

RCW 29B.40.020 Limits specified—Exemptions. (Effective January 1, 2026.)

(1) The contribution limits in this section apply to:

- (a) Candidates for legislative office;
- (b) Candidates for state office other than legislative office;
- (c) Candidates for county office;
- (d) Candidates for port district office;
- (e) Candidates for city council office;
- (f) Candidates for mayoral office;
- (g) Candidates for school board office;
- (h) Candidates for public hospital district board of commissioners in districts with a population over 150,000;

(i) Persons holding an office in (a) through (h) of this subsection against whom recall charges have been filed or to a political committee having the expectation of making expenditures in support of the recall of a person holding the office;

- (j) Caucus political committees;
- (k) Bona fide political parties.

(2) No person, other than a bona fide political party or a caucus political committee, may make contributions to a candidate for a legislative office, county office, city council office, mayoral office, school board office, or public hospital district board of commissioners that in the aggregate exceed *eight hundred dollars or to a candidate for a public office in a port district or a state office other than a legislative office that in the aggregate exceed *one thousand six hundred dollars for each election in which the candidate is on the ballot or appears as a write-in candidate. Contributions to candidates subject to the limits in this section made with respect to a primary may not be made after the date of the primary. However, contributions to a candidate or a candidate's authorized committee may be made with respect to a primary until 30 days after the primary, subject to the following limitations: (a) The candidate lost the primary; (b) the candidate's authorized committee has insufficient funds to pay debts outstanding as of the date of the primary; and (c) the contributions may only be raised and spent to satisfy the outstanding debt. Contributions to candidates subject to the limits in this section made with respect to a general election may not be made after the final day of the applicable election cycle.

(3) No person, other than a bona fide political party or a caucus political committee, may make contributions to a state official, a county official, a city official, a school board member, a public hospital district commissioner, or a public official in a port district against whom recall charges have been filed, or to a political committee having the expectation of making expenditures in support of the recall of the state official, county official, city official, school board member, public hospital district commissioner, or public official in a port district during a recall campaign that in the aggregate exceed *eight hundred dollars if for a legislative office, county office, school board office, public hospital district office, or city office, or *one thousand six hundred dollars if for a port district office or a state office other than a legislative office.

(4) (a) Notwithstanding subsection (2) of this section, no bona fide political party or caucus political committee may make contributions to a candidate during an election cycle that in the aggregate exceed (i) eighty cents multiplied by the number of eligible registered voters in the jurisdiction from which the candidate is

elected if the contributor is a caucus political committee or the governing body of a state organization, or (ii) forty cents multiplied by the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction from which the candidate is elected if the contributor is a county central committee or a legislative district committee.

(b) No candidate may accept contributions from a county central committee or a legislative district committee during an election cycle that when combined with contributions from other county central committees or legislative district committees would in the aggregate exceed forty cents times the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction from which the candidate is elected.

(5) (a) Notwithstanding subsection (3) of this section, no bona fide political party or caucus political committee may make contributions to a state official, county official, city official, school board member, public hospital district commissioner, or a public official in a port district against whom recall charges have been filed, or to a political committee having the expectation of making expenditures in support of the state official, county official, city official, school board member, public hospital district commissioner, or a public official in a port district during a recall campaign that in the aggregate exceed (i) eighty cents multiplied by the number of eligible registered voters in the jurisdiction entitled to recall the state official if the contributor is a caucus political committee or the governing body of a state organization, or (ii) forty cents multiplied by the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction from which the candidate is elected if the contributor is a county central committee or a legislative district committee.

(b) No official holding an office specified in subsection (1) of this section against whom recall charges have been filed, no authorized committee of the official, and no political committee having the expectation of making expenditures in support of the recall of the official may accept contributions from a county central committee or a legislative district committee during an election cycle that when combined with contributions from other county central committees or legislative district committees would in the aggregate exceed forty cents multiplied by the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction from which the candidate is elected.

(6) For purposes of determining contribution limits under subsections (4) and (5) of this section, the number of eligible registered voters in a jurisdiction is the number at the time of the most recent general election in the jurisdiction.

