

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 made for the following:

1. Gifts for foreign dignitaries or visiting governmental officials.

2. Out-of-town travel, lodging, and meal expenses 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, educational courses or seminars by officials or staff, if such attendance serves a City purpose.

4. Membership in civic, service or professional organizations, if such membership serves a City purpose.

5. Tickets to events sponsored by or in conjunction with a civic, charitable, governmental, or community organization, or tickets to post-season sporting events held in Seattle or in which a regional team is competing.

6. Non-cash expressions of congratulations, appreciation or condolences for constituents, public employees, governmental officials, or other persons with whom the official communicates in his or her official capacity. This category includes the cost of an official hosting a meal purchased at an auction conducted by a non-profit organization. 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, so long as they are not published in a year in which the official's name will appear on the ballot and do not otherwise promote or oppose a candidate or ballot measure.

8. Mailings to Seattle households providing information related to City business, so long as such mailings do not promote or oppose a candidate or ballot measure.

9. The purchase, lease or rental of office equipment, office furnishings and office supplies.

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.