

(Regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission, Title 2, Division 6, California Code of Regulations.)

**§ 18215. Contribution.**

(a) A contribution is any payment made for political purposes for which full and adequate consideration is not made to the donor. A payment is made for political purposes if it is:

(1) For the purpose of influencing or attempting to influence the action of the voters for or against the nomination or election of a candidate or candidates, or the qualification or passage of any measure; or

(2) Received by or made at the behest of the following or any agent thereof:

(A) A candidate;

(B) A controlled committee;

(C) An official committee of a political party, including a state central committee, county central committee, assembly district committee or any subcommittee of such committee; or

(D) An organization formed or existing primarily for political purposes, including, but not limited to, a political action committee established by any membership organization, labor union or corporation.

(b) The term “contribution” includes:

(1) Any payment made to a person or organization other than a candidate or committee, when, at the time of making the payment, the donor knows or has reason to know that the payment, or funds with which the payment will be commingled, will be used to make contributions or expenditures. If the donor knows or has reason to know that only part of the payment will be used to make contributions or expenditures, the payment shall be apportioned on a reasonable basis in order to determine the amount of the contribution. There shall be a

presumption that the donor does not have reason to know that all or part of the payment will be used to make expenditures or contributions, unless the person or organization has made expenditures or contributions of at least one thousand dollars (\$1,000) in the aggregate during the calendar year in which the payment occurs, or any of the immediately preceding four calendar years.

(2) A candidate's own money or property used on behalf of his or her candidacy.

(3) Any goods or services received by or behested by a candidate or committee at no charge or at a discount from the fair market value, unless the discount is given in the regular course of business to members of the public.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the term “contribution” does not include:

(1) An expenditure made at the behest of a candidate in connection with a communication directed to voters or potential voters as part of voter registration activities or activities encouraging or assisting persons to vote, if the expenditure does not constitute express advocacy.

(2) Volunteer personal services or payments made by a person for his or her own travel expenses, if such payments are made voluntarily without any understanding or agreement that he or she will be repaid.

(3) A payment made by an occupant of a home or office for costs related to any meeting or fundraising event held in the occupant's home or office, if the total cost of the meeting or fundraising event is \$500 or less, exclusive of the fair rental value of the premises.

(4) A payment made at the behest of a candidate, which is for a communication by the candidate or any other person, that meets all of the following:

(i) Does not contain express advocacy;

(ii) Does not make reference to the candidate's candidacy for elective office, the candidate's election campaign, or the candidate's or his or her opponent's qualifications for office; and

(iii) Does not solicit contributions to the candidate or to third persons for use in support of the candidate or in opposition to the candidate's opponent.

(5) A payment made by a candidate or committee for another candidate to attend the paying candidate's or committee's fundraiser.

(6) A payment made by a candidate for a communication publicizing his or her endorsement by another candidate, provided that the communication does not expressly advocate the nomination or election of the endorsing candidate or the defeat of an opponent of the endorsing candidate.

(7) A payment made by a ballot measure committee for a communication in which the ballot measure supported or opposed by the committee is endorsed or opposed by a candidate, and the communication does not expressly advocate the nomination or election of the endorsing candidate or the defeat of an opponent of the endorsing candidate.

(8) A payment made by any broadcasting station (including a cable television operator, programmer or producer), website, or a regularly published newspaper, magazine or other periodical of general circulation, including any Internet or electronic publication, that routinely carries news and commentary of general interest, for the cost of covering or carrying a news story, commentary or editorial.

(9) A payment by an organization for its regularly published newsletter or periodical, if the circulation is limited to the organization's members, employees, shareholders, other affiliated individuals and those who request or purchase the publication. This exception applies only to the

costs regularly incurred in publication and distribution. Any additional costs incurred are contributions, including, but not limited to, expanded circulation; substantial alterations in size, style, or format; or a change in publication schedule, such as a special edition.

