

**121.015 Definitions for chapter.**

**(Effective July 15, 2026)**

As used in this chapter:

- (1) "Registry" means the Kentucky Registry of Election Finance;
- (2) "Election" means any primary, regular, or special election to fill vacancies regardless of whether a candidate or slate of candidates is opposed or unopposed in an election. Each primary, regular, or special election shall be considered a separate election;
- (3) "Committee" includes the following:
  - (a) "Campaign committee," which means one (1) or more persons who receive contributions and make expenditures to support or oppose one (1) or more specific candidates or slates of candidates for nomination or election to any state, county, city, or district office, that is authorized by the candidate or slate of candidates to receive contributions, make expenditures, and generally conduct a campaign for the candidate or slate of candidates, but does not include an entity established solely by a candidate which is managed solely by a candidate and a campaign treasurer and whose name is generic in nature, such as "Friends of (the candidate)," and does not reflect that other persons have structured themselves as a committee, designated officers of the committee, and assigned responsibilities and duties to each officer with the purpose of managing a campaign to support or oppose a candidate in an election;
  - (b) "Independent expenditure-only committee," which means one (1) or more persons who receive unlimited contributions for the purpose of making only independent expenditures to support or oppose one (1) or more specific candidates or slates of candidates for nomination or election to any state, county, city, or district office;
  - (c) "Caucus campaign committee," which means members of one (1) of the following caucus groups who receive contributions and make expenditures to support or oppose one (1) or more specific candidates or slates of candidates for nomination or election, or a committee:
    1. House Democratic caucus campaign committee;
    2. House Republican caucus campaign committee;
    3. Senate Democratic caucus campaign committee;
    4. Senate Republican caucus campaign committee; or
    5. Subdivisions of the state executive committee of a minor political party, which serve the same function as the above-named committees, as determined by regulations promulgated by the registry;
  - (d) "Political issues committee," which means three (3) or more persons joining together to advocate or oppose a ballot measure if that committee receives or expends money in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000);
  - (e) "Permanent committee," which means a group of individuals, including an association, committee, or organization, other than a campaign committee, independent expenditure-only committee, federally registered political

committee, political issues committee, inaugural committee, caucus campaign committee, or party executive committee, which is established as, or intended to be, a permanent organization having as a primary purpose expressly advocating the election or defeat of one (1) or more clearly identified candidates, slates of candidates, or political parties, which functions on a regular basis throughout the year;

- (f) "Executive committee of a political party," which means a political committee that is a subdivision of a national political party committee and operates within the structure and under the supervision of the state executive committee of that same political party. Political parties may support candidates for public office, raise and spend money for their internal operations, and are governed by a committee that is elected by the voters in that subdivision in a manner not inconsistent with the rules of that same political party; and
  - (g) "Inaugural committee," which means one (1) or more persons who receive contributions and make expenditures in support of inauguration activities for any candidate or slate of candidates elected to any state, county, city, or district office;
- (4) "Contributing organization" means a group which merely contributes to candidates, slates of candidates, campaign committees, caucus campaign committees, or executive committees from time to time from funds derived solely from within the group, and which does not solicit or receive funds from sources outside the group itself. Any contributions made by the groups in excess of two hundred dollars (\$200) shall be reported to the registry;
- (5) "Testimonial affair" means an affair held in honor of a person who holds or who is or was a candidate for nomination or election to a political office in this state designed to raise funds for any purpose not charitable, religious, or educational;
- (6) "Contribution" means any:
- (a) Payment, distribution, loan, deposit, or gift of money or other thing of value, to a candidate, his or her agent, a slate of candidates, its authorized agent, a committee, or contributing organization. As used in this subsection, "loan" shall include a guarantee, endorsement, or other form of security where the risk of nonpayment rests with the surety, guarantor, or endorser, as well as with a committee, contributing organization, candidate, slate of candidates, or other primary obligor. No person shall become liable as surety, endorser, or guarantor for any sum in any one (1) election which, when combined with all other contributions the individual makes to a candidate, his or her agent, a slate of candidates, its agent, a committee, or a contributing organization, exceeds the contribution limits provided in KRS 121.150;
  - (b) Payment by any person other than the candidate, his or her authorized treasurer, a slate of candidates, its authorized treasurer, a committee, or a contributing organization, of compensation for the personal services of another person which are rendered to a candidate, slate of candidates, committee, or contributing organization, or for inauguration activities;
  - (c) Goods, advertising, or services with a value of more than two hundred dollars

(\$200) in the aggregate in any one (1) election which are furnished to a candidate, slate of candidates, committee, or contributing organization or for inauguration activities without charge, or at a rate which is less than the rate normally charged for the goods or services; or

- (d) Payment by any person other than a candidate, his or her authorized treasurer, a slate of candidates, its authorized treasurer, a committee, or contributing organization for any goods or services with a value of more than two hundred dollars (\$200) in the aggregate in any one (1) election which are utilized by a candidate, slate of candidates, committee, or contributing organization, or for inauguration activities;
- (7) Notwithstanding the foregoing meanings of "contribution," the word shall not be construed to include:
- (a) Services provided without compensation by individuals volunteering a portion or all of their time on behalf of a candidate, a slate of candidates, committee, or contributing organization;
  - (b) A loan of money by any financial institution doing business in Kentucky made in accordance with applicable banking laws and regulations and in the ordinary course of business;
  - (c) An independent expenditure by any individual or permanent committee; or
  - (d) Any processing fee, transaction fee, or service charge deducted by a third-party payment processor, credit card issuer, or electronic payment service, provided that the fee is a standard commercial charge for the service rendered;
- (8) "Candidate" means any person who has received contributions or made expenditures, has appointed a campaign treasurer, or has given his or her consent for any other person to receive contributions or make expenditures with a view to bringing about his or her nomination or election to a nonfederal public office, except as provided in KRS 121.180(10)(b);
- (9) "Slate of candidates" means:
- (a) Between the time a certificate or petition of nomination has been filed for a candidate for the office of Governor under KRS 118.365 and the time the candidate designates a running mate for the office of Lieutenant Governor under KRS 118.126, a slate of candidates consists of the candidate for the office of Governor; and
  - (b) After that candidate has designated a running mate under KRS 118.126, that same slate of candidates consists of that same candidate for the office of Governor and the candidate's running mate for the office of Lieutenant Governor. Unless the context requires otherwise, any provision of law that applies to a candidate shall also apply to a slate of candidates;
- (10) "Knowingly" means, with respect to conduct or to a circumstance described by a statute defining an offense, that a person is aware or should have been aware that his or her conduct is of that nature or that the circumstance exists;
- (11) "Fundraiser" means an individual who directly solicits and secures contributions on behalf of a candidate or slate of candidates for a statewide-elected state office or an office in a jurisdiction with a population in excess of two hundred thousand

