

Publications

Client Alert: Political Contribution Limits Applicable to Federal and Ohio Elections

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As the November 3, 2020 General Election draws near and political activity is heating up, below is a brief reminder regarding political contribution limits and restrictions applicable to federal and Ohio elections.

Federal Candidate Elections

Individuals are permitted to make political contributions to candidates for President, the United States Senate, and the United States House of Representatives. The maximum contribution limit for these candidates is \$2,800 per election period (primary and general election).

For-profit and non-profit corporations are prohibited from making direct political contributions to candidates for federal office.

However, corporations are permitted to sponsor a federal Political Action Committee (PAC) to make contributions to federal candidates.

A federal PAC that has achieved multicandidate status (registration for at least six months; contributions from at least 51 persons; contributions to at least five federal candidates) is permitted to contribute up to \$5,000 per election period to federal candidates.

Federal PACs that have not yet achieved multicandidate status are permitted to contribute up to \$2,800 per election period to federal candidates.

For additional information regarding federal political contribution limits, click on the link below for a federal political contribution limits chart.

Ohio Non-Judicial Candidate Elections

Individuals are permitted to make political contributions to candidates for elected offices in Ohio. The maximum contribution for candidates for statewide office, the Ohio Senate, and the Ohio House of

Representatives is \$13,292.35 per election period.

For-profit and non-profit corporations are prohibited from making direct political contributions to candidates for elected office in Ohio.

However, federal or Ohio PACs sponsored by corporations are permitted to make political contributions to Ohio candidates.

A federal or Ohio PAC is permitted to contribute up to \$13,292.35 per election period to a candidate for statewide office, the Ohio Senate, and the Ohio House of Representatives

For additional information regarding Ohio non-judicial political contribution limits, click on the link below for an Ohio political contribution limits chart.

Ohio Judicial Candidate Elections

Judicial candidate campaign committees in Ohio are subject to separate contribution limits and campaign finance restrictions established and governed by the Ohio Supreme Court.

For the 2020 general election period, individuals are permitted to contribute up to \$3,800 to the campaign committee of a candidate for the Ohio Supreme Court, up to \$1,300 to the campaign committee of a candidate for the Court of Appeals, and up to \$600 to the campaign committee of a candidate for the Court of Common Pleas, Municipal Court, or County Court.

“Organizations” are also permitted to make political contributions to judicial candidates in Ohio. For purposes of Ohio judicial candidate elections, “Organizations” permitted to directly contribute to judicial candidates include partnerships, limited liability companies, professional associations, law firms, and PACs. However, for-profit and non-profit corporations are prohibited from making direct political contributions to judicial candidates in Ohio.

For the 2020 general election period, Organizations are permitted to contribute up to \$7,000 to the campaign committee of a candidate for the Ohio Supreme Court, up to \$3,800 to the campaign committee of a candidate for the Court of Appeals, and up to \$3,800 to the campaign committee of a candidate for the Court of Common Pleas, Municipal Court, or County Court.

If there is a contested primary, donors are allowed to make contributions up to these limits for both the primary campaign and the general election campaign.

For additional information regarding Ohio judicial candidate political contribution limits, click on the link below for an Ohio judicial campaign political contribution limits chart.

Please contact your Vorys attorney or Vorys Advisors professional if you have questions or would like further information regarding political contribution limits.