

# FACT SHEET FOR THE FAIR ELECTIONS PROGRAM DURING THE 2022 ELECTION CYCLE

## Contact us



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## Background

The Fair Elections Program (FEP) is a voluntary public financing program for local political campaigns in the District of Columbia through the combination of matching funds and lump sum base amounts.

## The Program will

- ▶ Provide an incentive for more candidates to compete in the electoral process;
- ▶ Encourage residents to have greater civic participation in the electoral process; and
- ▶ Amplify the voices of residents by matching qualified small dollar contributions.

## Highlights of the Program

- ▶ The Fair Elections Program is voluntary and is available to candidates running for the covered office of Mayor, Attorney General, Chairman and Member of the Council and At-Large and Ward Member of the State Board of Education.
- ▶ Candidates must pledge to accept lower contribution limits; to accept contributions only from individuals, and not from business entities or traditional Political Action Committees; and to participate in at least one debate in contested city-wide races.
- ▶ To be certified by the Office of Campaign Finance (OCF) as a "Participating Candidate" in the Fair Elections Program, the candidate must obtain the following during the qualifying period:
  - For the Office of Mayor, qualified small dollar contributions from at least 1000 small dollar contributors, which in the aggregate, total \$40,000 or more
  - For the Office of Attorney General, qualified small dollar contributions from at least 500 small dollar contributors, which in the aggregate, total \$20,000 or more
  - For the Office of Council Chairman, qualified small dollar contributions from at least 300 small dollar contributors, which in the aggregate, total \$15,000 or more
  - For the Office of At-Large Council Member, qualified small dollar contributions from at least 250 small dollar contributors, which in the aggregate, total \$12,000
  - For the Office of Ward Member of the Council, **or** At-Large Member of the State Board of Education, qualified small dollar contributions from at least 150 small dollar contributors, which in the aggregate, total \$5,000 or more
  - For the Office of Ward Member of the State Board of Education, qualified small dollar contributions from at least 50 small dollar contributors, which in the aggregate, total \$1,000 or more

Once certified as a "Participating Candidate," the OCF will within five (5) business days of certification direct the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to distribute within five (5) business days of receiving the OCF notice, matching funds for qualified small dollar contributions (QSDCs) and one half of the base amount in contested city-wide races. Thereafter, the OCF will within five (5) business days of the verification of each R & E Report or the qualification of a Participating Candidate for ballot access, direct the CFO to pay matching funds for QSDCs or the remaining one half of the base amount, within five (5) business days of receiving the OCF notice.

All surplus funds must be remitted to the Office of Campaign Finance within sixty (60) days of an election or the withdrawal, revocation, or termination of candidacy; and the Office of Campaign Finance will audit all campaign operations post-election or following the termination of a campaign.

**Base Amounts, Contribution Limits, and Matching Payments****Base Amounts are only payable in contested elections, as follows:**

- \$160,000 for the Office of the Mayor;
- \$40,000 for the Office of the Attorney General;
- \$40,000 for the Office of Council Chairman; \$40,000 for the Office of Councilmember elected At-Large and from a Ward; and
- \$10,000 for the Office of State Board of Education Member

**Small Dollar Contributions\* from individual District residents and individual non-residents are limited to:**

- \$200 for the Office of Mayor;
- \$200 for the Office of Chairman of the Council or Attorney General;
- \$100 for the Office of Member of the Council elected At-Large;
- \$50 for the Office of Member of the Council elected from a Ward or for Member of the State Board of Education elected At-Large;
- \$20 for the Office of Member of the State Board of Education elected from a Ward.

▶ Contributions or loans from the Candidate or immediate family members, in the aggregate, are limited to \$5,000.00 or \$2500.00, dependent on the covered office.

▶ Participating Candidates are entitled to matching payments for each qualified small dollar contribution with a value of \$5 or more from an individual District resident at a rate of 5:1.

The maximum amount Participating Candidates may receive for the 2022 Election Cycle in matching payments at the 5:1 rate for qualified small dollar contributions from individual District residents is as follows:

- Mayor - \$3,544,475
- Council Chair - \$616,222
- Attorney General - \$825,633
- At Large Council Member - \$333,394
- Ward Council Member - \$233,384
- Ward State Board of Education Member - \$33,294

The cap is based on a look back at 110% of the average expenditures of all winning candidates for the prior four (4) elections for the office of Mayor, City Council Chair and Attorney General. The prior two (2) elections are used to determine the cap for the office of City Council At-Large, City Council Ward and State Board of Education, Ward.

**Training Requirement:**

▶ A candidate for public office and the treasurer of a principal campaign committee in the District of Columbia must attend a training program in person (due to the current Public Health Emergency, all training is conducted virtually online at the OCF Website until further notice) before the Office of Campaign Finance concerning the reporting requirements within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date on which the Public Financing Statement of Organization is filed, or as otherwise scheduled by the Agency.

**Debate Requirement:**

Program participants may be required to take part in a public debate for each contested city-wide Primary, Special or General Election in an election cycle for the covered offices.

**Mandatory Filing Deadlines for Candidates Seeking Certification and Participating Candidates**

- ▶ July 31, 2021
- ▶ October 10, 2021
- ▶ December 10, 2021
- ▶ January 31, 2022
- ▶ March 10, 2022
- ▶ April 10, 2022
- ▶ May 10, 2022
- ▶ June 10, 2022
- ▶ August 10, 2022
- ▶ October 10, 2022
- ▶ October 31, 2022 (8 Day Pre-General Election Report)
- ▶ December 10, 2022

**Optional Filing Deadlines for Candidates Seeking Certification until Certification is Achieved.** (Dates may be subject to change)

- ▶ August 31, 2021
- ▶ September 30, 2021
- ▶ October 31, 2021
- ▶ January 10, 2022
- ▶ February 10, 2022
- ▶ March 30, 2022
- ▶ April 30, 2022
- ▶ June 30, 2022
- ▶ July 10, 2022
- ▶ August 31, 2022
- ▶ September 30, 2022

**Optional Filing Deadlines for Participating Candidates following Certification** (Dates may be subject to change)

- ▶ February 10, 2022
- ▶ March 30, 2022
- ▶ April 30, 2022
- ▶ July 10, 2022
- ▶ August 31, 2022
- ▶ September 30, 2022

**Election Dates**

- ▶ June 21, 2022 (Primary Election)
- ▶ November 8, 2022 (General Election)

**Qualifying Period** (Dates may be subject to change)

- ▶ Primary Election: November 7, 2018 through March 23, 2022 (the last day to file nominating petitions as a candidate for a covered office in the Primary Election).
- ▶ General Election: November 7, 2018 through August 10, 2022 (the last day to file nominating petitions as a candidate for a covered office in the General Election).

\* Each small dollar contribution must be accompanied by a "Receipt and Affirmation Statement for Contribution" form uploaded into the OCF E-Filing System.