(10) A payment for a debate or other forum sponsored by a nonpartisan organization in which at least two candidates appearing on the ballot for the same elective office were invited to participate.

(11) A payment for a debate or other forum in which the proponent of a ballot measure and at least one opponent, or their respective representatives, were invited to participate in equal numbers.

(12) A payment for a debate or other forum sponsored by a political party or affiliated committee in which a majority of the candidates for that party's nomination were invited to participate.

(13) A payment made by a bona fide service, social, business, trade, union or professional organization or group for reasonable overhead expenses associated with the organization's regularly scheduled meeting at which a candidate or an individual representing either side of a ballot measure speaks, if the organization pays no additional costs in connection with the speaker's attendance.

(14) A payment received by, directed by, or made at the behest of a candidate for personal purposes. [NOTE: Such payments may constitute gifts, income, or honoraria, and as such may be limited or prohibited, under other provisions of the Act. See also Regulation 18941.1 regarding payments for food.]

(15) A payment made by a candidate for a communication in support of or opposition to a ballot measure, if the communication features the endorsing candidate or clearly identifies him or

her as the sponsor of the communication. [NOTE: this exception does not include a monetary contribution from a candidate or his or her controlled committee to a ballot measure committee.]

(16) A payment by a sponsoring organization for the establishment and administration of a sponsored committee, provided such payments are reported. Any monetary payment made under this subdivision to the sponsored committee shall be made by separate instrument. A “sponsoring organization” may be any person (see Section 82047) except a candidate or other individual (see Section 82048.7). “Establishment and administration” means the cost of office space, phones, salaries, utilities, supplies, legal and accounting fees, and other expenses incurred in setting up and running a sponsored committee.

(17) A payment by a non-partisan organization, that is not affiliated with any candidate, political party, or committee and has not endorsed or contributed to candidates or measures in the election, to create and operate a website that posts political information designed to encourage individuals to vote or to register to vote and presents any candidate or measure-related content in a nonpartisan manner, giving reasonably equal treatment to candidates for the same office or to both sides of a measure.

(18) Uncompensated Internet activity by an individual supporting or opposing a candidate or measure as stated in Regulation 18215.2.

(d) A contribution made at the behest of a candidate for a different candidate or to a committee not controlled by the behesting candidate is not a contribution to the behesting candidate.

Note: Authority cited: Section 83112, Government Code. Reference: Sections 82015 and 85312, Government Code.

## HISTORY

1. New section filed 4-30-76; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 76, No. 18).
2. Amendment of subsection (e) filed 1-9-81; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 81, No. 2).
3. Amendment filed 2-17-82; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 82, No. 8).
4. Amendment filed 7-12-84; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 84, No. 28).
5. Relettering of subsection (d) to subsection (e) and new subsection (d) filed 11-26-90; operative 12-26-90 (Register 91, No. 1).
6. Amendment filed 11-7-95; operative 11-7-95 pursuant to Government Code section 11343.4(d) (Register 95, No. 45).
7. Editorial correction of subsection (b)(1) (Register 96, No. 43).
8. New subsection (c)(16) and amendment of Note filed 1-29-97 as an emergency; operative 1-29-97. Submitted to OAL for printing only (Register 97, No. 5).
9. Permanent regulation filed 6-26-97; operative 6-26-97. Submitted to OAL for printing only (Register 97, No. 26).
10. Repealer of subsections (c)(8)-(c)(8)(ii), new subsection (c)(8), amendment of subsections (c)(14) and (c)(16) and new subsections (c)(17)-(18) filed 12-20-2010; operative 1-19-2011. Submitted to OAL for filing pursuant to *Fair Political Practices Commission v. Office of Administrative Law*, 3 Civil C010924, California Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District, nonpublished decision, April 27, 1992 (FPPC regulations only subject to 1974 Administrative Procedure Act rulemaking requirements and not subject to procedural or substantive review by OAL) (Register 2010, No. 52).