Campaign Finance Reporter

Version 2.4.95.04386 Service Pack 33

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You Need to Know

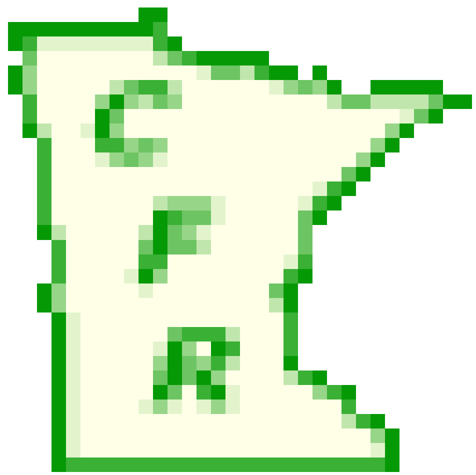
- The software was developed and is maintained by Board staff
- By statute all committees are required to file electronically as of 2012.
- CFR requires Windows operating system (can run on a Mac using an emulator such as Parallels, VMware, Code Weavers, I Emulator)
- Runs on and stores data on your computer.

Prerequisites

- Must have a registered committee with the Campaign Finance Board
- Obtain your credentials (Registration Number, User Name, and Password)
  - Call Marcia Waller (651) 539-1187 to obtain username and password.
- Download a copy of the software
  - (https://cfb.mn.gov/filer-resources/self-help/education-and-tools/campaign-finance-reporter-download-page/)
  - Click "Download Now"
- Install the software on your computer (Note: when you install CFE use the default locations provided.)

Finding the software

- On your desk-top double-click the icon that looks like a Map of Minnesota with the letters CFR.



Registering your Committee in CFR

- To setup a new committee (Register your Committee in CFR):
- Click the New Committee button on the opening screen
- Enter the committee's registration number, issued by the Board
- Enter the committee name and address, as reported to the Board
- Enter the Email address where you would like to receive e-filing confirmation that a report has been filed
- Enter the last two digits of the year you are reporting on, for example 20 for 2020.
- Select the committee type from the committee type drop down
- If your committee is the Principal Campaign Committee for a Candidate you will also need to:
- Check Special Election, if it applies
- Select the Office Sought
- Select the District(if applicable)
- If your committee reported to the Board last year, enter the ending cash balance from the previous year's report in the Beginning Cash field
- Click Ok

Download Committee Information

- Upon Registration of a new committee and every 30 days, CFR will remind you to download committee information.
- If registering a new committee in CFR prompted to provide your credentials, otherwise the credentials are stored within the data.
- Software will have limited function until committee information is downloaded
- This download updates
  - Information about your committee on file with CFB
  - Committee filing dates and limits
  - Entities Registered with the CFB

Viewing/Editing Committee Information

- Updating Your Committee's Officers
- You can update the individuals associated with your committee (e.g. Treasurer, Chair, etc.) or the individuals' information at anytime.
- If you make any changes to the committee's information, such as addresses, phone numbers, etc.; you must notify Board staff, as these changes affect the registration information on file. Email any changes to cf.board@state.mn.us
- Open the Committee form under Edit/View > Committee > Maintenance
- The individuals associated with the committee are listed under the Individuals section
- To select a different individual, start typing their last name in the corresponding field and select the correct individual from the drop-down list. (You may need to setup a new entity if the individual you are looking for is not in the list)
- To edit an associated individual's personal information, right-click the name of the individual.

Viewing Committee Data

- T view Board information about your committee:
- In the main navigation menu, go to Edit/View > Committee > View Data
- The tabs along the top of the form specify the data that is displayed under that tab (e.g. Reports Data, Limits Data)
- The System Data tab displays information about your committee as well as current year legislative session dates and compliance checking information.
- The Reports Data tab displays reports due for the current filing year.
- The Candidate Data tab displays information about the candidate.
- The Limits Data tab displays committee limit information for the current election cycle.
- Note: the Candidate Data tab and the Limits Data tab appear only for principle campaign committees

Maintenance

- Backup
  - Perform every time you do data entry
  - Keep your backups on separate media
  - Backup/Restore can be used to transfer committee information between machines
- Purge
  - Remove unwanted committees and filing years
- Compact
  - a database routine that maintains the integrity of the database

Common Behavior Buttons

- OK – Saves changes and closes form
- Cancel – Discards changes and closes form
- Clear – Discards changes leaving form open
- New – Saves changes and clears form leaving it open for further entry.

Receipts

- Any type of income or asset received by the committee
- Any contribution (or aggregate) from an individual over $20 requires a name and address
- Any contribution over (or aggregate) $200 requires an address and employment info

Receipts

- A single form is used to record and edit all transactions by which a committee receives money, goods, or services. The form allows a user to select a pre-determined type of receipt and enter all information required by the Campaign Finance Board in an easy, guided manner.

- To record a receipt:

- In the top menu bar, select Record Keeping > Receipts
- In the drop-down list labeled Receipt Type, select the form of receipt
- In the drop-down list labeled Source, select the entity that contributed

- If the required entity is not in the Source list, you may need to set it up as an entity

- Enter the monetary value of the receipt in the Amount field
- Enter the date the receipt was received in the Received Date field
- If it is an In Kind receipt, check the In Kind box and add a description of the goods or services received. An In Kind receipt must be recorded as being used within the same period in which it was received, via an In Kind Expenditure.

