



**GLOSSARY OF KEY
FEC TERMS
FOR
POLITICAL ACTION
COMMITTEES,
CANDIDATES, PARTIES
AND
CITIZENS**

About this Glossary

The *Glossary of Key FEC Terms* includes terms commonly used in the financing of federal elections in the United States. The glossary is compiled from a review of the informational materials made available from the Federal Election Commission.

Citations

Authorities primarily cited in this *Glossary* include the Federal Election Campaign Act, FEC regulations and FEC Advisory Opinions (AOs). All regulatory citations are to Title 11 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 100–116, 300, 400 and 9001–9039 (2008). Statutory citations are to Titles 2 and 26 of the United States Code (U.S.C.).

A

Act—*The Federal Election Campaign Act* of 1971, as amended (2 U.S.C. §§431–455). 100.18.

Administrative Expenses (of a nonconnected political committee and SSF)—The costs of operating a nonconnected committee or separate segregated fund, including salaries, rent and supplies, and other operating costs. 114.1(b).

Administrative Expenses (of a party)—Rent, utilities, office equipment, office supplies, routine building maintenance and other operating costs not attributable to a specific candidate. In addition, salaries and wages for state party employees who spend 25 percent or less of their compensated time in a given month on federal elections may be allocated as administrative expenses. 106.7(c)(1), 106.7(c)(2), (d)(1)(i), and 300.33(d)(i).

Administrative Fine (AF)—Civil money penalty assessed for certain late or nonfiled reports; monitoring is performed by OAR.

Advisory Opinions (AOs)—A formal ruling from the Commission regarding the legality of a specific activity proposed in an advisory opinion request. Part 112.

Advisory Opinion Request (AOR)—Any person involved in a specific factual situation affected by the Act (FECA) may request an AO. Upon receipt, the AOR is made available to the public.

Affiliated Committees—Committees and organizations that are considered one committee for purposes of the contribution limits. 110.3(a)(1). Affiliated committees include (1) All committees established or authorized by a candidate as part of his or her campaign for federal or nonfederal office; (2) all committees established, financed, maintained or controlled by the same person, group or organization. 100.5(g)(1) and (2); 110.3(a)(1)(i)

Agent (of a candidate)—An agent of a federal candidate or officeholder is any person who has actual authority, either express or implied, to engage in any of the following activities on behalf of the candidate or officeholder:

- To request or suggest that a communication be created, produced or distributed;
- To make or authorize a communication that meets one or more of the “content standards” for coordination;
- To request or suggest that any other person create, produce or distribute any communication;
- To be materially involved in decisions regarding the content, intended audience, means, media outlet, timing, frequency, size, prominence or duration of a communication;
- To provide material or information to assist another person in the creation, production or distribution of any communication;
- To make or direct a communication that is created, produced or distributed with the use of material or information derived from a substantial discussion about the communication with a different candidate; or
- To solicit, receive, direct, transfer or spend funds in connection with any election.

109.3(b) and 300.2(b)(3).

Agent (of a party)—An agent is any person who has actual authority, either expressed or implied, to engage in certain activities on behalf of a the committee.

- In the case of state, district and local party committees, these activities are 1) expending or disbursing any funds for federal election activity, 2) transferring or accepting transfers of funds for federal election activity, 3) engaging in joint fundraising activity if any part of the funds are to be used for federal election activity, or soliciting any funds for, or making or directing any donations to, any tax-exempt 501(c) organization or 527 organization that is not also a political committee, a party committee or an authorized

campaign committee.
300.2(b)(2).

- In the case of the national party committees, these activities are 1) soliciting, directing or receiving a contribution, donation or transfer of funds or, 2) soliciting any funds for, or making or directing contributions to, any tax-exempt 501(c) organization or 527 organization that is not also a political committee, a party committee or an authorized campaign committee. 300.2(b)(1).
- In the case of communications, for all party committees, the activities include requesting or suggesting that a communication be created, produced or distributed; creating, producing or distributing any communication at the request of a candidate; or being materially involved in the content or distribution of a communication. 109.3(a).

Allocation Account—A separate federal account into which funds from either a committee’s federal and nonfederal accounts, or from its federal and Levin accounts, are deposited solely to pay expenses that must be allocated. (A committee must have separate allocation accounts for its federal/nonfederal allocation and for its federal/Levin allocation.) 106.7(f) and 300.339 (d).

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office—The ADR Office was established to provide alternative methods for resolving enforcement complaints.

