

WAC 390-18-030 Advertising—Exemptions from sponsor identification and alternatives for online advertising. (1) RCW 42.17A.320 requires that political advertising must identify certain information. The commission is authorized to exempt advertising where the sponsor identification disclosures required by RCW 42.17A.320 (1) and (2) are impractical. In addition, other political advertising is exempt from providing certain disclosures. Political advertising may not include incorrect, false, or misleading sponsor identification whether or not sponsor identification is exempt under this section.

(2) (a) The following forms of advertising need not include the sponsor's name and address, the "no candidate authorized this ad" sponsor identification, the "top five contributors," "top three donors to PAC contributors," or the identification of the individual, corporation, union, association, or other entity that established, maintains, or controls the sponsoring political committee as otherwise required by RCW 42.17A.320 (1) and (2) and 42.17A.350:

(i) Campaign paraphernalia, including novelty or sundry items intended for individual distribution and use, with a printing surface area smaller than 60 square inches, including expandable surface area such as a balloon when expanded, or where such identification is otherwise impractical to provide a readable text;

(ii) Newspaper ads of one column inch or less (excluding online ads);

(iii) Reader boards where a message is affixed in movable letters, or skywriting; and

(iv) State or local voter's pamphlets published pursuant to law.

(b) Yard signs must include sponsor identification, but need not include "top five contributors" or "top three donors to PAC contributors."

(3) Online political advertising must provide the same disclosures that apply to non-online advertising to the extent practical. As an alternative, small online advertising may provide the required disclosures by using an automatic display with the advertising that takes the reader directly to the required disclosures.

(a) These automatic displays must be clear and conspicuous, unavoidable, immediately visible, remain visible for at least four seconds, and display a color contrast as to be legible. Online advertising that includes only audio must include the disclosures in a manner that is clearly spoken.

(b) Examples include nonblockable pop-ups, roll-overs, a separate text box or link that automatically appears with or in the advertising that automatically takes the reader directly to the required disclosures upon being clicked once, or other similar mechanisms that disclose the information required in RCW 42.17A.320 in a manner that is compatible with the device and technology used to display the advertising.

(4) Political advertising created and distributed by an individual using their own modest resources is not required to provide the disclosures in RCW 42.17A.320, when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

(a) The individual spends in the aggregate less than \$100 to produce and distribute the advertising or less than \$50 to produce and distribute online advertising;

(b) The individual acts independently and not as an agent of a candidate, authorized committee, political committee, corporation, union, business association, or other organization or entity;

(c) The advertising is not a contribution under RCW 42.17A.005 (16) (a) (ii) or (iii) or WAC 390-05-210;

(d) The individual does not receive donations, contributions, or payments from others for the advertising, and is not compensated for producing or distributing the advertising; and

(e) The advertising is either:

(i) A letter, flier, handbill, text, email or other digital communications from the individual that does not appear in a newspaper or other similar mass publication (except for letters to the editor and similar communications addressed in WAC 390-05-490(4)); or

(ii) Disseminated on the individual's social media site, personal website, or an individual's similar online forum where information is produced and disseminated only by the individual.

(5) Political advertising that is internal political communications to members is not required to separately include the disclosures in RCW 42.17A.320 where the sponsor's name is otherwise apparent on the face of the communication.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110 and [42.17A.]320. WSR 25-01-116, s 390-18-030, filed 12/16/24, effective 1/16/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1), 2019 c 428, and 2019 c 261. WSR 20-02-062, § 390-18-030, filed 12/24/19, effective 1/24/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1) and 2018 c 304. WSR 18-24-074, § 390-18-030, filed 11/30/18, effective 12/31/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110 and 42.17A.320. WSR 13-12-017, § 390-18-030, filed 5/24/13, effective 6/24/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110. WSR 12-03-002, § 390-18-030, filed 1/4/12, effective 2/4/12. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.370. WSR 11-05-051, § 390-18-030, filed 2/10/11, effective 3/13/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.370 and 42.17.562. WSR 06-11-132, § 390-18-030, filed 5/23/06, effective 6/23/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.370(1). WSR 04-12-057, § 390-18-030, filed 5/28/04, effective 6/28/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.390. WSR 95-01-074A, § 390-18-030, filed 12/16/94, effective 1/16/95. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.370(1). WSR 85-15-020 (Order 85-03), § 390-18-030, filed 7/9/85.]