

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Regarding E-Filing Campaign Disclosure

What is E-filing?

Filer Convenience: E-filing is free online software that allows filers to create, store and file their campaign statements electronically. The system creates the schedules for the filer based on the filer's data input, then subtotals, totals, and even knows when to disclose activity on the proper schedule. Commonly made mistakes with paper filings are avoided entirely with the software. The free system validates each form to prevent missing page numbers and committee IDs, incorrect filing deadlines, improperly reported loans, or missing employer/occupation information. The system makes itemization easier. Filers simply enter all the activity and the system will know whether or not to itemize. The free system uses the most advanced data security protocols which makes it as safe to use as online banking.

Improved Transparency and Public Access: The public will have online access to forms as soon as they are filed. The filings appear in redacted form to protect the privacy of the entities involved, while showing the public the basic activity along with the City, State, and Zip code tied to the activity. The system has an expanded search function allowing viewers to search not only by candidates but by contributors as well. The advanced search allows you to search entities across all filings. Reports showing who contributed to any committee, or how committees spent their money are ready with just a few clicks of the mouse.

Efficiency: E-filing is a "green" solution. The system automates numerous manual processes reducing the time and money spent by County staff on organizing and filing Campaign Disclosure documents. Warehousing the paper documents will become a thing of the past, eliminating the need for decades long storage of old paper filings.

Is E-filing required?

The Voter Registration and Elections Department now requires all candidates and committees that receive contributions or make expenditures totaling more than \$1,000 in a calendar year, to electronically file campaign statements.

Which forms can I file electronically?

The system offers all the required FPPC forms, including 410, 450, 460, 461, 465, 470, 496 and 497.

How do I know how to use the E-filing program?

The system vendor will provide all filers complete training on use of the system. The software is intuitive and filled with online tutorials and support tools to make the filing experience as easy as possible. New filers in the system can request one-on-one telephone training to get them up and running in the system.

What software do I need to e-file statements?

No additional software is needed for use of this system. The system is a web-based, data entry filing system that allows candidates and campaign committees to submit disclosure reports mandated by California's Political Reform Act. The filer's computer does need access to the internet and needs to be able to open PDF documents.

What are the system requirements?

The system works on any recent version of a modern browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari) and can be used on any PC, Mac, or Linux operating system. The filer's computer needs access to the internet and needs to be able to open PDF documents. The system offers free utilities for all of the above browsers.

What's the cost?

There is no cost to the filer to use this system or to the public to view the redacted forms online. The County's system is a hosted solution that includes unlimited training and support as well as all upgrades and system maintenance during the contract period.

How easy is it?

The filing system is geared for filers that are used to dealing with paper. The software is intuitive and filled with online support tools to make the filing experience as easy as possible. New filers in the system can request one-on-one telephone training to get them up and running in the system.

Is this more work than I'm doing now?

Once the filer creates their login, the system is less work than completing paper forms. The system takes all the guess work out of completing the forms, eliminates common mistakes, and even does the math for the filer. Filers will use the system to complete and store their disclosure documents and then submit their statement online with just a click of a button, eliminating the need for paper documents all together.

How do I establish an E-filing account?

The County will set up each filer in the system, and the filer will simply go to the system's link to get started. The system has easy to follow step-by-step instructions to establish an E-filing account. New filers can even request one-on-one live telephone training for help with establishing an account.

Where do I login?

Sacramento County Voter Registration and Elections webpage links to the system.

How do I sign an electronic statement?

A filer's login will be used as their official signature.

How do I assign a Treasurer to my account?

The Treasurer will use the 'self-register' registration process in the system. Treasurers using 3rd party software simply create their electronic file in their software and submit it to the system.

How do I review what the Treasurer has prepared?

For filers with treasurers, the treasurer creates and submits the filing on behalf of the committee, candidate, and treasurer. Prior to submission, the treasurer can send the candidate a draft version of the filing for online review and approval. All filings can be amended immediately if any information needs correcting.

How do I amend my filings?

Just click on the "amend" link next to the filed document in the permanent document index in the filer's secure portal, add the reason for the amendment, change the data impacted by the amendment, create a draft of the amendment and if the filer is satisfied the draft is good, click the submit button.

How do I access my documents?

Filers access their documents through a secure login portal using their own e-mail address and password of their choosing.

Who can view the files?

The filer has complete access to their original filings at all times through their secure login. The public will be able to view the filed documents in redacted form through the public viewing portal. The system's E-filings show only redacted versions on the public viewing portal.

How can I learn more about how to use E-filing?

Contact Voter Registration and Elections staff at (916) 875-6276, or send your questions to voters-campaignservices@saccounty.net. Online tutorials and one-on-one phone training is available. Once you are set up the system by the County, you can request a personal telephone training session with NetFile by emailing filerhelp@netfile.com.