section IV

MDCRIS will generate the following documents for the committee to print after the submission:

- Notice of Intent
- Statement of Organization

B. STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE

After submission and review by the State Board, an email will be sent to the Candidate, Chairman, and Treasurer with a temporary password to access MDCRIS. The email will occur within 24 hours. If this email is not received within 24 hours, please verify that the email was not received in a spam folder. If not received, contact the State Board at 410-269-2880.

After receiving the email with the temporary password, each committee member will need to log into MDCRIS, with the assigned temporary password and create a unique personal password. The username to be used during log-in, is the email address listed in the Committee Registration.

C. HOW TO EDIT PUBLIC FINANCING COMMITTEE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

If at any time, the registration information should need to be edited, the committee may log into MDCRIS and follow these instructions:

- Step 1: From the menu on the left side of the screen, select **EDIT**.
- Step 2: This selection will allow you to edit reported information.
- Step 3: Once the information is edited, select the box on the bottom of the page that states “I certify these changes....” and select **SUBMIT**.

- Step 4: The system will save the edited information and state at the top of the page if the edited information was saved successfully.
- Step 5: Then select **OK**.

D. DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO OPEN A PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNT

To open a publicly funded campaign account, the following may be requested by the financial institution:

- Employer Identification Number File Form SS-4 with the Internal Revenue Service (Application for Employer Identification Number) <https://www.irs.gov/uac/form-ss-4-application-foremployer-identification-number-ein>. A personal social security number cannot be used.
- Resolution of Authority - Banks should accept the processed Statement of Organization to a newly formed public financing committee by the State Board. This document will be generated after completing registration in MDCRIS.
- Personal Identification.

As a reminder, once the committee's publicly funded campaign account is opened with the financial institution, this account number **MUST** be entered in MDCRIS to ensure timely deposits of publicly matched funds for the certified candidate.

E. RECEIPT OF CONTRIBUTIONS

A separate receipt must be obtained from the contributor with the contributor's name, residential address, and be signed by the contributor directly or by digital signature. Each receipt must have the contributor's name, residential address, and be signed by the contributor directly or by the digital signature method approved by the State Board. The signature card name must match the name of contributor to be considered a qualifying contribution.

A cancelled check does not qualify as a signed contribution receipt for matching Public Campaign Financing Fund purposes. The contributor must sign and provide a receipt as an additional document acknowledging the contribution to be a qualified contribution for public fund matching. A qualifying contribution made in bank check form must be printed with a name to match the name on the signed receipt of contribution.

- For example, a bank check has two names printed on the document, with an Anne Arundel County address, one of the names must be the name of the Anne Arundel County resident contributor.
- For an additional example, a bank check has two names printed on the document, with a Anne Arundel County address, the contributor can sign the document using the initials of one of the names printed on the check. (i.e. the name printed on the check is John A. Contributor and signed as J. A. Contributor.)

F. DIGITAL SIGNATURES

A contribution receipt from the contributor with a digital signature means a document provided to the State Board where the donor made an affirmative action acknowledging the contribution to a publicly financed candidate. This is more than checking a box but an action, a check mark, as evidence of the signature, will not be accepted by the contributor for matching funds. For example, evidence that the donor affirmatively typed in his or her initials or name at the time of making the contributions understanding the law and its requirements for making a contribution. The supporting documentation of a digital signature must include a record with a time stamp of when the action occurred. See Election Law Article §1-101(y) for a definition of an electronic signature.

G. CERTIFICATION OF CANDIDATE

Once the initial registration and contribution requirements are satisfied to become eligible for Anne Arundel County Public Campaign Financing, all documents to determine certification of a participating candidate must be filed with the State Board. This filing must be completed through the MDCRIS platform. The Board must certify an applicant candidate no later than 10 business days after receiving the following information:

- Receipts for the required number of qualifying contributions and required aggregate total dollar amount;
- A declaration from the candidate agreeing to follow the regulations governing the use of Public Campaign Financing Fund contributions (completed at the time of registration);
- A campaign finance report that includes:
 - each qualifying contribution received;
 - each expenditure made; and
 - all receipts associated with each contribution and expenditure; and
- A certificate of candidacy for a covered office.

