

Chapter 6

What is a Political Committee?

A political committee means:

1. A combination of two or more individuals, or a person other than an individual, that, in an aggregate amount in excess of \$500 during a single calendar year:
 - a. Accepts contributions for the purpose of making contributions to any candidate, political committee, committee of continuous existence, or political party;
 - b. Accepts contributions for the purpose of expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate or issue;
 - c. Makes expenditures that expressly advocate the election or defeat of a candidate or issue; or
 - d. Makes contributions to a common fund, other than a joint checking account between spouses, from which contributions are made to any candidate, political committee, committee of continuous existence, or political party.
2. The sponsor of a proposed constitutional amendment by initiative who intends to seek the signatures of registered electors.

A political committee is **not** an organization whose activities are limited to making expenditures for electioneering communications or accepting contributions for the purpose of making electioneering communications.

Other exceptions to the definition of a political committee are certain corporations or business entities, committees of continuous existence and political parties.

(Section 106.011(1), F.S.)

Comparison of Political Committee, Committee of Continuous Existence And Electioneering Communication Organization

	Political Committee (PC)	Committee of Continuous Existence (CCE)	Electioneering Communication Organization (ECO)
Purpose	<p>To support or oppose any candidate, issue*, PC, CCE, ECO, or political party.</p> <p>May make independent expenditures.</p> <p>May make electioneering communications.</p> <p>*A sponsor of a constitutional initiative petition must be a PC. (100.371, F.S.)</p>	<p>To make contributions to candidates, committees, or political parties. (106.04, F.S.)</p> <p>May contribute to PCs supporting or opposing an issue if such contributions do not exceed 25% of its annual income as reported for the previous year. (106.04(5), F.S.)</p> <p>May contribute to an ECO. (DE 06-09)</p> <p>May not make independent expenditures. (DE 04-09)</p> <p>May not make electioneering communications. (106.04(5), F.S.)</p>	<p>Limited to making expenditures for electioneering communications or accepting contributions for the purpose of making electioneering communications. (106.011(19), F.S.)</p> <p>May not "expressly advocate" the election or defeat of a candidate or the passage or defeat of an issue. (106.011(18), F.S.)</p>
Special Organizational Criteria	None.	<p>Must be organized and operated in accordance with a written charter or bylaws that contain procedures for the election of officers and defines membership in the organization. (106.04(1)(a), F.S.)</p> <p>At least 25% of the income, excluding interest, of the organization must come from dues of members. (106.04(1)(b), F.S.)</p>	None
Initial Filings	<p>Statement of Organization (106.03, F.S.)</p> <p>Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository (106.021, F.S.)</p> <p>Registered Agent Statement of Appointment (106.022, F.S.)</p>	<p>Application for Certification</p> <p>Charter or Bylaws</p> <p>Dues or assessment schedule</p> <p>Financial statement for preceding 12 months</p> <p>Registered Agent Statement of Appointment (106.04(2), F.S.)</p>	<p>Statement of Organization (106.03, F.S.)</p> <p>Appointment of Campaign Treasurer and Designation of Campaign Depository (106.11(1)(d)3., F.S.)</p> <p>Registered Agent Statement of Appointment (106.022, F.S.)</p>

	Political Committee (PC)	Committee of Continuous Existence (CCE)	Electioneering Communication Organization (ECO)
Campaign Accounts	Funds must be deposited in a campaign depository designated “ <i>((Name of Committee) Campaign Account).</i> ” (106.11(1)(b), F.S.)	May use the organization’s checking account.	May use the organization’s checking account.
Limits on Contributions To the Entity	PC supporting or opposing issues only - no limit. PC supporting or opposing one or more candidates - \$500 per election PC supporting or opposing both candidates and issues - \$500 per election (106.08, F.S.)	As long as the requirements under “Special Organizational Criteria” are maintained there is no limit.	No monetary limit May not accept a contribution from an organization exempt from taxation other than a political committee, committee of continuous existence, political party, or electioneering communication organization unless the contributing organization has registered as if it were an ECO (106.08(5)(d), F.S.)
Limits on Contributions By the Entity	PC to a candidate - \$500 per election. PC expenditures in support of or opposition to issues – no limit. PC to a political party – no limit.	CCE to a candidate or PC supporting candidates - \$500 per election. (106.08, F.S.) CCE to an ECO or a political party – no limit. CCE to a PC supporting issues – not to exceed 25% of its annual income as reported on the annual report filed from the previous year. (106.04(5), F.S.)	May not make contributions to candidates (106.11(19), F.S.)
Restrictions	Funds may be used only for PC activity and only for the purpose of influencing the results of an election.	A CCE must register as a PC in order to directly support or oppose issues. (106.04(5), F.S.) May not make independent expenditures (DE 04-09) May not make electioneering communications. (106.04(5), F.S.)	Funds may only be used to make electioneering communications. (106.011(19), F.S.) An ECO must register as a PC in order to directly support or oppose issues. May not make independent expenditures.

	Political Committee (PC)	Committee of Continuous Existence (CCE)	Electioneering Communication Organization (ECO)
When to File Reports	See <i>Calendar of Reporting Dates</i> on the Division's web site.	See <i>Calendar of Reporting Dates</i> on the Division's web site. Annual report filed in January of each year.	See <i>Calendar of Reporting Dates</i> on the Division's web site. See also section 106.0703 for additional reporting requirements
Where to File Reports	Division of Elections – if supports or opposes statewide, legislative, or multicounty candidates or issues. Supervisor of Elections – if supports or opposes candidates or issues in a countywide or less than a countywide election, except municipal. Municipal Clerk – if supports or opposes only municipal candidates or issues.	Division of Elections (106.04(4), F.S.)	Division of Elections – if supports or opposes statewide, legislative, or multicounty candidates or issues. Supervisor of Elections – if supports or opposes candidates or issues in a countywide or less than a countywide election, except municipal. Municipal Clerk – if supports or opposes only municipal candidates or issues.