



# **Campaign Finance Data**

## **Excel Template How-To Guide**

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## In This Document

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This document provides an introduction to using the structured data file template provided by the Office of the City Clerk (OCC) in accordance with [Ordinance 20150806-004](#). For information on field requirements, character limits, and data formatting, please see the Data File Specification and Guide document provided by the OCC.

The worksheets provided in the structured data file were designed to meet both TEC and City of Austin (COA) requirements, while permitting filers to use the contribution and expenditure sheets to file reports electronically with the TEC.

Filers are responsible for determining which worksheets are relevant to their specific campaign finance situation. Structured data files must be completed and submitted to the OCC by the filing date associated with the C/OH report. For example, the structured data file for a January 15<sup>th</sup> reporting period must be submitted before 5pm on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

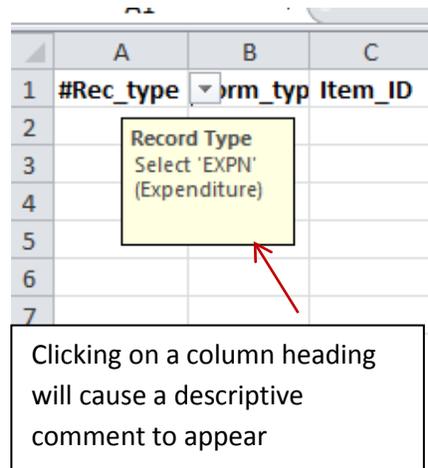
### File Compatibility

The template was created in Microsoft Excel versions 2010 and is designed for use with Microsoft Excel versions 2010 and later, but is compatible with previous versions of Excel, Google Sheets and Open Office. Using a program other than Excel 2010 or later could result in formatting changes to the template. If formatting changes occur, refer to the Filing Template Guide and Specifications for information about properly filling out the data file. Should you need access to Microsoft Excel, all [Austin Public Library branches](#) are equipped with a computer lab featuring Excel 2010.

## Instructions for filling out the template

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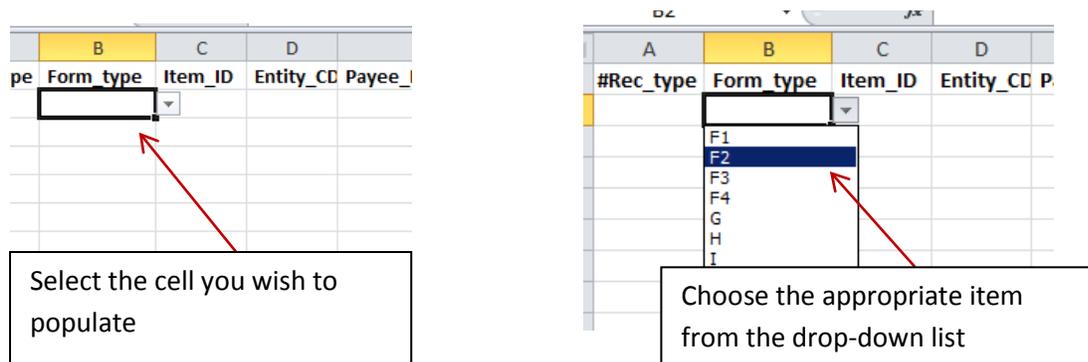
Each Excel worksheet contains column headings and instructions for each individual data field. To find more information for the data field, click on the column heading to see a descriptive comment. The comment may instruct you to select an item from a drop-down list, or describe the type of information to place in the individual cell. For detailed information about each field's character limits, valid inputs, and fields that may not be left blank, see the Data File Specification and Guide provided by the OCC.



## Selecting an Item from the Drop Down List

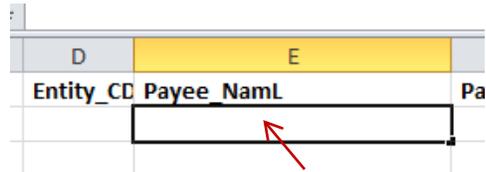
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For columns that contain a drop down list, click the cell and select the appropriate item from the drop down. Fields that do not have a drop-down must be manually typed into the template.