NOTE: A CANDIDATE MAY SUBMIT ONLY ONE APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION FOR ANY ELECTION AND THE DECISION BY THE STATE BOARD AS TO CERTIFY A CANDIDATE IS FINAL.

H. CERTIFICATION IS ONLY REQUIRED ONCE

A candidate needs only to qualify once in order to become a certified candidate during an election cycle. A certified candidate who accepts a matching public contribution during a primary election becomes a participating candidate for the general election. Certification is not required for both the primary and the general election.

I. HOW TO FILE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS THROUGH MDCRIS

The MDCRIS can be accessed using any internet browser. The log in for the system is located at www.campaignfinance.maryland.gov. The system can be accessed by entering the users' report email as a username and the personal password created.

J. HOW TO ENTER A CONTRIBUTION

- From the left side menu located on the left side of the committee's home page, select ENTER CONTRIBUTIONS/TRANSFERS/IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.
- Select the appropriate filing period.
- Select the appropriate contribution type: (See Below)

CONTRIBUTION TYPE	PERMITTED/NOT PERMITTED
Loan from Candidate	PERMITTED
Loan from Candidate's Spouse	PERMITTED
Loan	NOT PERMITTED
Cash	PERMITTED
Check	PERMITTED
Coordinated In-Kind	NOT PERMITTED
Credit Card	PERMITTED
Electronic Fund Transfer	PERMITTED
In-kind	PERMITTED
Other Incomes	PERMITTED
Payroll Deduction	PERMITTED
Raffle of Wheel (Cash)	PERMITTED
Raffle or Wheel (Check)	PERMITTED
Raffle or Wheel (Credit Card)	PERMITTED
Refund/Rebate	PERMITTED
Ticket Purchase (Cash)	PERMITTED
Ticket Purchase (Check)	PERMITTED
Ticket Purchase (Credit Card)	PERMITTED
Transfer	NOT PERMITTED

- After the proper contribution type is selected, then select the appropriate contributor type. For each contribution type, there are various contributor types to select:
 - Individual- Matching Fund must be selected in order for the contributor type to have that contribution reviewed to be public fund matching. Any other selection will not be reviewed for matching.

CONTRIBUTOR'S INFORMATION - When entering the contributor's information, a search feature is available by typing the contributor's name in the SEARCH CONTRIBUTOR field. If the contributor is found in the committee's database, the information can be automatically entered into the contributor information fields by highlighting the name and then pressing ENTER. This will automatically display the contributor's information in the appropriate fields.

If the contributor's information is not available through the SEARCH CONTRIBUTOR'S field, manually enter the contributor's information as follows:

- Full Name;
- Address;
- County of residence (must be Anne Arundel County to be matched by Public Campaign Financing funding);

The employer and occupation information is not required as the allowable contribution amount in a publicly funded campaign cannot exceed \$250.00.

NOTE: AFTER ENTERING ALL THE CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION IN THE APPROPRIATE FIELDS, IF YOU CHANGE THE CONTRIBUTION TYPE, THE CONTRIBUTOR'S INFORMATION WILL BE DELETED.

- **CONTRIBUTION DETAILS**-The contribution details has to be entered manually. The following information will be entered for each contribution:
 - Contribution Date;
 - Contribution Amount;
 - Check Number;
 - If necessary, a comment box is located in the Contribution Details Sections.

Select SAVE at the bottom of the screen.

