



## Campaign Finance Information – WECF Spending Limits

When a legislative candidate applies for a grant from the Wisconsin Election Campaign Fund, the candidate agrees to limit the amount of money he or she will spend for the primary campaign and for the election campaign, as well as for the total campaign. Statewide candidates agree to a total campaign spending limit only. Any expenditure for use during the primary or election counts against the total campaign spending limit.

The disbursement limits required by s.11.31(1)(2) Wis. Stats, are shown in the table below. The disbursement limits apply to all candidates who accept public grants unless their opponents do not accept a grant and do not file an affidavit of voluntary compliance with spending limits.

### STATEWIDE CANDIDATES

Office	Total Spending Limit	Candidate Self Contribution Limit	Amount of Individual Contributions of \$100 or Less Necessary to Qualify	Maximum Size of Grant
GOVERNOR	\$1,078,200	\$20,000	\$53,910	\$485,190
LT. GOVERNOR	323,475	20,000	16,174	145,564
ATTY. GENERAL	539,100	20,000	26,955	242,595
STATE TREASURER	215,625	20,000	10,781	97,031
SECRETARY OF STATE	215,625	20,000	10,781	97,031
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION	215,625	20,000	10,781	97,031

### LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES

Office	Primary Spending Limit	Election Spending Limit	Total Spending Limit	Candidate Self Contribution Limit	Amount of Individual Contributions of \$100 or Less Necessary to Qualify	Maximum Size of Grant
STATE SENATE	\$21,575	\$21,575	\$34,500	\$2,000	\$3,450	\$15,525
STATE ASSEMBLY	10,775	10,775	17,250	1,000	1,725	7,763

#### Definition of Campaign for the Purpose of Calculating Spending Limits

For purposes of calculating spending limits, the campaign of a candidate for partisan office in the fall election begins on either the day of the candidate's registration or January 1 preceding the fall election, whichever is earlier.

The campaign for a nonpartisan candidate in the spring election begins on either the day of the candidate's registration or July 1 preceding the spring election, whichever is earlier.



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In the case of a candidate in a special election, the campaign begins on either the day of the candidate's registration or the date of the order calling the special election, whichever is earlier.

**MATERIALS OR SERVICES PURCHASED EARLIER THAN THE BEGINNING DATE OF THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD FOR USE IN THE PRIMARY OR ELECTION MUST BE COUNTED AGAINST THE SPENDING LIMIT.**

### **When Spending Limits Do NOT Apply**

If a candidate who accepts a WECF grant has an opponent who does not accept a grant and does not file an affidavit of voluntary compliance with spending limits, the candidate is not limited in the amount he or she may spend.

If there is only one candidate for a legislative office in each political party in the primary, the candidates are not subject to the separate primary and election spending limits. The candidates are bound only by the total spending limit.

### **Allocation of Spending Limits**

A legislative candidate may allocate expenditures between the primary and election spending limits. For example, a candidate may purchase billboard advertising that will appear before the primary, but will be displayed throughout the election campaign. The candidate may make a reasonable allocation for part of the expenditure to the primary spending limit and another part to the election spending limit. Similarly, a candidate may make an allocation where there are a large number of items to be distributed throughout the campaign such as leaflets or matchbooks. Advertising that runs within a specific period may not be allocated to another period.

Candidates for governor and lieutenant governor of the same political party who accept public grants may agree to combine spending limits and may reallocate the total disbursement level between them.

### **Expenditures Not Counted Against Spending Limits**

Certain items are excludable from the spending limits. These exclusions do not count against the spending limits. A candidate may exclude the following from spending limits:

1. Federal, state and local taxes paid or incurred;
2. payments made on the principal of personal and commercial loans;
3. deposited contributions which are returned to contributors, donated to charity or donated to the common school fund;
4. certain costs for fundraising events: facilities rental, entertainment expenses, cost of items auctioned, food and beverages (including preparation and service when contracted to an outside agency), if utilized for a meal, sale, auction, rally or similar fundraising effort.

**THE COSTS OF MAILING, PRINTING AND ADVERTISING RELATED TO THE FUNDRAISING EVENT ARE NOT EXCLUDABLE;**

5. expenditures made or obligations incurred which apply to a campaign other than that for which the grant was received. (For example, payments of debts incurred in a previous campaign period, or disbursements for a future campaign);
6. any recount expenses paid from the campaign depository;



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7. contributions made to other registrants;
8. any reimbursements made to the candidate from the campaign committee for the candidate's travel expenses;
9. all refunds or deposits paid.

Candidates must report their exclusions in Schedule 2 D (Exclusions from Spending Limits) of the campaign finance report (GAB-24). The exclusion must include the date, amount, the name and address of the person or business to whom or which the expenditure is made, and a designation of primary or election expense.