

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions regarding the laws or rules governing campaign finance and practices, please contact the office of the Commissioner of Political Practices.

MONTANA COMMISSIONER OF POLITICAL PRACTICES



www.politicalpractices.mt.gov



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This guide is a summary to help you understand the campaign finance and practices laws. For complete requirements, see Montana Code Annotated Title 13, **Chapters** 35 and 37.

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CAMPAIGN FINANCE & PRACTICES

FOR CANDIDATES & POLITICAL COMMITTEES

★ **ATTRIBUTION** ★

**WHAT
YOU NEED
TO KNOW**

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What are election communications?

Election communications are communications that advocate the success or defeat of a candidate, political party or ballot issue. Those communications include, but are not limited to, TV or radio, newspapers, billboards, direct mail (brochures, postcards), posters, bumper stickers, yard signs, websites, paid internet and social media ads.

Electioneering communications that do not support or oppose a candidate or ballot issue may also be required to have the appropriate attribution. See COPP website for guidance.

What should the attribution say?

Political candidates must include the name and complete mailing address of the candidate or the candidate's campaign. Example:

Paid for by Frank Smith
P.O. Box 292
Helena, MT 59604

OR

Paid for by Smith for Senate
P.O. Box 292, Helena, MT 59604

The candidate's campaign treasurer may be included, but is not required.

Political committees, such as political action committees, political party committees, and ballot issue committees, must include the name of the committee treasurer, as well as the mailing address of either the committee or the committee treasurer. Example:

Paid for by Support our Schools
Linda Evans, treasurer
P.O. Box 350, Helena, MT 59604

A political committee that is a corporation or union – see 44.11.605(2)(B)(c), ARM.

What other information is required on the materials?

If a candidate's election is partisan, the communication must state the candidate's party affiliation or include the party symbol. The affiliation may be identified in the body of the communication or in the attribution.

Where should the attribution be placed on my campaign materials?

The communications materials must clearly and conspicuously state the attribution. In the case of a message on TV or radio, the attribution should state at the end of the message: Paid for by Smith for Senate, P. O. Box 292, Helena, MT 59604. For print media, the attribution should be placed at the bottom of the communication. On yard signs, billboards and other similar materials, the attribution must be placed on the front of the materials.

What if my campaign material is too small to include an attribution?

If the material is too small, it is necessary to file copy of the material with the Commissioner of Political Practices, with the required attribution information, at the time of the publication or dissemination of the communication material.

What if I have unintentionally omitted the attribution?

Upon discovery of the omission, the person financing the communication must notify the Commissioner of Political Practices within five (5) days and make every reasonable effort to bring the material into compliance. **No dissemination should be made of material that is not in compliance. (You must pull all TV, radio, newspaper ads, the posting of billboards, etc., until the materials have been corrected and placed again in the various media.)**

CLEAN CAMPAIGN ACT

The "Clean Campaign Act" of 2007 requires candidates and committees supporting candidates to provide other candidates with copies of certain campaign advertising that is intended to be distributed within the 10 days prior to an election. The copies must be provided at the time the material is published, broadcast, disseminated, or otherwise made available to the public. The law applies to any campaign advertising in print or broadcast media.

The requirement would not apply if:

1. Identical material was already published or broadcast, or
2. The material does not identify or mention the opposing candidate.

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEB BASED MATERIALS

All PAID social media boosts, promotions, sponsored by, ads, etc. on any platform must contain the appropriate attribution. This includes events, videos, images, post, promoted shared links, etc.

All PAID web ads, banners, etc. through Google, Yahoo, Bing or other network must contain the appropriate attribution.

A candidate or committee's website that required domain, hosting or other development expenditures requires the appropriate attribution.