



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN & POLITICAL FINANCE

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June 3, 2013
AO-13-03

Michael Woronka
50 Hill Street
Methuen, MA 01844

Re: Reporting requirements of PAC organized to influence multiple local candidate elections

Dear Mr. Woronka:

This letter is in response to your recent request for an advisory opinion regarding the organization of a political committee primarily to influence the election of candidates for municipal office in up to 15 different towns and cities.

Questions

1. *Where would the committee organize and file reports?*

The reports, like reports filed by PACs organized to support or oppose candidates for state office, must be filed with OCPF.

The second paragraph of Section 18 of the campaign finance law, M.G.L. c. 55, generally defines where committees organized to support or oppose more than one municipal candidate must file. The statute defines the reporting schedule for committees organized to aid or promote "the success or defeat of one or more candidates... *in a city or town* preliminary, primary, general or special election." The section applies to PACs organized to support or oppose candidates in one municipality, stating that such committees file with the local election official. Section 18 does not, however, contemplate PACs organized to support candidates in multiple municipalities.

Because Section 18 does not define where such PACs must file reports, a separate catch-all provision of the campaign finance law, M.G.L. c. 55, § 24, applies. Section 24 requires "all other statements or reports" to be filed with OCPF, stating that with the exception of reports relating to regional districts, "*all other statements or reports*" must be filed with OCPF. Accordingly, a PAC organized to support or oppose candidates in multiple cities or towns must file its Statement of Organization and campaign finance reports with OCPF. The reports must be filed electronically on three occasions during election years (eight days before the state primary, eight days before the state election, and on or before January 20 of the following year). During odd-numbered years, the PAC must file mid-year reports by July 20 and year-end reports by January 20. I have attached the office's *Campaign Finance Guide: Political Action Committees and People's Committees*, for information.

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2. *Would the committee be required to include "Political Action Committee" in its formal name?*

Yes. This is required by M.G.L. c. 55, s. 5, which specifies that a PAC's Statement of Organization shall include the words "Political Action Committee" in the name of the committee. See also IB-94-02 (attached).

This opinion is issued within the context of the Massachusetts campaign finance law and is provided solely on the basis of representations in your letter and your conversations with OCPF staff.

Please contact us if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Sullivan
Director

Enclosures
MJS:gb