



CITIZENS' ELECTION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

2020 General Assembly Primary and General Elections

Chapter 157 of the Connecticut General Statutes establishes the Citizens' Election Program (the "Program"), a voluntary program which provides clean elections financing to qualified candidates for statewide offices and the General Assembly. The Program is financed by the Citizens' Election Fund, which receives funds primarily from the proceeds of the sale of abandoned property in the State of Connecticut's custody, as well as voluntary donations.

Candidates running for the office of state senator or state representative in 2020 may join the Program.

Although participation in the Program is voluntary, certain requirements apply to *all* candidate committees of General Assembly candidates. For example, candidate committees are required to file forms indicating whether or not they will participate and will likely need to file mandatory supplemental campaign finance disclosure reports.

The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the "Commission") is the filing repository for all campaign forms and disclosure statements filed for General Assembly candidates. The Commission is also responsible for administering the Program and monitoring compliance with Program requirements.

Program Goals

The voluntary public financing Program is designed to improve the electoral process in the following ways:

1. Allowing candidates to compete without reliance on special interest money;
2. Allowing statewide officers and legislators the ability to make decisions free of the influence of, or the appearance that they have been influenced by, donations from special interests;
3. Restoring public confidence in the electoral and legislative processes;
4. Increasing meaningful citizen participation; and
5. Providing the public with useful and timely disclosure of campaign finances.

To participate, candidates must agree to abide by certain requirements, including strict contribution and expenditure limits and mandatory financial disclosures.



General Election Grants

Grant Reduction Schedule

In 2017, the legislature implemented a grant reduction schedule so the later a campaign applies for a general election grant, the smaller the grant it may be eligible to receive. The specific dates in 2020 and the corresponding grant amounts will be outlined in the next sections.

Major Party Candidates

A major party is defined as a political party or organization whose candidate for Governor in the most recent gubernatorial election received *at least 20%* of the whole number of votes cast for all candidates for Governor while running as a member of that party, or a political party having a number of enrolled members on the active registry list equal to *at least 20%* of the total number of enrolled members of all political parties on the active registry list in the state at the time of the last gubernatorial election.

A candidate who has obtained the nomination of a major party is eligible for a full general election grant base amount. However, if the candidate faces only a minor party or petitioning opponent who has not raised an amount equal to the qualifying threshold level for that office ("limited opposition"), the grant would be reduced to 60%, and if he is unopposed in the general election, the grant would be reduced to 30%. In addition, the grant may now be reduced depending on when the campaign applies. The specific grant amounts, based on application date and opposition, are below:

2020 Senate General Election – Major Party Candidates

Date of Grant Application	Full Opposition (full grant)	Limited Opposition (60% grant)	Unopposed (30% grant)
If you apply on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2020 (full grant)	\$103,955.00	\$62,373.00	\$31,186.50
If you apply between Tues., August 25, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Sept. 4, 2020 [Monday, September 7, is a state holiday] (75%)	\$77,966.25	\$46,779.75	\$23,389.88
If you apply between Tues., Sept 8, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Sept. 21, 2020 (65%)	\$67,570.75	\$40,542.45	\$20,271.23
If you apply between Tues., Sept. 22, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 5, 2020 (55%)	\$57,175.25	\$34,305.15	\$17,152.58
If you apply between Tues., Oct. 6, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Oct. 9, 2020 (40%)	\$41,582.00	\$24,949.20	\$12,474.60



2020 State Representative General Election – Major Party Candidates

Date of Grant Application	Full Opposition (full grant)	Limited Opposition (60% grant)	Unopposed (30% grant)
If you apply on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2020 (full grant)	\$30,575.00	\$18,345.00	\$9,172.50
If you apply between Tues., August 25, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Sept. 4, 2020 [Monday, September 7, is a state holiday] (75%)	\$22,931.25	\$13,758.75	\$6,879.38
If you apply between Tues., Sept 8, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Sept. 21, 2020 (65%)	\$19,873.75	\$11,924.25	\$5,962.13
If you apply between Tues., Sept. 22, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 5, 2020 (55%)	\$16,816.25	\$10,089.75	\$5,044.88
If you apply between Tues., Oct. 6, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Oct. 9, 2020 (40%)	\$12,230.00	\$7,338.00	\$3,669.00

Grant amounts are also reduced by any personal funds provided by the candidate, certain amounts of lawn signs provided to the committee, and any grant monies left over from a primary.

Minor Party and Petitioning Candidates

A minor party is defined as a political party that is not a major party and whose candidate for the office in question received at the last-preceding regular election for such office, under the designation of that political party or organization, at least 1% of the whole number of votes cast for all candidates for such office at such election.

A petitioning candidate is one who utilizes the nominating petition procedure to obtain ballot access.

