

# IOWA ETHICS AND CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE BOARD

An Independent Agency of the Executive Branch

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**BOARD MEMBERS:**  
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Geraldine Leinen, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair  
Gwendolyn Boeke, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair  
Mark McCormick  
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**TO: LOCAL CANDIDATES, PARTIES, BALLOT ISSUE PACS**  
**FROM: CHARLIE SMITHSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & LEGAL COUNSEL**  
**Re: CAMPAIGN FINANCE ISSUES**

The campaign laws in Iowa Code chapter 56 apply to candidates for local office, political committees (PAC) involved in campaigns for candidates or ballot issues, and party committees that advocate for or against local candidates. The Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board administers the campaign laws. Please be aware of the following "major" items:

1. Questions by local candidates and PACs should be directed to Sue Brown at (515) 281-4104 or by email at [sue.brown@iecdb.state.ia.us](mailto:sue.brown@iecdb.state.ia.us). County central committees should contact Sandy Reier at (515) 281-4411 or by email at [sandy.reier@iecdb.state.ia.us](mailto:sandy.reier@iecdb.state.ia.us). You may also contact Charlie Smithson at (515) 281-3489 or by email at [charlie.smithson@iecdb.state.ia.us](mailto:charlie.smithson@iecdb.state.ia.us). The Board's Web site allows you to view and download the laws, rules, advisory opinions, educational brochures, and campaign disclosure forms at [www.state.ia.us/ethics](http://www.state.ia.us/ethics). The Board's address is 514 E. Locust, Suite 104, Des Moines, Iowa 50309 and the fax is (515) 281-3701.
2. The first form new committees file is the statement of organization (DR-1). The form must be filed within 10 days of receiving contributions, making expenditures, or incurring debts in excess of \$750. Under the campaign laws a debt is incurred when an item is ordered.
3. Know when your committee must file disclosure reports under Iowa Code section 56.6. Make sure reports are filed on or before the due date as civil penalties are assessed for late reports. Starting January 1, 2003, campaign finance reports are to be filed with the Board and the Board will then make copies available to your county auditor. If you are interested in filing your reports via the Internet, please contact Sue Brown.
4. Remember that if an organization gives your committee in excess of \$750, that organization must register as a temporary PAC. Please make sure to have organizations that contribute in excess of \$750 to your committee contact the Board immediately for assistance.
5. Do not accept contributions from corporations, insurance companies, banks, credit unions, or savings and loans institutions as prohibited by Iowa Code section 56.15 (NOTE: this prohibition does not apply to ballot issue PACs, but these committees would be subject to the reporting requirements set out in #4 above).
6. Put the words "paid for by" and the name of who paid for the material on all political materials pursuant to Iowa Code section 56.14. A "paid for by" attribution must be placed even if a committee has not yet been registered by filing a statement of organization. In these situations, the "paid for by" must include the name and address of the person paying for the material. If the material is paid for by a registered committee, only the name of the committee needs to be placed after the words "paid for by." Yard signs and other small items are exempt.
7. Make sure to review the campaign laws in Chapter 56 and the Board's rules on campaigning in 351 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 4.