Authorized Committee—Any political committee, including the principal campaign committee, authorized in writing by a federal candidate to receive contributions and make expenditures on his or her behalf. 100.5(f)(1). Authorized committees are often called “candidate committees” or “campaign committees.”

B

Bank—A state bank; a federally chartered depository institution (including a national bank); or a

depository institution insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Administration. 100.82(a)-(d); 100.142(a)-(d) and 103.2.

BCRA—*Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act* of 2002. Signed into law by President Bush on March 27, 2002, BCRA contains many substantial and technical changes to the federal campaign finance law.

C

Campaign—A candidate for a federal office, his or her authorized agents, principal campaign committee and any other authorized committees.

Campaign Committee—Popular term for an authorized committee.

Candidate—An individual seeking election to federal office becomes a candidate when he or she or agents acting on his or her behalf raise contributions that exceed \$5,000 or make expenditures that exceed \$5,000. 100.3.

Candidate Committee—Popular term for an authorized committee.

Clear and Conspicuous—A disclaimer is clear and conspicuous if the print is not difficult to read and the placement cannot be easily overlooked. 110.11(c)(1).

Clearly Identified Candidate—A candidate is clearly identified when his or her name, nickname, photograph or drawing appears or when his or her identity is apparent by unambiguous reference. 100.17; 106.1(d).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)—A codification of the current general and permanent regulations of the various federal agencies. It is divided into 50 Titles which represent broad areas subject to regulatory action. Title 11 deals with federal elections.

COLA—Cost Of Living Adjustment. Commonly used in reference to the amount of increased as a result of changes in the CPI.

Collecting Agent—An organization that collects and transmits contributions to a separate segregated fund (SSF). A collecting agent may be the SSF's connected organization or an organization or committee affiliated with the SSF. 102.6(b)(l).

Commercial Vendor—Any person providing goods or services to a candidate or political committee whose usual and normal business involves the sale, rental, lease or provision of those goods or services. 116.1(c).

Connected Organization—An organization that uses its treasury funds to establish, administer or solicit contributions to a separate segregated fund. 100.6

Contribution—A payment, service or anything of value given to influence a federal election; or the payment by any person of compensation to another person if those services are rendered without charge to a political committee for any purpose. 100.52(a) and 100.54.

Coordinated—Made in cooperation, consultation or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, a candidate, a candidate's authorized committee or their agents, or a political party committee or its agents. 109.20.

Coordinated Communication—A communication that satisfies a three pronged test:

- The communication must be paid for by a person other than a federal candidate, authorized committee or a political party committee, or any agents of the aforementioned entities with whom the communication is coordinated. (See Party Coordinated Communication, below);
- One or more of the four content standards set forth in 109.21(c) must be satisfied; and
- One or more of the five conduct standards set forth in 109.21(d).
- A payment for a communication satisfying all three prongs is an in-kind contribution to the candidate or political party committee with which it was coordinated. 109.21.

Coordinated Party Expenditure—Commonly referred to as a “441a(d)” expenditure for its derivation from 2 U.S.C. §441a(d), this is a special type of expenditure that can be made only by a national or state political party committee in connection with the general election of a candidate. These expenditures are subject to a separate set of limits and do not count against the party’s normal contribution limits with respect to each candidate. 109.30 and 109.32-34.

CPI—Consumer Price Index. A measure of change over time in the price of goods and services typically purchased by urban consumers, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The expenditure limits for coordinated party expenditures and those for Presidential candidates are adjusted using the change in the CPI.

Corporation—Any separately incorporated entity (other than a political committee that has incorporated for liability purposes only). 100.134(l) and 114.12(a). The term corporation covers both for-profit and nonprofit corporations and includes nonstock corporations, incorporated membership organizations and incorporated cooperatives.

D

Date Contribution Is Made—The date the contributor relinquishes control over a contribution; in the case of an in-kind contribution, the date the goods or services are provided by the contributor. This date determines the election limit against which a contribution counts. 110.1(b)(6).

Date Contribution Is Received—The date the campaign (or campaign agent) takes possession of the contribution. This date is used for FEC reporting. 102.8(a).

Debt Settlement Plan (DSP)— After a terminating committee has reached agreements with its creditors the treasurer must file a debt settlement plan on FEC Form 8. Once the plan has been submitted to the Commission for review, the committee must postpone payment on the debt until the

Commission has completed the review. 116.7(a). Payments to creditors must be disclosed in the committee’s termination report.