A minor party candidate is eligible for a **full general election grant** if he has obtained the nomination of a minor party whose candidate seeking election for the same office in the same district at the last-preceding regular election received at least 20% of the votes cast for that office. A petitioning candidate is eligible for a full general election grant if he has obtained ballot access and petition signatures by electors equaling at least 20% of the votes cast for that office in the prior general election.

A minor party candidate is eligible for **two thirds** of a full general election grant if he has obtained the nomination of a minor party whose candidate seeking election for the same office in the same district at the last-preceding regular election received at least 15% of the votes cast for that office. A petitioning candidate is eligible for a full general election grant if he has obtained ballot access and petition signatures by electors equaling at least 15% of the votes cast for that office in the prior general election.



A minor party candidate is eligible for **one third** of a full general election grant if he has obtained the nomination of a minor party whose candidate seeking election for the same office in the same district at the last-preceding regular election received at least 10% of the votes cast for that office. A petitioning candidate is eligible for a full general election grant if he has obtained ballot access and petition signatures by electors equaling at least 10% of the votes cast for that office in the prior general election.

In addition, the grant amount may be reduced depending on when the candidate applies during the election cycle, as previously discussed. The specific grant amounts, based on application date and percentage of signatures / vote obtained by the minor party in previous regular election cycle, are summarized in the charts below:

Committees of Candidates Who Receive One-Third or Two-Thirds of the Full Grant Amount May Raise “Differential Contributions”

Minor party or petitioning candidates who receive less than the full grant amount may continue to raise and spend additional contributions, known as “differential contributions,” which must meet the criteria for qualifying contributions, up to the amount of the full applicable grant for the general election for that office.

Committees of Candidates Who Receive One-Third or Two-Thirds of the Full Grant Amount May Be Eligible For Post-Election Grant

Minor party or petitioning candidates who receive a one-third or two-thirds grant amount and report a deficit in post-election disclosure statements may also be eligible to receive supplemental grant money.

2020 Senate General Election – Minor Party & Petitioning

Date of Grant Application	20% last vote / signatures (full grant)	15% last vote / signatures (2/3 grant)	10% last vote / signatures (1/3 grant)
If you apply on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2020 (full grant)	\$103,955.00	\$69,303.33	\$34,651.67
If you apply between Tues., August 25, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Sept. 4, 2020 [Monday, September 7, is a state holiday] (75%)	\$77,966.25	\$51,977.50	\$25,988.75
If you apply between Tues., Sept 8, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Sept. 21, 2020 (65%)	\$67,570.75	\$45,047.16	\$22,523.59
If you apply between Tues., Sept. 22, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 5, 2020 (55%)	\$57,175.25	\$38,116.83	\$19,058.42
If you apply between Tues., Oct. 6, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Oct. 9, 2020 (40%)	\$41,582.00	\$27,721.33	\$13,860.67



2020 State Representative General Election – Minor Party & Petitioning

Date of Grant Application	20% last vote / signatures (full grant)	15% last vote / signatures (2/3 grant)	10% last vote / signatures (1/3 grant)
If you apply on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2020 (full grant)	\$30,575.00	\$20,383.33	\$10,191.67
If you apply between Tues., August 25, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Sept. 4, 2020 [Monday, September 7, is a state holiday] (75%)	\$22,931.25	\$15,287.50	\$7,643.75
If you apply between Tues., Sept 8, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Sept. 21, 2020 (65%)	\$19,873.75	\$13,249.16	\$6,624.59
If you apply between Tues., Sept. 22, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 5, 2020 (55%)	\$16,816.25	\$11,210.83	\$5,605.42
If you apply between Tues., Oct. 6, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. on Fri., Oct. 9, 2020 (40%)	\$12,230.00	\$8,153.33	\$4,076.67

Grant amounts may also be reduced by the amount of any unspent primary funds (if the candidate's committee received a primary grant), certain amounts of lawn signs provided to the committee, and by any personal funds provided by the candidate.

Expenditure Limits

- Expenditures made or incurred during the period before a primary campaign or general election campaign (the "**pre-primary/pre-general election period**") are limited to the required amount of qualifying contributions, plus any allowable personal funds the candidate provides to the candidate committee. This period ends with the commencement of the primary campaign period or the general election campaign period, as discussed below.
- For candidates for the district office of State Senator or State Representative, the **primary campaign period** begins the day after the close of the state or district convention held to endorse such candidate. For candidates for the municipal office of State Senator or State Representative, the primary campaign period begins the day after the close of the caucus, convention, or town committee meeting held to endorse such candidate. The primary campaign period ends on the day of the primary election.
 - The **primary campaign period** limit is calculated by adding the amount of the primary grant, and any unspent qualifying contributions or unspent personal funds provided by the candidate.



