

# California Fair Political Practices Commission

## Committee Naming Requirements

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### Introduction

The Political Reform Act (the “Act”) has various naming requirements for committees based upon a variety of factors, including whether there is a controlling candidate/officeholder, whether the committee is general purpose or primarily formed, and whether the committee is sponsored. A committee type can change over time depending upon the activity of the committee, which may require a committee to update its name accordingly. This fact sheet provides a brief description of relevant committee types and a broad overview of the rules applicable to committee names, as well as examples of each.

### Committee Types

**Controlled.** A “controlled committee” is one controlled directly or indirectly by a candidate or officeholder.<sup>1</sup> Controlled committees must include the candidate’s last name and other information depending upon the type of committee as addressed in the examples below.

**General Purpose and Primarily Formed.** A general purpose committee<sup>2</sup> raises funds and makes expenditures to support a variety of candidates or measures; while a primarily formed committee<sup>3</sup> exists to primarily support or oppose one candidate, measure, or groups of candidates or measures being voted on at the same election. Committees must periodically review their activity in order to determine whether they qualify as general purpose or primarily formed.<sup>4</sup>

**Sponsored.** A committee that is operated by, or that receives all or most of its funding from, a single source may qualify as a sponsored committee.<sup>5</sup> Names of sponsored committees must include a reference to the sponsor, or sponsors, in the name of the committee.<sup>6</sup>

**Major Donor.** A person or entity that does not receive contributions, but makes contributions totaling \$10,000 or more in a calendar year qualifies as a major donor committee.<sup>7</sup>

**Independent Expenditure.** A person or entity that does not receive contributions, but makes independent expenditures totaling \$1,000 or more in a calendar year qualifies as an independent expenditure committee.<sup>8</sup>

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**Note:** Most political advertisements require disclosure of the name of the committee paying for the communication. In addition to the name of the committee, some committees must also identify major funders on an advertisement. Please reference the [Political Advertisement Disclosures](#) Fact Sheet for and [Advertisement Disclosure Charts](#) for further guidance.

## Naming Requirements

### Controlled Committees

Candidate Campaign Committee – Include the candidate’s last name, office sought, and year of election.<sup>9</sup>

*Example:* Greer for Senate 2022<sup>10</sup>

State Candidate Controlled Ballot Measure Committee – A candidate controlled general purpose ballot measure committee must include last name of candidate and expressly indicate it is a ballot measure committee. A primarily formed committee must include the last name of the candidate and reference to the measure or proposition supported or opposed.<sup>11</sup>

*Examples:*

- *General Purpose:* Education Performance, a ballot measure committee controlled by Senator White
- *Primarily Formed:* Assembly Member Chiu’s Ballot Measure Committee to Support Proposition 115<sup>12</sup>

Local Candidate Controlled Ballot Measure Committee – Include the last name of the candidate. Check local code for any additional local requirements.

Legal Defense Funds<sup>13</sup> – A committee controlled by a candidate that raises funds to help defray costs from specified legal proceedings must include the candidate’s last name and the words “Legal Defense Fund”<sup>14</sup>

*Example:*<sup>15</sup> Jones Legal Defense Fund

Officeholder Committee – A controlled committee established to pay for expenses associated with holding the office to which the officeholder was elected.

- State Officeholder<sup>16</sup> – Include the state officeholder’s last name, the office held, the year the officeholder was elected to the current term of office, and the words “Officeholder Account.”<sup>17</sup>

*Example:* Anderson Assembly 2020 Officeholder Account

- Local Officeholder – Include the last name of the officeholder. Check local code for any additional local requirements.

Recall Committee – Include the name of the officeholder subject to the recall and the word “recall.”<sup>18</sup>

*Example:* Brown Recall Committee

## **Ballot Measure Committees**

Primarily Formed Committee – Include the numerical or letter designation and whether the committee is in support or opposition.<sup>19</sup>

*Examples:*<sup>20</sup>

- No on Proposition 8
- Committee in Support of Measures A and B

Sponsored Committees – Include the full name of the sponsor in the name of the committee. If the committee has more than one sponsor and the sponsors are members of an industry or other identifiable group, include a term identifying that industry or group.<sup>21</sup>

*Examples:*<sup>22</sup>

- A Committee in Support of Measure A, Sponsored by the Pasadena Firefighters, Local 1210
- Citizens against Proposition 10, Sponsored by California Health Insurers

Recall Committees<sup>23</sup> – Recall committees are considered ballot measure committees and must include the name of the elected officer who is the target of the recall and whether the committee is in support or opposition.<sup>24</sup>

*Example:* Citizens Opposed to the Brown Recall

## **Primarily Formed Committees**

Primarily Formed Committee Supporting or Opposing a Candidate or Candidates – A committee whose primary purpose is to support or oppose a candidate or group of candidates must include the last name or names of the candidates, the office sought, year of election, and whether in support or opposition.