Delegate—An individual who is or seeks to become a delegate to a national nominating convention or to a state or local convention, caucus or primary held to select delegates to a national nominating convention. 110.14(b)(l).

Delegate Committee—A group organized for the purpose of influencing the selection of one or more delegates. The term includes a group of delegates, a group of individuals seeking to become delegates and a group of individuals supporting delegates. 110.14(b)(2).

Direct—For purposes of part 300, to direct means to guide, directly or indirectly, a person who has expressed an intent to make a contribution, donation, transfer of funds or otherwise provide anything of value, by identifying a candidate, political committee or organization for the receipt of such funds or things of value. 300.2(n).

Direct Mail—A communication to the general public using either a commercial mailing firm or mailing lists purchased from a commercial vendor. 100.87(a), 100.89(a) 100.147(a) and 100.149(a).

Disbursement—Any purchase or payment made by a political committee or any other person that is subject to the Act. 300.2(d).

District or Local Party Committee— Any organization that is part of the official party structure, and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the political party at the level of city, county, neighborhood, ward, district precinct or any other subdivision of a state. 100.14(b).

Donation—A payment, gift, subscription, loan, advance, deposit or anything of value given to a person but does not include contributions. 300.2(e).

Draft Committee—A political committee established solely to draft an individual or to encourage him or her to become a candidate. 102.14(b)(2).

E

E&J—Explanation and Justification. Clarification of regulations published in FR notices for final rules.

Earmarked Contribution—A contribution that the contributor directs (either orally or in writing) to a clearly identified candidate or authorized committee through an intermediary or conduit. Earmarking may take the form of a designation, instruction or encumbrance, and it may be direct or indirect, express or implied. 100.6.

Election—Any one of several processes by which an individual seeks nomination for election, or election, to federal office. They include a primary election, including a caucus or convention that has authority to select a nominee; a general election; a runoff election; and a special election held to fill a vacant seat. 100.2.

Election Cycle—For purposes of aggregating contributions and expenditures for FEC reporting, the period beginning the day after the previous general election (for federal office) and ending on the day of the next general election. 100.3(b). The election cycle spans:

- Two years for House candidates;
- Four years for Presidential candidates; and
- Six years for Senate candidates.

Electioneering Communication—Any broadcast, cable or satellite communication that (1) refers to a clearly identified candidate for federal office; (2) is publicly distributed within certain time periods before an election and (3) is targeted to the relevant electorate. 100.29.

Election Year—Year in which there are regularly scheduled elections for federal office (even-numbered years).

Expenditure—A purchase or payment made for the purpose of influencing a federal election. A written agreement to make an expenditure is also considered an expenditure. 100.111 and 100.112.

Express Advocacy—Unambiguously advocating the election or defeat of a

clearly identified federal candidate. There are two ways that a communication can be defined as express advocacy (candidate advocacy): by use of certain “explicit words of advocacy of election or defeat” and by the “only reasonable interpretation” test. 100.22.

“Explicit words of advocacy of election or defeat”: The following words convey a message of express advocacy (candidate advocacy):

- “Vote for the President,” “re-elect your Congressman,” “support the Democratic nominee,” “cast your ballot for the Republican challenger for the U.S. Senate in Georgia,” “Smith for Congress,” “Bill McKay in ‘16”;
- Words urging action with respect to candidates associated with a particular issue, e.g., “vote Pro-Life”/ “vote Pro-Choice,” when accompanied by names or photographs of candidates identified as either supporting or opposing the issue;
- “Defeat” accompanied by the name or photograph of the opposed candidate or “reject the incumbent”; and
- Campaign slogan(s) or word(s), e.g., on posters, bumper stickers and advertisements, that in context can have no other reasonable meaning than to support or oppose a clearly identified candidate, for example, “Nixon’s the One,” “Carter ‘76,” “Reagan/Bush.” 100.22(a).

“Only Reasonable Interpretation” Test: In the absence of such “explicit words of advocacy of election or defeat,” express advocacy (candidate advocacy) is found in a communication that, when taken as a whole and with limited reference to external events, can only be interpreted by a “reasonable person” as advocating the election or defeat of one or more clearly identified candidate(s). 100.22(b).

F

Facilitation—Facilitation is the use of corporate or labor organization resources or facilities to engage in fundraising activities in connection with

any federal election (other than raising funds for the organization's separate segregated fund). Facilitation results in a prohibited contribution to the committee that benefits from the activity. 114.2(f)(l).