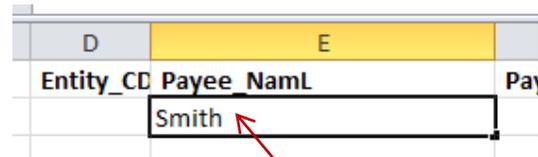


## Populating Text Cells

Columns that do not contain drop down menus must be typed in manually. In order to enter data into a cell, double click on the cell and a cursor will appear. Data can then be typed or pasted from another text document into the individual cell



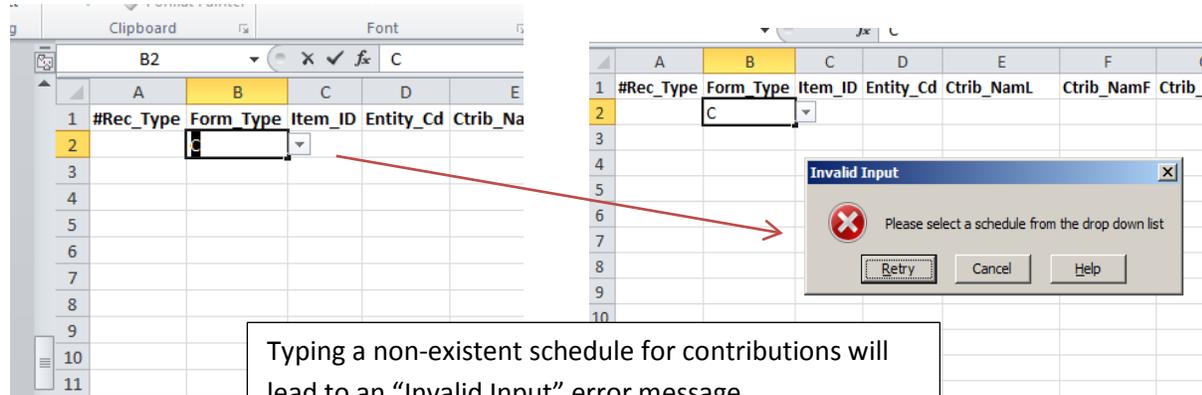
Select the cell you wish to populate



Type information directly into the cell

## “Invalid Input” Error Message

Many cells contain guidance or limit the information that can be placed into a cell. For example, typing an incorrect schedule in the Form\_type field will result in an error message. Should you receive an error message, check the Data File Specification and Guide to ensure you have input the correct data.



Typing a non-existent schedule for contributions will lead to an “Invalid Input” error message

## Submitting your Completed Data File to OCC

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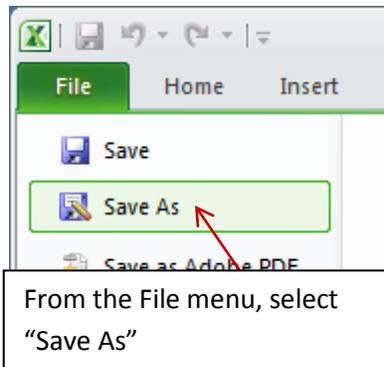
Once you have completed your data file, use the “Save As” feature in Excel to save the file with a new filename. The final template should follow the naming convention listed below

**Last\_First\_Report\_yyyymmdd\_no**

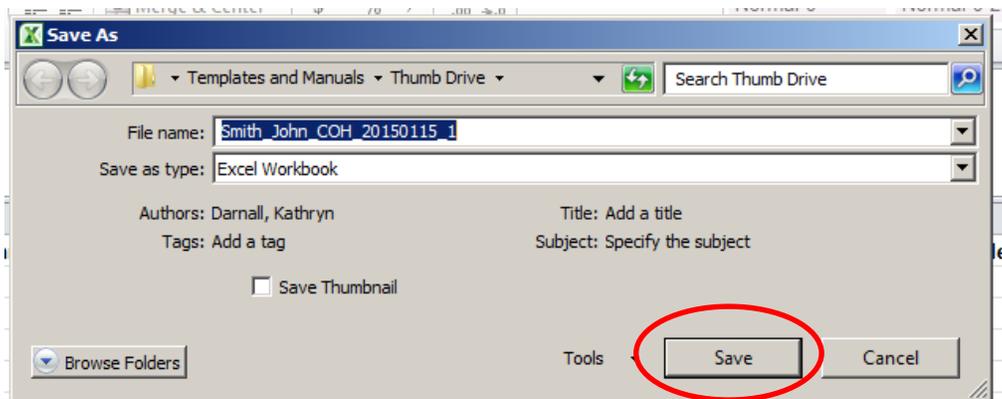
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Filer's Last Name	Filer's First Name	Report Type (e.g. COH, COR)	Report date, e.g. 20150115	Submission number – will be 1 unless file is a resubmission

Please save the file with your appropriate information, e.g. Smith\_John\_COH\_21050115\_1.

To save the Excel file with a new filename, click “Save As” from the File Menu in Excel. A dialog box should appear.



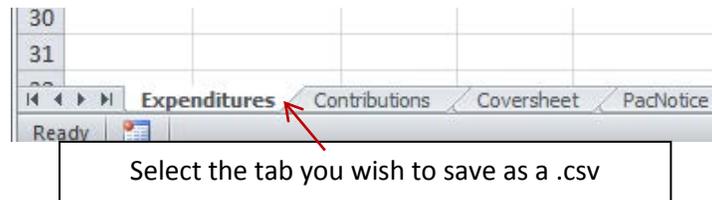
When the dialog box appears, save the new file using the naming convention above and click Save.



