



Contribution Uses and Restrictions

What is a contribution?

(§ 130.011(12), RSMo)

Contributions are donations of money or anything of value given to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure. There are two kinds of contributions:

- **A monetary contribution** is money contributed to support or oppose candidates or ballot measures. Examples include checks, cash, loans, advances, and a candidate's own money used in support of their candidacy (with specific exceptions noted in the law).
- **An in-kind contribution** is anything of value, other than money, given to support or oppose candidates or ballot measures. Examples include, but are not limited to: gifts, office supplies, discounts, etc.

What is not a contribution?

- Ordinary hospitality or services provided without compensation by volunteers.
- Interest earned on committee funds.
- A direct expenditure made by a PAC or political party committee without a candidate committee's coordination or consultation.
- Costs incurred by a connected organization to maintain a committee or solicit contributions.

Lobbyists Dissolving Committee Funds

(§§ 105.465 and 130.097.2, RSMo)

Anyone who registers as a lobbyist and also has a candidate committee must dissolve the candidate committee and disburse all money of the committee by:

- Returning a contribution to the original contributor;
- Donating to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity; or
- Transferring funds to a political party committee.

Lobbyists cannot transfer funds from a committee they control to another committee controlled by a candidate or public official.



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How can my committee use the contributions it receives?

(§ 130.034, RSMo)

Contributions may be used for any purpose allowed by law, including, but not limited to:

- Expenses related to a campaign;
- Expenses incurred in connection with the duties of elected office;
- Expenses pertaining to the entertaining of or providing social courtesies to constituents, professional associations, or other elected officials;
- The return of a contribution to the original contributor (subject to certain restrictions);
- Contributions to a political organization or candidate committee as allowed by law;
- Establishing a new committee, defined in Chapter 130, RSMo;
- Unconditional gifts to any charitable, fraternal, or civic organization or other association; or
- Payment of reasonable attorney's fees accrued by a person who is the subject of a complaint and/or investigation arising from holding or running for public office ([Advisory Opinion 2018.10.CF.005](#)).

Campaign contributions shall not be used for personal expenses.

Candidate committees cannot use their contributions to contribute to continuing committees/PACs or other candidate committees.



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Restrictions on Contributions Received

- **No committee** may accept contributions from:
 - Any natural person who is not a United States citizen.
 - A foreign government.
- **Candidate committees (including exploratory and debt service committees)** cannot accept contributions from:
 - Corporations or labor organizations.
 - Other candidate committees.
 - Any federal or out-of-state PAC that is making a contribution in excess of \$1,500 and has not registered with the MEC (General Assembly candidates are prohibited from taking any contributions from federal PACs that are not registered).
- **Political party committees** cannot accept contributions from:
 - Corporations or labor organizations.
 - Any federal or out-of-state PAC making a contribution over \$1,500 that has not registered with the MEC.
- **Continuing committees (PACs)** cannot accept contributions from:
 - Political party committees.
 - Candidate committees (including exploratory and debt service committees).
 - Campaign committees.
 - Any corporation, association, or partnership that does not have authority to transact business in Missouri.
 - Any federal or out-of-state PAC that is making a contribution over \$1,500 and has not registered with the MEC.



Related Resources:

- [Campaign Finance Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Treasurer's Guide to Campaign Finance](#)
- [After Election Guidelines and Debt Service Committees](#)
- [After Election Guidelines Tutorial YouTube Series](#)
- [Chapter 130, RSMo](#)

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