(7) Notwithstanding subsections (2) through (5) of this section, no person other than an individual, bona fide political party, or caucus political committee may make contributions reportable under this title to a caucus political committee that in the aggregate exceed *eight hundred dollars in a calendar year or to a bona fide political party that in the aggregate exceed *four thousand dollars in a calendar year. This subsection does not apply to loans made in the ordinary course of business.

(8) For the purposes of RCW 29B.20.050, 29B.40.020 through 29B.40.040, 29B.40.140 through 29B.40.230, 29B.40.240, 29B.45.020, and 29B.45.030, a contribution to the authorized political committee of a candidate or of an official specified in subsection (1) of this section against whom recall charges have been filed is considered to be a contribution to the candidate or official.

(9) A contribution received within the 12-month period after a recall election concerning an office specified in subsection (1) of

this section is considered to be a contribution during that recall campaign if the contribution is used to pay a debt or obligation incurred to influence the outcome of that recall campaign.

(10) The contributions allowed by subsection (3) of this section are in addition to those allowed by subsection (2) of this section, and the contributions allowed by subsection (5) of this section are in addition to those allowed by subsection (4) of this section.

(11) RCW 29B.20.050, 29B.40.020 through 29B.40.040, 29B.40.140 through 29B.40.230, 29B.40.240, 29B.45.020, and 29B.45.030 apply to a special election conducted to fill a vacancy in an office specified in subsection (1) of this section. However, the contributions made to a candidate or received by a candidate for a primary or special election conducted to fill such a vacancy shall not be counted toward any of the limitations that apply to the candidate or to contributions made to the candidate for any other primary or election.

(12) Notwithstanding the other subsections of this section, no corporation or business entity not doing business in Washington state, no labor union with fewer than 10 members who reside in Washington state, and no political committee that has not received contributions of *ten dollars or more from at least 10 persons registered to vote in Washington state during the preceding 180 days may make contributions reportable under this title to a state office candidate, to a state official against whom recall charges have been filed, or to a political committee having the expectation of making expenditures in support of the recall of the official. This subsection does not apply to loans made in the ordinary course of business.

(13) Notwithstanding the other subsections of this section, no county central committee or legislative district committee may make contributions reportable under this title to a candidate specified in subsection (1) of this section, or an official specified in subsection (1) of this section against whom recall charges have been filed, or political committee having the expectation of making expenditures in support of the recall of an official specified in subsection (1) of this section if the county central committee or legislative district committee is outside of the jurisdiction entitled to elect the candidate or recall the official.

(14) No person may accept contributions that exceed the contribution limitations provided in this section.

(15) The following contributions are exempt from the contribution limits of this section:

(a) An expenditure or contribution earmarked for voter registration, for absentee ballot information, for precinct caucuses, for get-out-the-vote campaigns, for precinct judges or inspectors, for sample ballots, or for ballot counting, all without promotion of or political advertising for individual candidates;

(b) An expenditure by a political committee for its own internal organization or fund-raising without direct association with individual candidates; or

(c) An expenditure or contribution for independent expenditures as defined in RCW 29B.10.310 or electioneering communications as defined in RCW 29B.10.220. [2024 c 164 s 444; 2019 c 100 s 1; 2013 c 311 s 1; 2012 c 202 s 1. Prior: 2010 c 206 s 1; 2010 c 204 s 602; 2006 c 348 s 1; 2005 c 445 s 11; prior: 2001 c 208 s 1; 1995 c 397 s 20; 1993 c 2 s 4 (Initiative Measure No. 134, approved November 3, 1992). Formerly RCW 42.17A.405, 42.17.640.]

***Reviser's note:** The dollar amounts in this section may have been adjusted for inflation by rule of the commission adopted under the authority of RCW 29B.20.050. For current dollar amounts, see WAC 390-05-400.

Intent—Construction—Rules remain valid—Effective date—2024 c 164: See notes following RCW 29B.10.010.

Effective date—2010 c 204 ss 505, 602, and 703: See note following RCW 29B.30.050.

Effective dates—2005 c 445: See note following RCW 29B.30.010.

Effective date—1995 c 397: "Sections 1 through 32, 34, and 37 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1995." [1995 c 397 s 35. Formerly RCW 42.17A.910, 42.17.960.]

Short title—1993 c 2: See note following RCW 29B.40.010.