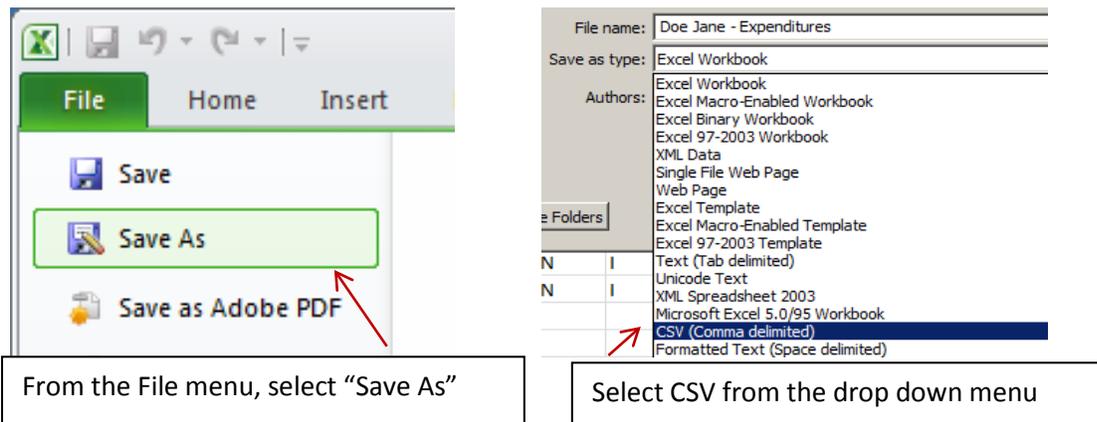
## Saving as a .csv

In order to use the Contributions and Expenditures sheets to upload your data to the Texas Ethics Commission, you will need to save each worksheet as a .csv (comma separated value) file. **Please note that at this time, the TEC Software only permits uploading the Contributions and the Expenditures data sheets.**

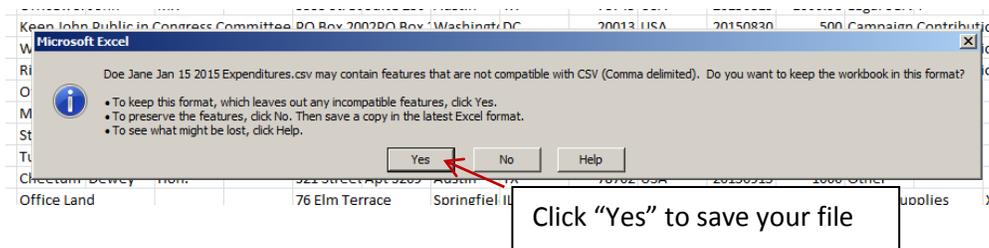
To save a .csv file, first select the tab you would like to save. **Note:** .csv files can only save the selected worksheet, so you will need to repeat the process to save multiple files.



Once you have selected the tab you wish to save, click "Save As" from the File Menu in Excel. A dialog box should appear. From the dialog window under "Save as Type" select CSV from the drop down menu.



A warning box will appear letting you know that formatting changes will occur when you save the file as a .csv. Click Yes to save your file. It will not replace your Excel workbook, but will save a separate file with a .csv file extension.



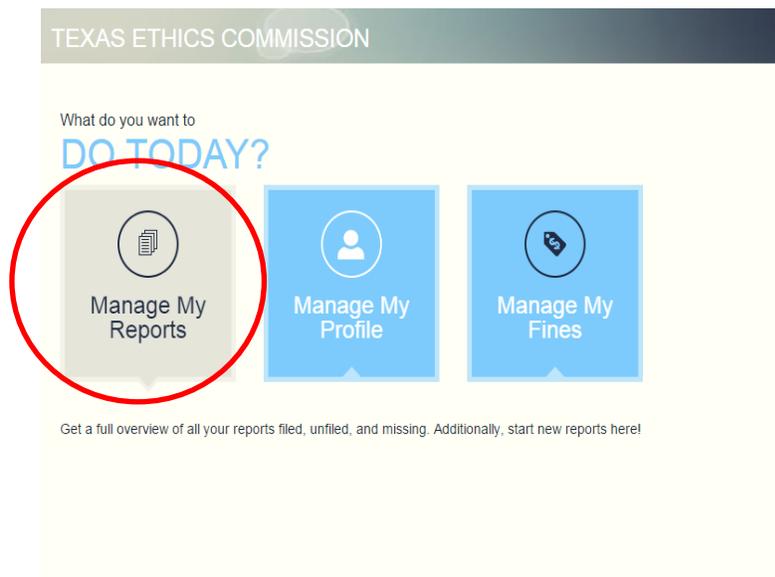
Repeat the process to save both your contributions and expenditures spreadsheets as separate .csv files.

