



*Voluntary Compliance Through Education and Disclosure*

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# **PUBLIC FINANCING PROGRAM**

**THINKING OF RUNNING  
FOR OFFICE IN THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA?**



**You May Qualify for Public Funding**

## What is the Fair Elections Program?

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.

## Who Can Participate?

Participation in the Fair Elections Program is available to candidates running for the "Covered Office" of:

- ◆ Mayor
- ◆ Attorney General
- ◆ Councilmember (Chairman, At-Large, and Ward), and the
- ◆ State Board of Education (At-Large and Ward)

## Participating Candidates must pledge to adhere to:

- ◆ Lower contribution limits for individuals than those that apply to non-participating candidates;
- ◆ A total ban on corporate and business entity, and traditional PAC contributions;
- ◆ Restrictions on the amounts candidates and members of their immediate families may contribute to their campaigns; and
- ◆ Participate in candidate debates.

## The Program will:

- ◆ Provide an incentive for more candidates to compete in the electoral process and engage with average everyday citizens and their neighbors to seek financial support instead of relying on large contributions from special interests.
- ◆ Amplify the voices of residents by matching qualified small dollar contributions at a 5:1 ratio.
- ◆ Encourage greater civic participation in the electoral process by the small donor.
- ◆ Free candidates from the rigors of fundraising to communicate more with their constituents.

## Certification

A candidate is deemed eligible if they accept the program's requirements which include contribution limits and meeting the minimum small-dollar amounts for the office sought.

For more information on the Fair Elections Program, please visit the Office of Campaign Finance website: [www.ocf.dc.gov](http://www.ocf.dc.gov) Or call (202) 671-0547.

## Base Amount Payments

Base amount payments are meant to provide candidates with start up funds for their campaigns while they continue to collect QSDCs, and are paid only in contested elections. The amount of the payment varies dependent upon the Covered Office.

## Matching Payments

QSDCs are eligible for matching funds at a 5:1 rate after the candidate is certified for the Program—e.g., a \$200 QSDC would be matched with \$1,000, for an effective donation of \$1,200. Contributions from non-District resident individuals are not matched.

## Contribution Limits & Requirements

Candidates seeking certification and participating candidates may accept Qualified Small Dollar Contributions (QSDCs) from individual District residents and contributions from non-District individuals in an election cycle that do not exceed for the following Covered Offices:

| OFFICE COVERED  | CONTRIBUTION LIMITS   |
|---|---|
| Mayor   | <b>\$200</b> (currently \$2,000 under the traditional system) |
| Attorney General  | <b>\$200</b> (currently \$1,500 under the traditional system) |
| Council Chairman  | <b>\$200</b> (currently \$1,500 under the traditional system) |
| At-Large Councilmember  | <b>\$100</b> (currently \$1,000 under the traditional system) |
| Ward Councilmember & At-Large State Board of Education Member | <b>\$50</b> (currently \$500 under the traditional system)    |
| Ward State Board of Education Member                          | <b>\$20</b> (currently \$200 under the traditional system)    |

\*Each contribution must be supported by a signed digital receipt and Affidavit of the contributor.

## Qualifications

To qualify for the Program, a candidate seeking certification must file an Affidavit signed by the candidate and the committee treasurer, and obtain QSDCs from District resident individuals which meet the following threshold requirements for the Covered Offices sought:

| OFFICE COVERED  | MINIMUM AMOUNTS | SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTORS |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Mayor   | \$40,000        | 1000                      |
| Attorney General  | \$20,000        | 500                       |
| Council Chairman  | \$15,000        | 300                       |
| At-Large Councilmember  | \$12,000        | 250                       |
| Ward Councilmember & At-Large State Board of Education Member | \$5,000         | 150                       |
| Ward State Board of Education Member                          | \$1,000         | 50                        |