

Mandatory Electronic Filing for Certain Committees

Frequently Asked Questions – County Edition

Q1. Why was my committee not required to file electronically in the last election?

The change to the law regarding electronic filing was effective January 1, 2017.

Q2. I am expecting to have very little activity for my election. Do I still need to file my reports electronically?

Any committee that raises or spends in excess of \$10,000.00 in an election cycle will be a mandatory electronic filer. Any committee that does not exceed the \$10,000.00 limit will not be expected to file their reports electronically, but can certainly file them voluntarily.

Q3. What are the benefits of filing electronically?

The software performs all of the calculations for you thereby making your reports more accurate and less time consuming for the user. In addition, the software maintains a database of all contributors and payees which also saves time by eliminating the need to enter repetitive information.

Q4. How do I obtain the reporting software?

The Campaign Finance Remote Software (CFRS) is available on the State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement website at www.ncsbe.gov. Select Campaign Finance, then select Reporting Software. The software is available for download. There are also Campaign Finance Software help topics that will get you started.

Q5. I have a really old pc (dial-up, tablet, Mac), will this software work on my devise?

The Reporting software is a stand-alone application built for the Windows operating system; there is no support for setting up the application to run over a network. The following Windows operating platforms are supported, but the software will operate on various Windows operating platforms (including Windows 10):

- Windows XP SP3
- Windows 7 32bit

Q6. When is the best time to start using the software?

You can start at any time but It's easier to start at the beginning of an election cycle so that your election totals are correct.

Q7. Is there a form that I need to file with the BOE indicating that I am planning to exceed \$10,000?

No, once a committee exceeds \$10,000 they are expected to start using the software and filing future reports electronically.

Q8. Can I create a pdf file and email that in as my electronic filing?

No. A pdf is not the correct format for electronic filing. Your electronically filed report must be imported into the State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement internal software, and so we need a data file.

Q9. Why am I emailing my electronic reports to the State? I am a municipal/county candidate.

Currently we do not have internal software that the County Boards of Election can use, and so they are unable to accept and process electronic reports. All electronic reports will be made available on the NCSBEE website, and the county boards will provide a link to each committee on their website.

Q10. How can I determine that my electronic report was received?

A reply email is sent for each report that is filed electronically. In addition, starting with the 2017 Mid Year Semi Annual Report, all electronic reports will be available on the NCSBEE website. The website is updated each evening with all reports that have been imported for the day. You can search for your report by selecting Campaign Finance – Report Search.

Q11. I heard that the state was working on web based software. Is that available?

We do not anticipate the new software being available during the 2018 election.

Q12. Do I still need to file a signed cover page manually if I have filed an electronic report?

Yes. The law requires that reports are filed under an original signature, so you must file a signed Disclosure Report Cover with your County Board of Elections.

Q13. We are planning to have three very large fundraisers. Will I be able to assist my treasurer with data entry duties using this software?

Unfortunately, the software is a stand-alone application which cannot easily be shared between users. Downloading the software to a laptop which can be shared between users is what we would recommend.

Q14. What happens if a committee exceeds \$10,000.00 and doesn't file their reports electronically?

Hardcopy reports reflecting that a committee has exceeded the \$10,000.00 limit will be processed as "report not received" until that report is properly filed electronically. Reports filed late or not received are assessed daily penalties.

Q15. If I want to receive training for the software, how do I register my interest?

Software training is provided at the NCSBEE office, on a one to one basis. If enough interest is generated, we may be able to offer software training workshops. There are currently no plans to offer regional software training. There are Campaign Finance Software Help Topics available from the website via the following link <http://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance/reporting-software> that have step by step instructions on using the software.

Register your interest in software training by emailing campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov. You can also use this email address if you have any related questions.

Q16. If I have questions about how to use the software, who should I ask?

You should call or email your questions to NCSBEE at 919-814-0700 or campaign.reporting@ncsbe.gov.