FEC—Federal Election Commission.

FECA—*The Federal Election Campaign Act* of 1971, as amended (2 U.S.C. §§431–455). 100.18. Sometimes referred to as “the Act.”

FEC Identification Number—Number assigned to a committee upon registration with the FEC. Used for identification purposes with the FEC only, this number is not a taxpayer identification number.

Federal Account—An account established for activity in connection with any federal election. 102.5(a)(l)(i).

Federal Election—An election for federal office.

Federal Election Activity (FEC)—Activity by entities, including state, district and local party committees, which may be paid for with federal or – in the case of the first two types – a combination of federal and Levin funds. The four types of federal election activity are as follows: 1) Voter registration activity during the period 120 days before a primary or general election and ending on election day itself; 2) Voter identification, get-out-the-vote and generic campaign activity conducted in connection with an election in which a federal candidate appears on the ballot; 3) A public communication that refers to a clearly identified candidate for federal office and that promotes, attacks, supports or opposes any candidate for federal office. The communication does not need to expressly advocate the election or defeat of the federal candidate to qualify as federal election activity; and 4) Services provided during a month by an employee of a state, district or local party committee who spends more than 25 percent of his or her compensated time during that month on activities in connection with a federal election including FEA. 100.24(b).

Federal Funds—Funds that comply with the limits, prohibitions and reporting requirements of federal law. 300.2(g). Corporations, unions, foreign nationals,

national banks and federal government contractors are prohibited from making contributions or expenditures in connection with a federal election. 2 U.S.C. §§ 441b, 441c and 441e. See also 2 U.S.C. §441f prohibiting contributions in the name of another. Permissible sources of funds for contributions to federal political committees include individuals and entities that are not otherwise prohibited.

Federal Office—U.S. Presidency and Vice Presidency and seats in the U.S. Congress: Senator, Representative, Delegate (District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, Virgin Islands and Northern Mariana Islands) and Resident Commissioner (Puerto Rico). 100.4.

Federal Officeholder—An individual elected to or serving in the office of President or Vice President of the United States, or a Senator or Representative in, or a Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, to the Congress of the United States. 113.1(c) and 300.2(o).

FIFO—First In, First Out. A reasonable accounting method that states the first items entered into inventory are considered the first items out.

FOIA—Freedom of Information Act. Regulations concerning FEC policy and procedures in regard to FOIA are contained in 11 CFR Part 4. The Associate General Counsel for the General Law and Advice Division is the FOIA Officer for the FEC.

Foreign National—(1) an individual who is not a citizen of the United States or a national of the United States and has not been lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence, as defined in 8 U.S.C. §1101(a)(20); or (2) a foreign principal, as defined in 22 U.S.C. §611(b). 110.20(a)(3).

FR—*Federal Register*. Published daily to keep the CFR updated with the latest information. The FEC generally submits for publication Sunshine Notices as to the time, place and agenda of Commission meetings, notices of proposed rulemaking, transmittal of regulations to Congress and other general notices in the *Federal Register*. These notices are identified by number.

G

GELAC— General Election Legal and Accounting Compliance Fund. Fund used by major party candidates for the office of the President or Vice President of the United States, solely for legal and accounting services to ensure compliance with federal law.

Generic Campaign Activity—A type of federal election activity, as distinguished from voter drive activity. Generic campaign activity is a public communication that promotes or opposes a political party and does not promote or oppose a clearly identified candidate or a nonfederal candidate. 100.25

Generic Voter Drive—Voter identification, voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, or any other activities that urge the general public to register, vote or support candidates of a particular party or associated with a particular issue, without mentioning a specific candidate. 106.6(b)(1)(iii).

Get-Out-The-Vote Activity (GOTV)—In regard to federal election activity, this means contacting registered voters by telephone, in person or by other individualized means to assist them in voting. This activity includes, but is not limited to, providing individual voters with information such as the date of the election, when and where polling places are open, the location of the polling places and transporting or offering to transport voters to polling places. 100.24(a)(3).

Government Contractor—A person who enters into contract, or is bidding on such a contract, with any agency or department of the United States government and is paid, or is to be paid, for services, material, equipment, supplies, land or buildings with funds appropriated by Congress. 115.1.

H

HLOGA—*The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007*, Pub. Law No. 110-81, 121 Stat. 735, which amended parts of the FECA.