- If a primary is held, the **general election campaign period** for the candidate nominated at the primary begins the day after the primary. If there is no primary, the general election campaign period begins the day after the candidate is nominated. The general election campaign period ends the day the campaign treasurer files the final required campaign finance disclosure statement.
 - The **general election campaign period** limit is calculated by adding the amount of the general election grant, and any unspent qualifying contributions or unspent personal funds provided by the candidate.

Expenditure Limits During "Pre-Primary/Pre-General Election Period"			
Office Sought	Qualifying Amount	Maximum Allowable Amount of Candidate's Personal Funds	Maximum Expenditures During Period
State Senator	\$16,000	\$2,000	\$16,000 - \$18,000
State Representative	\$5,300	\$1,000	\$5,300 - \$6,300

Permissible Expenditures

- Clean elections funds may be used only for campaign-related expenditures made to advance the participating candidate's campaign.
- Campaigns must maintain detailed documentation indicating that campaign expenditures were made to directly further the participating candidate's race. Such documentation should be created at the time of the transaction.
- Campaign records are subject to comprehensive examinations to ensure compliance with Program requirements.
- Expenditures without adequate supporting documentation are considered impermissible under the Program regulations.

Permissible Expenditures for participating candidates include, but are not limited, to:

- **Political campaign advertising expenses**, such as adequately documented advertisements in any communication medium; production or postage costs related to customary campaign items, such as flyers, signs, stickers, t-shirts, hats, and buttons;



- **Campaign promotional events**, including expenditures for food, space rental, staff and entertainment at such events;
- **Polling or get-out-the-vote activities** in furtherance of the participating candidate's campaign;
- **Food and beverages for campaign workers** not to exceed \$15 per person for breakfast, \$20 per person for lunch, or \$30 per person for dinner;
- **Salaries for campaign staff or consultants**, provided a written agreement is signed *before* the performance of any work or services, and contemporaneous detailed records are kept documenting the work performed or services rendered (for example, timesheets, work logs, invoices, etc.);
- **Campaign office expenses**, including office rent (with a written lease) and office supplies, equipment, and furniture;
- **Limited post-election expenses**, such as costs of photocopies associated with compliance with the Commission's post-election review of the participating candidate's campaign.

Examples of Impermissible Expenditures include:

- Spending for the personal use of any candidate or individual;
- Payments to the candidate or candidate's family members or the businesses of the participating candidate or any of the candidate's family members;
- Contributions, loans or expenditures to other candidates or committees;
- Payments above fair market value for goods or services received; and
- Expenditures lacking sufficient contemporaneous documentation.

For additional guidance, please see the Commission's Citizens' Election Program Regulations, which can be found on the Commission's website (portal.ct.gov/seec).

Supplemental Reporting

Candidates in Campaigns with any Participating Candidates

- Every candidate committee in a primary or general election campaign in which there is at least one participating candidate must file weekly supplemental campaign finance statements with the Commission according to schedules available on the Commission's website (portal.ct.gov/seec).
- If you are in a **primary race** with at least one participating candidate, you are required to file an initial supplemental statement on the second Thursday following the July 10th statement and a subsequent supplemental statement is due every Thursday until the date of the primary.



- If you are in a **general election** race with at least one participating candidate, you are required to file an initial supplemental statement on the second Thursday following the October 10th statement and a subsequent supplemental statement is due every Thursday until the date of the general election. If you are participating and unopposed in the general election, you need only file the final supplemental statement.

For more information on the deadlines for these filings, please visit the Commission's website at portal.ct.gov/seec.

Excess Expenditure Reporting within 24 to 48 Hours

- Excess expenditures are expenditures made, or obligated to be made, by a participating candidate that in the aggregate exceed the applicable expenditure limit for a participating candidate. For the purposes of triggering a supplemental reporting requirement, a participating candidate's applicable expenditure limit is the sum of the amount of required qualifying contributions plus the amount of the full grant for the applicable primary or general election period.
- Nonparticipating candidates are not required to follow the Program's expenditure limits; however, participating candidates are required to follow the Program's expenditure limits. Accordingly, participating candidates should *not* make excess expenditures. A participating candidate and treasurer of a candidate committee which has received public funds are subject to various penalties if the committee receives excess funds or makes or incurs an obligation to make an excess expenditure.
- If a participating candidate's committee makes or incurs an expenditure exceeding the participating candidate's applicable expenditure limit **more than 20 days before a primary or election**, the treasurer must file a declaration of excess expenditures **within 48 hours** of making or incurring the expenditure.
- If a participating candidate committee makes or incurs an expenditure exceeding the participating candidate's applicable expenditure limit **20 days or less before a primary or election**, the treasurer must file a declaration of excess expenditures **within 24 hours** of making or incurring the expenditure.

Purpose of Overview Materials

The purpose of this overview is to provide general information about the various rules and requirements of the Program. This document however, is not a substitute for the law, which can be found on the Commission's website, portal.ct.gov/seec. If you have specific questions you may contact the Commission's Candidate Services Unit at 860-256-2985.