CANDIDATES FOR COUNTY OFFICE OF ASSESSOR, AUDITOR, CLERK- RECORDER, DISTRICT ATTORNEY, SHERIFF-CORONER, TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Are there any local laws applicable to elections for this office?

   Yes. The local laws are found in the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, Division 530 "Election Campaign." They are commonly referred to as the County's Election Campaign Ordinance.

2. Where can I get a copy of the County's Election Campaign Ordinance?

   The County Clerk provides a printed copy to candidates in the candidate packets. In addition, you can find the ordinance in the Contra Costa County Ordinance Code at any local library. You can also find the County's Election Campaign Ordinance on the County's website: www.co.contra-costa.ca.us. Look under "Government" and go to "Ordinances." Then go to "Title 5 General Welfare and Business Regulations" and "Division 530 Election Campaign." The ordinance is also available at the Elections Office's website: www.CoCoVote.us.

3. What is the current election cycle for this office?

   July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2010. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.212.)

4. When would the next election cycle for this office start?

   - ***If a candidate is elected to office in the Primary Election on June 8, 2010, the next election cycle for the office will be from July 1, 2010 through the last day of the month in which the primary election for the office is held in 2014.***

   - ***For candidates who enter a run-off and will stand for election at the General Election on November 2, 2010, the next election cycle will be July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010. Once a candidate is elected to office, a subsequent election cycle for the office would begin January 1, 2011 and run through the last day of the month in which the primary election for the office is held in 2014. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.212.)***

5. Does the County's Election Campaign Ordinance limit the amount an individual or a committee may contribute to my campaign for this office?

   - ***Yes. During each election cycle, an individual (other than the candidate) or a political committee may contribute the aggregate amount of $1,675 to your campaign. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.402.)***

   - ***The same limit applies whether the contribution is monetary or non-monetary.***

6. Would a donation of campaign office space be subject to the same contribution limit?

   No. During each election cycle, a person or a political committee can make an in-kind contribution of campaign office space that does not exceed the aggregate amount of $5,000 in value. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.403.)

7. What is a broad-based political committee (also known as a political action committee, or PAC)?

   It is a committee that has been in existence for more than six months, receives contributions from 100 or more persons, and, acting in concert, makes contributions to five or more candidates. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.216.)

8. Does the County's Election Campaign Ordinance limit the amount a broad-based political committee can contribute to my campaign for this office?

   - ***Yes. During each election cycle, a broad-based political committee can contribute up to $10,000 to your campaign. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.404.)***

   - ***The same limit applies whether the contribution is monetary or non-monetary.***

9. Is there a limit on the total aggregate amount of contributions I can accept from all broad-based political committees?

   Yes. During each election cycle, you may not accept more than the total aggregate amount of $50,000 from all broad-based political committees. For example: $10,000 apiece from five committees; or, $8,000 apiece from four

committees and $2,000 apiece from nine additional committees. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.404.)

10. Does the County's Election Campaign Ordinance limit the amount that I can give to my own campaign?

    No.

11. Does the County's Election Campaign Ordinance limit the amount that I can lend to my own campaign?

    No.

12. Does the County's Election Campaign Ordinance limit the amount my campaign can spend in support of my election?

    No.

13. Are candidates for this office subject to any special reporting requirements?

    - ***Yes. At the same time that the candidate files the campaign statements required by state law, he or she must also file copies of the statements with the County Clerk-Recorder. In addition, the candidate must file an additional statement by 12:00 noon on the last Friday before the election covering the period between the previous statement filed and 12:00 midnight of the last Thursday before the election. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.802.)***

    - ***These statements should be filed at:***

      County Elections Office

      555 Escobar Street

      Martinez, CA 94553

14. Is there any penalty for violating the County's Election Campaign Ordinance?

    Yes. Most violations of the ordinance are misdemeanors, punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for up to six month, or a fine not exceeding $1,000, or both. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.1003.)

15. How do I report a violation of the County's Election Campaign Ordinance?

    - ***The District Attorney enforces the County's Election Campaign Ordinance. (See Contra Costa County Ordinance Code, §530-2.1004.)***

    - ***You can report a violation to the District Attorney at:***

      County District Attorney's Office

      627 Ferry Street

      Martinez, CA 94553

16. What should I do if I have questions about the County's Election Campaign Ordinance?

    You should consult your private legal counsel. It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with all requirements of the ordinance.

This informational brochure is provided as a courtesy. It does not cover all matters addressed in the County's Election Campaign Ordinance and does not contain legal advice. This brochure may not be relied upon in the event of an enforcement proceeding under the County's Election Campaign Ordinance. If you have questions about the Ordinance and what it allows, you should seek advice from your private legal counsel.