Host Committee—Any local organization (e.g., any local civic association, business league, chamber of commerce, real estate board, board of trade or convention bureau):

- That represents a state or city with respect to the convention;
- That is not organized for profit;
- Whose net earnings do not strengthen the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; and
- That has as its principal objective the encouragement of commerce in, and the promotion of a favorable image of, the convention city. 9008.51 and 9008.52(a).

I

Identification—For purposes of recordkeeping and reporting, a person's full name and address and, in the case of an individual, his or her occupation (principal job title or position) and employer (organization or person by whom an individual is employed) as well. 100.12, 100.20 and 100.21.

Identification Number—See FEC Identification Number.

Independent Expenditure—An expenditure for a communication which expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate and which is not made in cooperation, consultation or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, any candidate, or his or her authorized committees or agents, or a political party committee or its agents. 100.16.

In-Kind Contribution—A contribution of goods, services or property offered free or at less than the usual and normal charge. 100.52(d).

J

Joint Contribution—A contribution made by more than one person on a single check or other written instrument. 110.1(k)(1).

Joint Fundraising—Fundraising conducted jointly by a political committee and one or more other committees.

L

Labor Organization—An organization, agency or employee representative committee or plan in which employees participate and which deals with employers on grievances, labor disputes, wages, hours of employment or working conditions. 114.1(d).

Leadership PAC—A political committee that is directly or indirectly established, financed, maintained or controlled by a federal candidate or officeholder which is neither an authorized committee nor affiliated with the candidate's authorized committee. 2 U.S.C. §434(i)(8)(B).

Levin Funds—A category of funds raised by state, district and local party committees that may be spent for certain federal election activities. Levin funds are donations from sources ordinarily prohibited by federal law but permitted by state law.

LIFO—Last In, First Out. An accounting method that states the last items entered into inventory are considered the first items out.

Limited Liability Company (LLC)—A limited liability company (LLC) is treated as either a corporation or a partnership.

An LLC is treated as a corporation if:

- It has chosen to file, under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules, as a corporation; or
- It has publicly traded shares. 110.1(g)(3).
-

An LLC is treated as a partnership if:

- It has chosen to file, under IRS rules, as a partnership; or
- It has made no choice, under IRS rules, as to whether it is a corporation or a partnership. 110.1(g)(2).

Local or District Party Committee—A political committee responsible for the day-to-day operation of a political party at a level lower than the state level (e.g. city, county, ward). 100.14(b).

Local Party Organization—Same as Local Party Committee except that a local party organization is not a political committee.

M

Major Party—A political party whose candidate in the preceding Presidential election received, as the candidate of such party, 25 percent or more of the popular vote. 9002.6; 9008.2(c).

Mass Mailing—A mailing by U.S mail or facsimile of more than 500 pieces of mail matter of an identical or substantially similar nature within any 30-day period. This does not include e-mail or other Internet communications. 100.27. See Public Communication.

Member—With respect to a labor organization, a trade association, a cooperative or other incorporated membership organization, a member is an individual or other entity that:

- Satisfies the requirements for membership in a membership organization;
- Affirmatively accepts the organization's invitation to become a member; and
- Maintains a long-term and continuous bond with the organization by:
 - Having a significant financial attachment, such as a significant investment or ownership stake;
 - Paying annual dues; or
 - Having direct participatory rights in the governance of the organization.

Membership Organization—A labor organization or a trade association, cooperative or other incorporated membership organization that:

- Is composed of members;
- Expressly states the qualifications for membership in its articles and by-laws;
- Makes its articles, by-laws and other organizational documents available to its members;
- Expressly seeks members;
- Acknowledges the acceptance of membership, such as by sending membership cards to new members or including them on a membership newsletter list; and
- Is not organized primarily for the purpose of influencing a federal election.

100.8(b)(4)(iv)(A) and 114.1(e).

Memo Entry—Supplemental information on a reporting schedule. The dollar amount in a memo entry is not incorporated into the total figure.

Minor Party—A political party whose candidate in the preceding Presidential election received, as the candidate of such party, 5 percent or more, but less than 25 percent, of the popular vote. 9002.7; 9008.2(d).

Multicandidate Committee—A political committee that has been registered at least 6 months, has more than 50 contributors and, with the exception of state party committees, has made contributions to at least 5 candidates for federal office. 100.5(e)(3).

Matter Under Review (MUR)—An FEC enforcement action, initiated by a sworn complaint or by an internal administrative action.