(200,000) residents;

- (12) "Independent expenditure" means:
- (a) The expenditure of money or other things of value for a communication which expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate or slate of candidates, and which:
    - 1. Is made without any coordination, consultation, or cooperation with any candidate, slate of candidates, campaign committee, or any authorized person acting on behalf of any of them; and
    - 2. Is not made in concert with, or at the request or suggestion of any candidate, slate of candidates, campaign committee, or any authorized person acting on behalf of any of them; or
  - (b) The expenditure of money or other things of value for a communication which expressly advocates or opposes a ballot measure, and which:
    - 1. Is made without any coordination, consultation, or cooperation with any political issues committee, or any authorized person acting on behalf of a political issues committee; and
    - 2. Is not made in concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, any political issues committee, or any authorized person acting on behalf of a political issues committee;
- (13) "Electronic reporting" means the use of technology, having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities, by which an individual or other entity submits, compiles, or transmits campaign finance reports to the registry, or by which the registry receives, stores, analyzes, or discloses the reports;
- (14) "Security procedure" means a procedure employed for the purpose of verifying that an electronic signature, record, or performance is that of a specific person or for detecting changes or errors in the information in an electronic record. The term includes a procedure that requires the use of algorithms or other codes, identifying words or numbers, encryption, or callback or other acknowledgment procedures;
- (15) "Electronic signature" means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record;
- (16) "Filer" means any candidate, a slate of candidates, committee, or other individual or entity required to submit financial disclosure reports to the registry;
- (17) "Filer-side software" means software provided to or used by the filer that enables transmittal of financial reports to the registry;
- (18) "Form" means an online web page or an electronic document designed to capture, validate, and submit data for processing to the registry, unless the context otherwise prescribes;
- (19) "Reasonable cause" means an event, happening, or circumstance entirely beyond the knowledge or control of the candidate, slate of candidates, or committee, which has exercised due care and prudence in maintaining the records of the campaign or committee pursuant to statute or administrative regulation;

- (20) "Foreign national" means:
- (a) An individual who is not a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States;
  - (b) A government, political subdivision, or municipality of a foreign country;
  - (c) A foreign political party;
  - (d) Any entity, including but not limited to a partnership, association, corporation, organization, or other combination of persons, that is organized under the laws of or has its principal place of business in a foreign country; or
  - (e) Any entity in the United States, including but not limited to a partnership, association, corporation, or organization that is wholly or majority owned by any foreign national, unless:
    - 1. Any contribution or expenditure the entity makes derives entirely from funds generated by the entity's United States operations; and
    - 2. All decisions concerning the contribution or expenditure, except for setting overall budget amounts, are made by individuals who are United States citizens or permanent residents;
- (21) "Ballot measure" means a question, other than the nomination or election of a candidate for public office, which has been:
- (a) Approved by a political subdivision or the General Assembly and is required by law to be placed before the voters of the territory affected; or
  - (b) Initiated or referred by citizen petition as authorized by KRS 242.020 and placed before the voters of the territory affected;
- (22) "Preliminary activity" includes but is not limited to:
- (a) Participating in focus groups;
  - (b) Making telephone calls;
  - (c) Traveling;
  - (d) Conducting polls; and
  - (e) Drafting ballot measure language; and
- (23) "Tax-exempt organization" means an organization described in 26 U.S.C. sec. 501(c) and exempt from federal taxation under 26 U.S.C. sec. 501(a). This subsection shall not be construed to treat a political organization under 26 U.S.C. sec. 527 as a tax-exempt organization for purposes of this chapter.

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**History:** Amended 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 175, sec. 38, effective July 15, 2026. -- Amended 2025 Ky. Acts ch. 57, sec. 1, effective June 27, 2025. -- Amended 2024 Ky. Acts ch. 107, sec. 2, effective July 15, 2024. -- Amended 2022 Ky. Acts ch. 208, sec. 1, effective April 14, 2022. -- Amended 2020 Ky. Acts ch. 88, sec. 10, effective July 15, 2020. -- Amended 2018 Ky. Acts ch. 4, sec. 1, effective February 20, 2018. -- Amended 2008 Ky. Acts ch. 129, sec. 10, effective July 15, 2008. -- Amended 2005 Ky. Acts ch. 105, sec. 2, effective March 16, 2005. -- Amended 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 398, sec. 2, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 153, sec. 4, effective July 15, 1996; and ch. 179, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1996. -- Amended 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 458, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994. -- Amended 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 288, sec. 15, effective July 14, 1992. -- Amended 1986 Ky. Acts ch. 100, sec. 1,

effective July 15, 1986. -- Amended 1980 Ky. Acts ch. 292, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1980. -- Created 1974 Ky. Acts ch. 130, sec. 178.