

# COMMISSIONER OF POLITICAL PRACTICES



## STATE OF MONTANA

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### Guidance for Candidates and Committees – Websites and Social Media

A website utilized by a candidate or political committee to advocate the success or defeat of a candidate or ballot issue is categorized as election material. Examples of such websites include a candidate or committee's personal website, as well as social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

The costs associated with the development and maintenance of a website or social media page should be reported in the same manner as costs associated with the production of brochures, bumper stickers, print ads, and other forms of advertising. Your website must contain the proper attribution. Additionally, any images or videos used on the website must be properly attributed to their source.

Reportable website expenses include:

- Purchasing a domain name
- Renewing a domain name
- Hosting a website
- Any development or maintenance costs associated with the website
- Assets purchased for use on the site
- Advertising

Creating and maintaining a Facebook page or Twitter account for use by a campaign or committee is not a reportable expense unless actual campaign funds are spent.

- For example, if Candidate John Smith creates and maintains a "John Smith for House" Facebook page, there is nothing to report until the candidate incurs an expense, such as "boosting" a post (i.e. paid promotion).
- Any paid promotion must contain the proper attribution.
- If a post is created and later "boosted," it must be edited to include the proper attribution, if it does not already.

More information regarding attribution of campaign materials can be found on the COPP website. See MCA 13-35-225.