# Importing the Contributions and Expenditures files to the TEC Software

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In order to import your contributions and expenditures into the TEC software, first follow the instructions for registering as a local filer, available at [https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/elf\\_filing\\_local.htm](https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/elf_filing_local.htm)

Once you have created a login/password, registered as a local filer, and filled in your filer information, you may create a report and begin uploading contributions and expenditures. To create a new report, login to the TEC Electronic Filing System and select “Manage my Reports”



You will see a listing of current reports if you have previously filed electronically with the TEC, otherwise select Start a New Report



## Cover Sheet

What kind of report do you want to file?

- January 15th semiannual
- July 15th semiannual
- 30th day before election
- 8th day before primary election
- Exceeded \$500 limit
- Runoff

If applicable, you may combine either a final report or a 15 day report with one of the other report types above.

- Final
- 15 day after treasurer appointment

### Other Reports

- Daily Pre-Election Report of Contributions
- Legislative Special Session Report
- Unexpended Contributions Report-Annual
- Unexpended Contributions Report-Final

Please specify the period the report covers.

Period Covered:  Through:

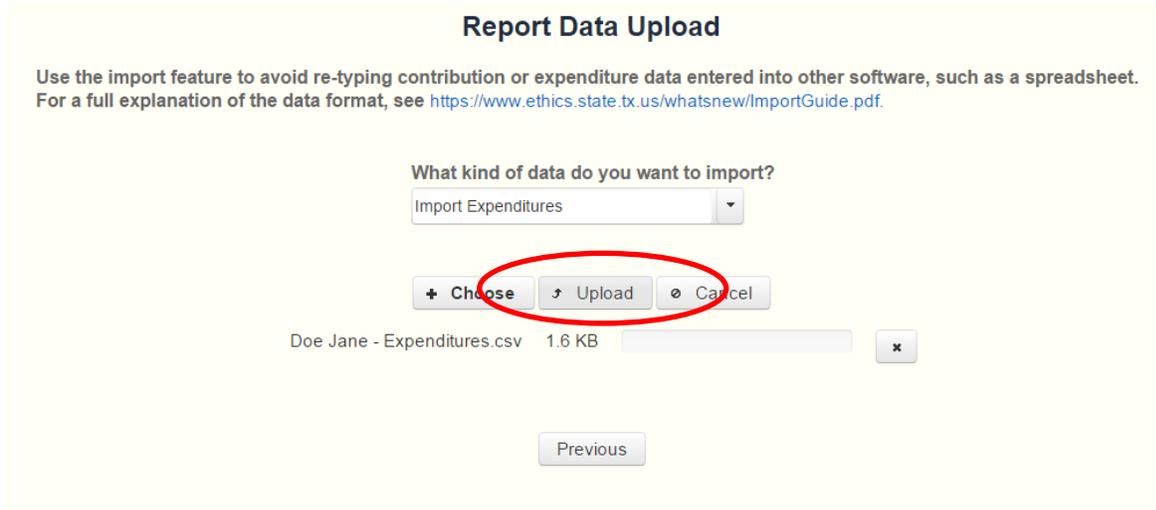
Fill out the relevant fields and click “Start My Report.” The new report will now appear in the “In Progress Reports” section of the filing software. Select “Upload File” from the Action Section of the Reports menu to begin uploading your data files.

## In-Progress Reports

Report	Report Type	Period Covered/Year	Action
100264627	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>January 15th semiannual</li></ul>	07/15/2015 - 12/31/2015	<input type="button" value="Continue Working"/> <input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Upload File"/>
100264746	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>30th day before election</li></ul>	07/01/2015 - 12/31/2015	<input type="button" value="Continue Working"/> <input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Upload File"/>
100603580	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>July 15th semiannual</li></ul>		<input type="button" value="Continue Working"/> <input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Upload File"/>

Click “Upload File” to import data

From the “Report Data Upload” page, select either Contributions or Expenditures from the menu and click “Choose” to locate your data file. Click “Upload” to upload the file.



If your upload is unsuccessful, a “Failure” message will appear in the corner of the screen along with a list of errors at the bottom of the page.



#### Errors in file import

Error: Line 1: Expenditure payee last name or organization name required  
Error: Line 7: Reimbursement intended flag only valid for Schedule G

If your upload is successful, a “Success” message will appear in the corner of the screen.