K. HOW TO ENTER AN EXPENDITURE

- From the left side menu located on the left side of the committee's home page, select ENTER EXPENDITURE AND OUTSTANDING OBLIGATIONS.
- Select the appropriate filing period.
- Select the appropriate Payee Type
- **PAYEE INFORMATION**-When entering the payee's information, a search feature is available by typing the payee's name in the SEARCH PAYEE field. If the payee is found in the database, the information can be automatically entered into the payee information fields by highlighting and selecting ENTER. This will automatically display the payee's information in the appropriate field.

If the payee's information is not available through the SEARCH feature, manually enter the payee's information as follows:

- Business/Organization
- Mailing Address
- **EXPENDITURE DETAILS**-The following information is required to be reported for each expenditure:
 - Expenditure Date

- Expense Category
 - Expense Purpose
 - Expense Amount
 - Outstanding Obligation
 - In-Kind Question
 - Payment Method
- VENDOR DETAILS- Vendor details is required if information is not the same as the payee- used for reimbursement entries:
 - Name of the Vendor.
 - Address.
 - Select SAVE.

L. HOW TO LINK RECEIPTS: A TWO STEP PROCESS

STEP ONE - UPLOADING RECEIPTS

- After scanning receipts as a pdf;
- Log into MDCRIS;
- From the left side menu located on the left side of the committee's home page, select Receipt Documents: STEP 1 (UPLOAD RECEIPT DOCUMENTS).
- The following screen will ask for the following information:
 - Filing period;
 - Transaction type (Contribution or Expenditure);
 - File Name (Name of file in which scanned receipt was saved);
- In the next field, the uploaded document will need to be located on the computer, highlighted and entered. This will place the file in the field to be uploaded to the program.
- Once uploaded, the program will advise that the file was uploaded successfully to MDCRIS.
- The uploaded receipts will list.

NOTE: IF A RECEIPT IS LINKED INCORRECTLY AND NEEDS TO BE DELETED, THE ENTRY CAN BE DELETED FROM THIS SCREEN. LOCATE THE INCORRECT RECEIPT AND SELECT THE RED X ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE SCREEN. THIS WILL DELETE THE RECEIPT.

STEP TWO - LINKING RECEIPT DOCUMENTS

After all receipts are uploaded to MDCRIS, the receipts have to be linked to the corresponding contribution. The instructions are as follows:

- From the left side menu located on the left side of the committee's home page, select Receipt Documents: STEP 2 (LINK RECEIPT DOCUMENTS).
- Select Filing Period;
- Select Transaction Type (Contribution/Expenditure);

- Select Contributor/Payee Name (This field has a search feature. Begin typing the contributor's name, once the name is found, highlight and select ENTER;
- Select TRANSACTION WITHOUT LINKED RECEIPT;
- OTHER INFORMATION FIELD is available if the contributions need to be filtered further.
- Select SEARCH.
- The program will list all contributions from the contributor on the screen.
- Select the corresponding contribution by checking the box on the left side of the listed contribution and select LINK.
- The program will then ask which document to link:
- Select the receipt name in the drop-down box that corresponds with the contribution and UPDATE LINK.
- The program will advise if the receipt linked properly.

M. HOW TO UNLINK RECEIPTS THROUGH MDCRIS

If a receipt was improperly linked to a contribution, a receipt can be unlinked by using the following instructions:

- Select Filing Period;
- Select Transaction Type (Contribution/Expenditure);
- Select Contributor/Payee Name (This field has a search feature. Begin typing the contributor's name, once the name is found, highlight and select ENTER;
- Select TRANSACTION WITH LINKED RECEIPT;
- A drop-down box will appear to select the name of the Linked Receipt Document;
- SEARCH;
- Select the contribution that it should be unlinked and select UNLINK;
- The program will advise if the receipt was unlinked successfully.

N. HOW TO FILE A REPORT THROUGH MDCRIS:

- From the left side menu located on the left side of the committee's home page, select EDIT/FILE PENDING TRANSACTION.
- Select SEARCH. (See Exhibit 1)

The next screen will display all transactions for the report being transmitted.

