

Campaign Finance Report (Contribution & Expenditure Report) Electronic Filing Requirements

Contribution and Expenditure Reports (C&E Reports) are required to be filed with the City Clerk's office at various times. Please refer to the Election Calendar for specific deadlines. In addition to the hardcopy filed with the City Clerk, Austin Code Section 2-2-26 requires contribution and expenditure reports by candidates and candidate committees to be in electronic format as determined by the city clerk. To meet the electronic filing requirement, the candidate or committee must save the completed form to a CD, and file the notarized hardcopy of the report.

The C&E Report may be completed either manually or by downloading software from the Texas Ethics Commission.

Completing the report manually

The Candidate/Officeholder Campaign Finance Report is available for downloading from the Texas Ethics Commission's website at <http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/forms/coh.pdf>. Complete the hardcopy of the report, print it and have the appropriate signature notarized. Scan the notarized report and save the report to a CD as a PDF document. File with the City Clerk's office the notarized hardcopy report with the CD.

Using the software provided by the Texas Ethics Commission

The Texas Ethics Commission provides candidates access to complete the contribution and expenditure report form using its electronic filing software at no cost. The software may be downloaded at http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/elf_filing_info.htm. The software allows an individual to electronically type information into the required fields and save and print the report, rather than completing the form by hand. The contribution and expenditure form is called the "Candidate/Officeholder Campaign Finance Report" Form C/OH.

This option does not eliminate the need to have the document signed and notarized; therefore, if you choose this option you must print and have the appropriate signature notarized before filing with the City Clerk. You may not use the software to electronically file or submit your report.

If you choose to use this method you will need to print the completed form and save the report to a CD as a PDF file. Sign the printed copy of the report and have it notarized. File with the City Clerk's office the notarized hardcopy report along with the CD.

Texas Ethics Commission Software Basic User Instructions

TO DOWNLOAD THE SOFTWARE

Click on “EXE” under full install. (A “GettingStartedGuide2” is included in the download of the software. The getting started guide will be found on your C: drive after the software has been installed.)

STARTING THE SOFTWARE

Double click on the “TX-CFS” icon on your screen. The main menu will appear. If there is no “TX-CFS” icon on your screen, click on your “Start” button and select “Programs” and then select “TX-CFS” from the list of programs.

ADDING A FILER TO THE SOFTWARE

First time users will need to complete the “filer information” before completing any reports. To enter the “filer information”, click on “Add New Filer” and complete all required fields and save. (If this button is not available on your screen, highlight the word “Filer” on the left side of the screen.) As you fill out the filer information, you will be asked to enter an account number and password; since you are not filing with the Ethics Commission, you may choose any password and number.

TO CREATE A REPORT

Highlight the name of the filer on the left side of the main menu screen and click the “Add a New Report” button. Highlight the report type on the left side of the window that appears and then click on the “Add Report” button on the right.

PREVIEWING / PRINTING A REPORT

To preview or print a report, highlight the report on the left side of the screen and click the “Preview a Report” button. You must have Adobe Reader to view a report. If you do not have Adobe Reader on your computer, you may download a free copy from www.Adobe.com.

TO SAVE TO CD

Click on “File” in the preview, click “save as” and select the drive to save the report to a CD.