



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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FPPC offers guidance on Campaign Filing Deadlines in wake of COVID-19

In light of the Statewide shelter-in-place order, the FPPC understands the unique and extraordinary situation caused by our united efforts to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. We are issuing this advisory as we acknowledge the reality the impact this order will have on the current and ongoing election cycle. While we acknowledge the legal nature of filing requirements and deadlines, the FPPC recognizes offices around the State are closed and the stay at home directive means the filing of campaign statements and reports will be difficult.

With that in mind, we still encourage candidates and committees to continue to make the best efforts to timely disclose campaign activity to the public. State and local candidates are encouraged to make use of electronic filing options, if available. All candidates and committees that file campaign statements and reports with the Secretary of State's office (SOS) may use SOS's online filing system. Local candidates and committees should contact their local filing officers to determine if electronic filing is available in their jurisdiction.

"It obviously would not be a good use of our enforcement resources to focus time and energy prosecuting violations that are clearly and demonstrably caused by conditions created by the pandemic," said FPPC Chair Richard C. Miadich. "We want to be as flexible and realistic as possible to help campaigns comply while also providing the public the information needed to make informed decisions."

The law requires certain statements and reports be filed with original signatures. We recognize restrictions imposed to fight the spread of COVID-19 may make the logistics of filing documents on paper with original signatures difficult or even impossible. To the extent that is the case, candidates and committees are encouraged to make use of digital and electronic options for filing statements and reports to ensure the timely filing of statements and reports (e.g. email and fax filing, scanned and/or photocopied signatures, electronic signatures, etc.). Paper statements with originals would need to be filed when feasible. If circumstances caused by COVID-19 inhibit a candidate's or committee's ability to timely file statements and reports, candidates and committees should communicate these issues to their filing officers and document all attempts to file and the issues faced.

If a candidate or committee makes best efforts to comply with the Political Reform Act's campaign finance disclosure rules but is unable to do so due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the FPPC will consider this a strong mitigating factor in determining whether an enforcement action against the candidate or



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committee is appropriate. The FPPC is committed to promoting timely and effective campaign disclosure to the public but also appreciates the larger public safety issues currently facing the state.

If you have questions or concerns above campaign filing obligations, please email us at advice@fppc.ca.gov.

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