N

National Committee—An organization that, by virtue of the bylaws of a political party, is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the political party at the national level, as determined by the Commission. 100.13.

National Party Committees—Political committees established and maintained by a national political party. A party's

national committee, House campaign committee and Senate campaign committee are defined as national party committees. 110.1(c)(2).

Negative Entry—An amount entered on a reporting schedule that is subtracted from the total balance for that schedule. Parentheses around a number indicate a negative entry.

Net Debts Outstanding—The total of a campaign's unpaid debts incurred with respect to an election plus estimated costs to liquidate the debts minus cash on hand and receivables. 110.1(b)(3)(ii).

New Party—A political party that is neither a major party nor a minor party. 9002.8; 9008.2(f).

NOCO—Net Outstanding Campaign Obligations.

Nonconnected Committee—Any committee which conducts activities in connection with an election but which is not established or administered by a candidate, political party, corporation or labor organization. 106.6(a).

Nonelection Year—A year in which there is no regularly scheduled federal election (odd-numbered years).

Nonfederal Account—An account established solely for activity in connection with nonfederal (state and local) elections. 102.5(a)(l)(i).

Nonfederal Election—An election for state or local office.

Nonfederal Funds—Funds that are not subject to the limitations or prohibitions of the Act. 300.2(k).

Nonmajor Party—A political committee that is either a minor party or a new party.

Nonpartisan, Tax-Exempt Organization—An organization staging candidate debates which is exempt from federal taxation under 26 U.S.C. §501(c)(3) or (4) and which does not support, endorse or oppose candidates or political parties. 110.13(a)(1).

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)—Alerts the public to revisions/additions to regulations.

O

Ongoing Committee—A political committee that has not terminated and does not qualify as a terminating committee. 116.1(b).

Operating Expenditures—A committee's day-to-day expenditures for items such as rent, overhead, administration, personnel, equipment, travel, advertising and fundraising. 106.1(c).

Opposing Candidate—In the primary election, another candidate seeking the nomination of the same political party for election to the same office that the candidate is seeking. In the general election, another candidate seeking election to the same office that the candidate is seeking. 400.3.

P

PAC—Acronym for political action committee; see definition below.

Party Committee—A political committee that represents a political party and is part of the official party structure at the national, state or local level. 100.5(e)(4).

Party Coordinated Communication—A communication that satisfies a similar three-pronged test as for a "coordinated communication" (see above), except that the first prong requires that the communication be paid for by a political party committee or its agents. A payment for a communication satisfying all three prongs is either an in-kind contribution to, or a "coordinated party expenditure" on behalf of, the candidate with whom it was coordinated. 109.37.

Party Organization—Same as Party Committee except that a party organization is not a political committee.

PCTB—Probable Cause to Believe. A term used in enforcement matters. If the Commission determines that there is "probable cause to believe" the law has been violated, the General Counsel attempts (for at least 30 days but not more than 90) to correct or prevent the

violation through informal methods of conciliation, i.e., by entering into a written conciliation agreement with the respondent.

Permissible Funds—Contributions that do not violate the Act's limits or prohibitions. See Federal Funds.

Person—An individual, partnership or any group of persons (such as a political committee, corporation or labor organization), not including the federal government. 100.10.

Personal Funds of Candidate—Generally, assets to which an individual had at the time he or she became a candidate:

- Legal right of access to or control over; and either
- Legal and rightful title; or
- An equitable interest.

Personal funds also includes certain categories of income and other funds received by the candidate. 100.33.

Personal Use of Campaign Funds—Any use of funds in a campaign account of a candidate (or former candidate) to pay for an expense (of any person) that would exist irrespective of the candidate's campaign or responsibilities as a federal officeholder. 113.1(g).

Political Action Committee (PAC)—Popular term for a political committee that is neither a party committee nor an authorized committee of a candidate. PACs sponsored by a corporation or labor organization are called separate segregated funds; PACs without a corporate or labor sponsor are called nonconnected PACs.

Political Committee—A group that meets one of the following conditions:

- An authorized committee of a candidate (see definition of candidate).
- A state party committee or nonparty committee, club, association or other group of persons that receives contributions or makes expenditures, either of which aggregate over \$1,000 during a calendar year.
- A local unit of a political party (except a state party committee) that: (1) receives contributions

- aggregating over \$5,000 during a calendar year; (2) makes contributions or expenditures either of which aggregate over \$1,000 during a calendar year; or (3) makes payments aggregating over \$5,000 during a calendar year for certain activities which are exempt from the definitions of contribution and expenditure (100.80, 100.87 and 100.89; 100.140, 100.147 and 100.149).
- Any separate segregated fund upon its establishment. 100.5.