NOTE: FROM THIS SCREEN, EDITS ON ENTRIES CAN BE MADE AND/OR DUPLICATE OR INCORRECT CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE DELETED. DELETING AN ENTRY CAN BE ACHIEVED BY CHECKING THE BOX AT THE FAR-RIGHT END OF THE TRANSACTION ENTRY AND SELECTING DELETE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE. IF ALL ENTRIES ARE TO BE DELETED, SELECT THE SELECT ALL BOX AND THEN THE DELETE ALL BOX AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE. EDITING AN ENTRY CAN BE COMPLETED BY SELECTING THE BLUE DISK IMAGE AT THE FAR OF THE TRANSACTION ENTRY.

- Once the contributions and receipts are linked, select the SELECT ALL box or manually check each entry to be sent and select FILE ALL TO STATE.
- The program will inquire if you want to submit for public funds. SELECT OK or CANCEL.
- If OK, the program will ask to certify your public funding request. SELECT OK or CANCEL.
- The Cash Balance Screen. This screen asks for your account balance. The amount entered must match the balance in MDCRIS. If the balances do not match, start by adding to the committee's balance any uncashed but reported checks. A good practice, is to balance the MDCRIS account like a checking account.
- If the treasurer's password is not available, skip over verification of treasurer. DO NOT check the box that states that the treasurer has verified the entry. In addition, the password box must be empty. If it is empty, there will be no dots inside the box.
- Check bottom of screen that states the information is certified and select SUBMIT.
- Screen will then state that the report is transmitting.
- Once the report is finished transmitting the program will ask to view or print.

NOTE: IF THIS IS YOUR FINAL REPORT, PLEASE SELECT FILE CLOSEOUT REPORT. AS A REMINDER, A CAMPAIGN ACCOUNT MUST HAVE A \$0.00 BALANCE TO PROCEED WITH FINAL REPORT.

O. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All Reports must be filed using the MDCRIS. This program can be accessed using any internet browser, logging in at www.campaignfinance.maryland.gov. Reports for your committee can be filed up to 11:59 p.m. on your filing date deadline. Once your report has been submitted through MDCRIS, an email will be sent acknowledging your submission.

Please see the Maryland State Board of Elections website for the mandatory reporting schedule.

NOTE: THAT THE BEGINNING TRANSACTION DATE FOR ALL REPORTS IS THE DAY AFTER THE ENDING TRANSACTION DATE OF THE PRIOR REPORT. THIS INCLUDES FILING ANY OPTIONAL PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING FUND REPORTS. IF THE COMMITTEE IS NEW, THE BEGINNING TRANSACTION DATE IS THE DATE THE COMMITTEE WAS FORMED.

P. PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING FUND REPORTS

A public financing committee may file additional reports requesting public funds. These optional reports can only be filed on the first and third Tuesday of each month starting on a date after the distribution period set by the State Board, except if the required campaign finance report is due within 7 days prior to the first or third Tuesday.

Again, to receive publicly matched funding, the public financing committee must provide to the State Board, a campaign finance report that includes:

- each qualifying contribution received;
- each expenditure made by the candidate;
- all receipts associated with each contribution and expenditure.

Q. AUTHORITY LINES

Generally

Each item of campaign material must include an authority line, set apart from the other printing or content of the campaign material. The authority line must state name and address (unless the address is on file with the State Board) of the person who is responsible for the production and distribution of the campaign material. (Md. Code Ann., Elec. Law § 13-401 (West))

Campaign material includes signs, buttons, letters, tickets, solicitations, radio and television advertisements, websites, social media accounts, bumpers stickers and paraphernalia such as pencils, hats and t-shirts. The authority line for a public financing committee must contain:

- The name of the Treasurer; and
- The name of the campaign finance entity.

