

WAC 390-16-043 Candidates and political committees—Public inspection of books of account. (1) RCW 42.17A.005 defines "books of account" for candidates and political committees as "a ledger or similar listing of contributions, expenditures, and debts, such as a campaign or committee is required to file regularly with the commission, current as of the most recent business day."

(2) RCW 42.17A.225 and 42.17A.235 require that candidates and political committees participating in an election as defined in RCW 42.17A.005, must make their books of account available for public inspection. The public inspection of books of account is not intended to be an exhaustive audit of all contributions received and expenditures made.

(3) Any individual who requests to publicly inspect the books of account of a candidate or political committee, must make the request during the period beginning 10 calendar days before a primary, general, or special election, by contacting the filer's email address listed on the C-1 report for a candidate, or the C-lpc report for a political committee.

(4) The inspection of the books of account may occur on weekdays, unless the treasurer for the candidate or committee agrees otherwise, beginning on the eighth day before the election, excluding legal holidays, for at least two consecutive hours between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at a location that is agreed upon by the treasurer and the individual requesting the inspection. If the treasurer and requestor are unable to agree on a location and the treasurer has not provided digital access to the books of account, the default location for an appointment must be a place of public accommodation selected by the treasurer within a reasonable distance from the treasurer's office. However, if the treasurer is located out-of-state, the default location must be within the state of Washington and reasonably accessible to both parties. The inspection must be allowed within 48 hours of the date and time the request was made at the agreed-upon location, provided that if the request is not made by 3:00 p.m. on the third day preceding an election, the candidate or political committee need only make best efforts to accommodate the request.

(5) The treasurer for the candidate or committee may make the books of account available electronically, in lieu of scheduling an in-person inspection, or if a location cannot be agreed upon by both parties. If the campaign's only copy of its books of account is maintained electronically with security protections, the person requesting the inspection must be given sufficient instruction to allow the inspection to proceed.

(6) The books of account, ledger and other supporting documentation must be maintained by the treasurer and kept current within one business day. The books of account of a candidate or political committee include the following: A ledger, spreadsheet, or similar listing of contributions, expenditures, loans, debts and obligations to substantiate the information disclosed on the PDC campaign finance reports. The books of account must include the underlying source documents such as receipts, invoices, copies of contribution checks, copies of canceled checks for expenditures, digital transactions, notes, or other documentation concerning expenditures, orders placed, and loans. The campaign or committee is not required to provide the name and address of contributors who gave \$100 or less in the aggregate in total contributions.

(7) The candidate or political committee is not required to make copies of its books of account for the requestor. Videorecording, photographing, or photocopying of the records is not required to be permitted but may be agreed to by both parties during or in advance of the inspection.

(8) At the time of making the appointment, the person requesting to inspect the books of account must provide the name(s) and contact information for all individuals who will be in attendance for the inspection. The requestor(s) must show photo identification prior to the inspection beginning, and the candidate or political committee may deny the inspection from occurring if photo identification is not provided.

(9) The records required by this section must be available for audit or examination by the PDC at any time upon request from the PDC.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110 and [42.17A.]125. WSR 23-12-036, § 390-16-043, filed 5/30/23, effective 6/30/23. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1), 2019 c 428, and 2019 c 261. WSR 20-02-062, § 390-16-043, filed 12/24/19, effective 1/24/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1) and 2018 c 304. WSR 18-24-074, § 390-16-043, filed 11/30/18, effective 12/31/18.]