Political Party—An organization that nominates or selects a candidate for election to federal office whose name appears on the election ballot as the candidate of the organization. 100.15.

Principal Campaign Committee (PCC)—An authorized committee designated by a candidate as the principal committee to raise contributions and make expenditures for his or her campaign for a federal office. 100.5(e)(1).

Prohibited Sources—Those entities that are prohibited from making contributions or expenditures in connection with, or for the purpose of influencing, a federal election. 110.4, 110.20, 114.2 and 115.2.

Public Communication—A communication by means of any broadcast, cable or satellite communication, newspaper, magazine, outdoor advertising facility, mass mailing (500 pieces of mail of substantially similar nature within a 30 day period) or telephone bank (500 calls of a substantially similar nature within a 30 day period), but not communications over the Internet (except for those placed for a fee on another person's web site) 100.26, 100.27 and 100.28.

R

Reattributed Contribution—The portion of an excessive contribution that has been attributed in writing to another contributor and signed by both contributors. 110.1(k)(3)(ii).

Receipt—Anything of value (money, goods, services or property) received by a political committee.

Redesignated Contribution—The portion of a contribution (usually excessive) that has been designated by the contributor, in writing, to an election other than the one for which the funds were originally given. 110.1(b)(5).

Refunded Contribution—A contribution is refunded when the recipient committee first deposits the contribution and later sends the contributor a check for the entire amount (or a portion) of the contribution. 103.3(b). Compare with definition of returned contribution.

RFAI—Request For Additional Information. Sent by the FEC to committees when reports contain apparent discrepancies, errors or surface violations. The committee is requested to respond in writing within 15 days.

Restricted Class—The executive and administrative personnel, members and stockholders (and the families of each) of a corporation or labor organization. 114.3(a); 114.5(g); 114.7(a) and (h); and 114.8(c), (h) and (i).

Returned Contribution—A contribution is returned when the recipient committee sends the original check (or other negotiable instrument) back to the contributor, without depositing it. 103.3(a). Compare with definition of refunded contribution.

RTB—Reason To Believe. A term used in enforcement matters. The Commission determines based on the facts before it whether there is reason to believe a violation of the law has occurred.

Runoff Election—An election held after a primary or a general election when no candidate wins the previous election. 100.2(d).

S

Separate Segregated Fund (SSF)—A political committee established by a corporation or labor organization, popularly called a corporate or labor PAC. 114.1(a)(2)(iii).

Solicit—For the purposes of part 300, to solicit means to ask, request or recommend, explicitly or implicitly, that another person make a contribution, donation, transfer of funds or otherwise provide anything of value. 300.2(m).

Special Election—A primary, general or runoff election that is not a regularly scheduled election and that is held to fill a vacant seat in the House of Representatives or the Senate. 100.2(f).

State Party Committee—A committee which, by virtue of the bylaws of a political party or the operation of state law, is part of the official party structure and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the party at the state level, including an entity that is directly or indirectly established, financed, maintained or controlled by that organization, as determined by the Commission. 100.14(a).

Stockholder—A person who has vested beneficial interest in stock, the power to direct how that stock is voted (if it is voting stock) and the right to receive dividends. 114.1(h).

Subordinate Party Committee—Any organization that is at the level of city, county, neighborhood, ward, district, precinct or any subdivision of a state, or any organization under the direction or control of the state committee, and is directly or indirectly established, financed, maintained or controlled by the state, district or local committee. 100.14(c).

T

Telephone Bank—More than 500 telephone calls of an identical or substantially similar nature within any 30-day period. This does not include e-mail or other Internet communications

transmitted over telephone lines. 100.28. See Public Communication.

Terminating Committee—A political committee that is winding down its activities in preparation for filing a termination report. A terminating committee has ceased to receive contributions or make expenditures (other than for debt retirement purposes or winding down costs). 116.1(a).

Trade Association—A membership organization consisting of persons engaged in a similar or related line of commerce. A trade association is organized to promote and improve business conditions and does not engage in regular business for profit; the net earnings of a trade association do not accrue to the benefit of any member. 114.8(a).

Trade Association Federation—An organization representing trade associations involved in the same or allied line of commerce. 114.8(g).

