

Rule 14 Public Office Funds

A. Prohibited Contributions. The following persons shall not contribute to, and no elected official shall accept contributions for a Public Office Fund from, the following:

1. Persons who are parties to a current contract or other transaction with the City of Seattle, or who have taken affirmative action to be considered for a contract or transaction with the City.

a. A person who is paid by a client to represent the client to the City, such as an attorney or an accountant representing a City vendor, does not thereby become a “party” to a transaction with the City.

b. Transaction, as used in this section, does not include those transactions that do not involve the exercise of discretion by any elected official, such as application for a business license, and does not include the City's provision of water, electricity, waste disposal or other utility services.

c. Affirmative action, as used in this section, includes, but is not limited to, making application, quoting a price, submitting a proposal and responding to a bid request.

2. Political Committees organized in support of any candidate.

B. No Contributions from Current or Pending City Contractors. Contributors to Public Office Funds shall disclose whether they have current or pending transactions with the City, as prohibited by this rule. When soliciting contributions to Public Office Funds, or accepting non-solicited contributions to Public Office Funds, elected officials shall inform the potential or actual contributors of the provisions of this rule and obtain from the potential or actual contributor a signed confirmation that such contributor is not a current or pending contractor as described in this rule. The elected official shall maintain signed copies of the confirmations with the Public Office Fund account records.

C. Permissible Office Fund Expenditures. Public Office Funds may be used by the elected official only for non-reimbursed public office expenditures. ~~Such expenses include, but are not limited to, the following categories made for the following:~~

1. Gifts for foreign dignitaries or visiting governmental officials ~~from other nations or states;~~

2. ~~Out-of-town travel, including lodging, and meal expenses, and other related disbursements,~~ incurred in the performance of official duties by the official, a member of the official's staff, or a member of the official's household accompanying him or her on such travel. ~~The dollar value of such expenses may not exceed those permitted under the City's travel policies and procedures. Office funds may not be used for expenses when an office holder is also collecting a per diem from the City or is otherwise reimbursed for those same expenses.~~

3. ~~Attendance at conferences, e~~ Educational courses or seminars, if ~~such attendance serves a City purpose, the courses or seminars maintain or improve skills which are employed in the performance of governmental duties by the official or a member of the official's staff;~~

4. Membership ~~ins to~~ civic, service or professional organizations, if such membership ~~bears a reasonable relationship~~ serves a ~~to a governmental or legislative City~~ purpose ~~and membership does not provide a material personal benefit to the member.~~;

5. ~~Non-tax deductible portion of the~~ The cost of tickets to events sponsored by or in conjunction with a civic, charitable, governmental, or community organization, or tickets to post-season sporting events, ~~charitable or civic events.~~

6. Non-cash expressions of congratulations, appreciation or condolences ~~sent to~~ for constituents, employees who do not work in the official's office or department, governmental officials, or other persons with whom the official communicates in his or her official capacity. The value of such non-cash expressions may not exceed \$50 for any individual in a calendar year. The cost of a single event expressing congratulations, appreciation or condolences may not exceed \$150.;

7. ~~Advertisements or endorsements in newspapers, program books, testimonials, souvenir books, or other publications, so long as they are not published in a year in which the official's name will appear on the ballot or do not otherwise if the advertisement does not support or promote~~ or oppose the nomination or election of a candidate for public office, ~~does not support or oppose a ballot issue in a manner not permitted by SMC 2.04.300a candidate or ballot measure,~~ and if it is not published in the year in which the official's name will appear on the ballot;

8. Mailings to Seattle households ~~which provide~~ ing information related to City business, ~~including City sponsored events,~~ so long as such mailings ~~do not violate SMC 2.04.300~~ do not promote or oppose a candidate or ballot measure.;

9. The purchase, lease or rental ~~for of~~ office space, equipment, office furnishings and office supplies.;

Comment [A1]: District office.

10. Payment of tax liabilities incurred as a result of authorized official expense fund transactions.;

11. Accounting, professional and administrative services provided to the Public Office Fund.

~~2. Conferences, meetings, receptions, and events attended in the performance of official duties by the official, or a member of the official's staff;~~

~~4. Meals and entertainment directly preceding, during or following a governmental or legislative activity;~~

~~D. Prohibited Office Fund Expenditures. Public Office Funds may not be used for the following:~~

~~1. An expenditure that in any way promotes the elected official's candidacy for any public office: Note that a campaign's use of equipment or supplies, such as a computer, paid for by Public Office Funds constitutes an illegal contribution to the campaign;~~

~~2. An expenditure that in any way promotes any other candidate for public office, or in any way supports or opposes a ballot issue in a manner not permitted by SMC 2.04.300;~~

~~3. Donations to tax-exempt charitable, civic or service organizations, including the tax-deductible portion of the cost of tickets to charitable or civic events.~~

~~4. Memberships, other than those described in Rule 14.D.6;~~

~~5. Compensation or benefit supplements for City employees for performance of duties that would be required or expected in the regular course of performing City duties;~~

~~6. An expenditure that is not directly related to the elected official's duties as an elected official.~~

DISCUSSION DRAFT