Example of authority line for a committee.
Committee to Elect Mary Smith, John Jones, Treasurer

If the material is too small to permit the inclusion of all required information in a legible manner, the material need only contain the name and title of the treasurer. The Office of the Attorney General has stated that almost no material is too small to permit inclusion of the complete authority line. Accordingly, every effort should be made to include the entire authority line.

Mailings

If there is more than one piece or item bearing the candidate's name in a mailing (for example, a brochure, a cover letter, a bumper sticker, a reproduction of a newspaper article), each piece must bear the authority line. An envelope that does not include the name of the candidate, the name of the campaign finance entity, or a campaign slogan is not required to contain an authority line.

Campaign Material on Electronic Media

Webpages and Social Media accounts:

Candidates and political committees that have a web page or social media account must place an authority line on the home or landing page of the website or social media account. An authority line is not required after each post or tweet. However, since each post or tweet is considered campaign material, the political committee is required to retain a copy of posts and tweets for at least one year.

Electronic Media Advertisement:

Electronic media advertisement by a political committee is required to have an authority line. If the electronic media advertisement is too small for an authority line then:

- The ad must allow the viewer to click on the ad and take the viewer to a home or landing page that displays the authority line; or
- Register the ad with the State Board.

Examples of electronic advertisement ads deemed too small:

- A paid text advertisement that is 200 characters or less in length
- A micro bar; or
- A button ad.

Copies of Campaign Material

Each political committee is responsible for publishing and distributing an item of campaign material and is required to keep a sample copy of the item for at least one year after the general election following the date when the item was published or distributed. For each item of campaign material disseminated through the internet, the sample copy may be either a paper facsimile copy or an electronic copy that can be produced as a paper facsimile upon request. These requirements do not apply to a billboard or a sign distributed by a political committee.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Anne Arundel County Public Campaign Finance Title

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/annearundel/latest/annearundelco_md/0-0-0-126925

Anne Arundel County Public Campaign Finance System Commission

<https://www.aacounty.org/public-campaign-finance-system-commission>

Staff email: ExJack24@aacounty.org

Anne Arundel County Office of Finance

<https://www.aacounty.org/finance>

Maryland State Board of Elections

http://www.elections.state.md.us/campaign_finance/County_public.html

Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System

www.campaignfinance.maryland.gov

Maryland Campaign Reporting Information System Help Desk

www.elections.state.md.us

Email: info.sbe@maryland.gov

Phone: 410-269-2880

Fax: 410-974-2019

Business Hours: 8:00AM - 5:00 PM, M – F

SAMPLE

CONTRIBUTION CARD

(The contributor should complete and review the card in its entirety.)

(Committee Name)

Contribution Type ☐ Check ☐ Cash ☐ Money Order ☐ Credit Card

Amount \$ _____

Contributor Name _____

Home Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

County of Residence: _____

Optional: Tel. _____ Email _____

Account Holder _____ Card Type _____

Account Number _____ Expiration Date _____

I understand that State law and County law require that a contribution be in my name and be from my own funds. I hereby affirm that this contribution is being made from my personal funds, is not being reimbursed in any manner, and is not being made as a loan; in addition, in the case of a credit card contribution, I also hereby affirm that this contribution is being made from my personal credit card account, billed to and paid by me for my personal use, and has no corporate or business affiliation.

Contributor's Signature

Date of Contribution

SAMPLE

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION FORM

(The contributor should complete and review the card in its entirety.)

(Committee Name)

CONTRIBUTOR'S INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

County of Residence: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION DETAILS

☐ Services/Facilities Provided Fair Market Value of Contribution: \$ _____

☐ Property Given Date Received: ____/____/____

☐ Expenses Paid Documentation Attached: ☐ Yes ☐ No

DESCRIPTION/EXPLANATION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE

(Please provide all details)

REMINDER: *The campaign committee shall explain and keep documentation showing how the fair market value of the in-kind contribution was determined. Attach supporting documentation to this form. This form and documentation may be requested during the election cycle and as part of the post-election audit.*