Transfer—A payment of one committee to an affiliated committee. 102.6(a).

U

Unauthorized Committee—A political committee not authorized in writing by any candidate to solicit or receive contributions or to make expenditures on behalf of a candidate. 100.5(e)(2).

Unauthorized Single-Candidate Committee—A political committee not authorized by any candidate, which makes contributions or expenditures on behalf of only one candidate. 100.5(e)(2) and (f)(2).

USC—United State Code. *The Federal Election Campaign Act* of 1971, as amended, is codified in Titles 2 and 26 of the United States Code.

Usual and Normal Charge—With regard to goods provided to a political committee, the term refers to the price of those goods in the market from which they ordinarily would have been purchased at the time they were provided. With regard to services, the term refers to the hourly or piecework charge for the services at a

commercially reasonable rate prevailing at the time the services were rendered. 100.52(d)(2).

V

VAP—Voting Age Population. Resident population of the United States, 18 years and over. State voting age populations (as of July 1 of each year) are estimated by the Department of Commerce and certified for use by the Commission. Expenditure limits for coordinated party expenditures and for Presidential candidates accepting public financing are determined using the VAP.

Voter Drive Activity—Voter identification, voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, or any other activities that urge the general public to register or vote, or that promote or oppose a political party, without promoting any federal or nonfederal candidate, that do not qualify as FEA. This is a category of allocable activity for mixed federal/nonfederal party activity sometimes also referred to as a “generic voter drive.” 106.7(c)(5).

Voter Identification—With regard to federal election activity, this means acquiring information about potential voters, including, but not limited to, obtaining voter lists and creating or enhancing voter lists by verifying or adding information about the voters’ likelihood of voting in an upcoming election or voting for specific candidates. 100.24(a)(4).

Voter Registration Activity—In regard to federal election activity, this means contacting individuals by telephone, in person or by other individualized means in order to assist them in registering to vote. This activity includes, but is not limited to, printing and distributing registration and voting information, providing individuals with registration forms and assisting individuals with completing and filing these forms. 100.24(a)(2).

Getting More Help

Advisory Opinions

Any person or group requiring a clarification of the election law with regard to an activity that they plan to undertake may request an advisory opinion from the FEC. Individuals and organizations involved in the activity specifically addressed in an AO (or in an activity that is materially indistinguishable) may rely on the opinion for legal guidance. Advisory opinion requests may be addressed to the Office of General Counsel at:

Federal Election Commission
999 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20463

Toll-Free Line

Many questions about federal campaign finance law do not require formal advisory opinions. Such questions may be addressed to trained FEC staff members by calling the FEC’s 800 number, below. Persons in the Washington, DC, area may call locally. The numbers are:

800/424-9530
202/694-1100
202/219-3336 (for the hearing impaired)

Hearing-impaired persons may reverse the charges when calling long distance.

Free Publications

The FEC publishes a series of brochures and other publications on several aspects of campaign financing and election law. Subscriptions to the Commission’s newsletter, the *Record*, are available free of charge. Write or call the FEC for a list of publications

currently available, or visit the FEC web site.

Faxline

The FEC maintains a free automated fax-on-demand service, Faxline. Documents available on Faxline include selected parts of Title 2 of the U.S. Code, FEC regulations, Advisory Opinions (1990-present), forms and schedules, brochures and other documents regarding campaign finance. To receive documents from the Faxline, call 202/501-3413 and follow the voice prompts.

World Wide Web

Visit the FEC's home page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.fec.gov>. Information on the site includes campaign finance statistical data; committee reports for candidates, parties and PACs; FEC news releases; reporting dates; forms; the *Record* newsletter; brochures and Campaign Guides.

The FEC web site also offers the capability to search the Commission's campaign finance database online. The web site also offers full text searches of Commission Advisory Opinions (AOs) issued since 1977. Searches can be made using the name of a requestor or other information about AOs. In addition, the FEC's Enforcement Query System allows users to search closed enforcement cases by such search criteria as respondent name or case number.

This publication provides guidance on certain aspects of federal campaign finance law. This publication is not intended to replace the law or to change its meaning, nor does this publication create or confer any rights for or on any person or bind the Federal Election Commission (Commission) or the public. The reader is encouraged also to consult the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended (2 U.S.C. 431 et seq.), Commission regulations (Title 11 of the Code of Federal Regulations), Commission advisory opinions, and applicable court decisions. For further information, please contact:

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