*Examples:*

- Committee to Support Doe for Senate 2022
- Friends of Abe, Bee and Castro for Rancho School Board 2024

Sponsored Committees - Include the full name of the sponsor in the name of the committee. If the committee has more than one sponsor and the sponsors are members of an industry or other identifiable group, include a term identifying that industry or group.

*Examples:*

- Committee to Support Doe for Senate 2022, sponsored by Almond Growers and Processors
- Friends of Abe, Bee and Castro for Rancho School Board 2024, Sponsored by ABC, Corp.

Primarily Formed Committee Supporting or Opposing a Ballot Measure – See naming requirements for *Ballot Measure Committees* above.

## **Major Donor and Independent Expenditure Committees**

Include the legal name of the individual or entity qualifying as a major donor or independent expenditure committee. If the person is commonly known to the public by another name, that name may be used. When a person directs and controls the making of contributions and/or independent expenditures by a related entity (e.g., a subsidiary or a majority shareholder of a corporation) that must be aggregated and reported, include the name of the individual or entity that directs and controls the making of the contributions, and indicate the contributions or independent expenditures of other entities. If the name of the committee listed on a previous report filed for the current calendar year changes during the year, list both names.<sup>25</sup>

### *Examples:*<sup>26</sup>

- New Ventures, Inc.
- Feather River Tribal Council/Bear Mountain Casino
- ABC Corporation, including aggregated contributions/independent expenditures
- Tim Lewis, formerly identified as Lewis Construction

\*A summary of committee naming requirements can also be found on page 3 of the [Instructions for Statement of Organization, Form 410](#); and page 4 of the [Instructions for Major Donor and Independent Expenditure Committee Campaign Statement, Form 461](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Section [82016](#).

<sup>2</sup> Section [82027.5](#).

<sup>3</sup> Section [82047.5](#).

<sup>4</sup> Regulations [18227.5](#); [18247.5](#).

<sup>5</sup> See Section [82048.7](#) for the complete definition of “sponsored committee.”

<sup>6</sup> Section [82048.7](#); Regulation [18419](#).

<sup>7</sup> Section [82013\(c\)](#).

<sup>8</sup> Section [82013\(b\)](#).

<sup>9</sup> Regulation [18402\(c\)](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [Manual 1](#) – State Candidates (pg. 2.8); and [Manual 2](#) – Local Candidates (pg. 1.25).

<sup>11</sup> Regulation [18521.5](#).

<sup>12</sup> See [Manual 3](#) – Ballot Measures (pgs. 1.11 – 1.14).

<sup>13</sup> Sections [85304](#); [85304.5](#).

<sup>14</sup> Regulations [18530.4\(b\)](#); [18530.45\(c\)](#).

<sup>15</sup> See [Manual 4](#) – General Purpose Committees (pg. 5.11).

<sup>16</sup> Section [85316](#).

<sup>17</sup> Regulation [18531.62\(c\)\(2\)](#).

<sup>18</sup> Regulation [18531.5\(c\)\(1\)](#); see also [Manual 1](#) – State Candidates (pgs. 1.16, 1.17); and [Manual 2](#) – Local Candidates (pgs. 1.25, 1.29).

<sup>19</sup> Section [84107](#).

<sup>20</sup> See [Manual 3](#) – Ballot Measure Committees (pgs. 1.11 – 1.14).

<sup>21</sup> Section [84102\(a\)](#); Regulation [18419](#).

<sup>22</sup> See [Manual 3](#) – Ballot Measure Committees (Pgs. 1.11 – 1.14).

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<sup>23</sup> Non-candidate controlled recall committees are considered primarily formed ballot measure committees. ([Manual 3](#), pgs. 1.2, 1.11, 1.12, 1.19).

<sup>24</sup> Regulation [18531.5\(c\)\(3\)](#).

<sup>25</sup> See [Manual 5](#) – Major Donor Committees (pgs. 1.3, 1.4, 2.4, 4.13, 4.16); and [Manual 6](#) – Independent Expenditure Committees (pg. 3.11).

<sup>26</sup> See [Manual 5](#) – Major Donor Committees (pgs. Intro – 3, 4.13); and [Manual 6](#) – Independent Expenditure Committees (pg. 3.11).

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