- If the receipt is an individual contribution to be split between a married couple, select the Joint Contribution box, then confirm the receipt was split by clicking on the upper tab labeled Joint Source

- Fill out any other fields relevant to the receipt (e.g. Loan if its a loan payment)
- Once the form is filled out, click OK to save the receipt

Sample Receipt Transactions

- Contribution from an Individual and their spouse
  - 4/12 John and Jane Doe $100
    - John (3M) and Jane Doe (Homemaker)
    - Box 202
    - St Paul, MN 55303

- Contribution from an Lobbyist
  - 6/13 David Aafedt (1733) $200

- Pass the hat? Stuff the jar?
- Cash proceeds from fundraising picnic
  - 6/30 $792

Sample Receipt Trans. (Cont.)

- Receipt from a Party Unit
  - 7/21 Republican Party of Minn (20008)$1000
- In-kind contribution of computer
  - 4/20 Joe Jefferson $250 (Computer)
    - Joe Jefferson
      - Box 303
    - St Paul, MN 55303

Expenditures

- Cash Expenditures are considered monetary payments to an entity. The Cash Expenditure form guides the user through recording all the necessary information regarding Cash Expenditures.

- To record a cash expenditure:

- In the top menu bar, select Record Keeping>Expenditures>Cash
- In the top right-hand corner, choose the Payee/Vendor Type
- In the drop-down list labeled Payee, select the vendor entity
- Enter the Amount and Date
- In the drop-down list labeled Description, select a category that best fits the expenditure
- Enter a brief, more accurate description of the expenditure in the Explanation field
- If applicable, check the Non-campaign Disbursement box
- The Non-campaign Disbursement check box appears only for candidate committees
- Select a category from the drop-down list labeled Desc
- If the category selected in the Description list is always considered a Non-campaign Disbursement, the Non-campaign Disbursement box will automatically be checked. Otherwise the user must determine if the expenditure is a Non-campaign Disbursement or a Campaign Expenditure.

Expenditures Contued…

- Available options on the Cash Expenditure form:
- Unpaid Bill: check this box if the expenditure has not been paid yet. If payment is owed to an entity other than the payee (i.e. Visa), select the Entity Owed
- The Check #:field is optional, but required in order to use the Bank Reconciliation feature.
- Project: If you setup a Committee project, such as a fundraiser, select the project from the drop-down list to associate it with this expenditure
- Loan: If a loan category was selected in the Description field, select the applicable loan from this drop-down list. See Setting up a Loan for more information.
- Review the data and click OK to save the expenditure

Sample Expenditures

- Campaign Expenditure
  - 5/5 UPS Store (Campaign Leaflets) $170
    - The UPS Store
    - 2515 White Bear Ave Ste A-8
    - Maplewood, MN 55109
- Non-campaign Expenditure
  - 6/30 Cub Foods (Food for fundraiser) $129.75
    - Cub Foods
    - 1177 Clarence St, St Paul
    - 9MN 55106
- Reimbursing Expenditure
  - 6/29 Joe Jefferson $224.38
    - 5/29 Office Supplies $49.37 Office Max 1885 County Rd D E, Maplewood, MN 55109
    - 5/30 Food for Volunteers $75.29 Cub Foods
    - 6/29 Mileage Expense $29.42 Joe Jefferson

Sample Expenditures (Cont.)

- Campaign Expenditure Unpaid Bill
  - 6/30 Acme Entertainment (Entertainment) $329.36
    - 15 Frontage Rd
    - Woodbury, MN 55130
- Contribution to an Unregistered Committee
  - 07/15 Will B Dunn for Mayor $200.00
    - 1234 7th St
    - St. Paul MN 55106

Payments on Unpaid Bills

- To make installments on an unpaid bill

- In the top menu bar, select Record Keeping\ Payments on Unpaid Bills
- Select the entity to receive the payment in the Payee drop-down list
- Payments can only be made on previously recorded unpaid expenditures. The Payee field will only list those entities that have unpaid balances.

- If you have multiple unpaid bills for the same payee, you may use the Date, Amount, and Description fields listed in the drop-down to help identify the correct item.

- Campaign Finance Reporter will automatically fill in the Date Incurred, Expenditure Amt, Paid Amount, and Amount Due fields. Check that these are correct before recording the payment
- Enter the Date of Payment
- Enter the Amount of Payment, the software will display a warning if the payment causes the total amount paid to be greater than the total expenditure amount
- If applicable, enter a Check Number
- The Check Number field is optional, but required in order to use the Bank Reconciliation feature

- Click OK to save the payment

Contributions (made)

- Cash Contributions encompass any money given by the committee directly to another registered entity.

- In the top menu bar, select Record Keeping > Contributions Made > Cash
- In the box labeled Recipient Type in the upper-right, select the type of entity the contribution was made to
- In the drop-down list labeled Recipient, select the entity the contribution was made to. This list is populated based upon the Recipient Type selection.
- Enter the amount of the contribution in the Amount field
- Enter the date of the contribution in the Date field
- (Optional) Enter a check number in the field labeled Check #
- Check numbers are optional, but are used in the Bank Reconciliation feature of Campaign Finance Reporter. If you wish to use the Bank Reconciliation feature, the use of check numbers may enhance its functionality
- Select OK to save the record and close the form, or select New to save the current record and open a new record
- Sample Contribution to Registered Committee
  - 7/20 Bike PAC (40555) $250

Contributions (made)

- Contributions FROM your committee TO another registered committee

- Go to **Record Keeping…Contributions Made…Cash** to open the cash contributions entry form.

- Sample
  - 7/20 Bike PAC (Donation) $250

Reports

- Batch Compliance
  - Possible Lobbyist Matches (Exact match of first and last name)
  - Possible Unresolved Compliance Issues
  - Go to **Reports…Batch Compliance** to run the batch compliance report.

- User reports can be generated for review
  - Operational Assistance
  - Daily Summaries
  - Performance Assessment
  - Go to **reports…User reports** to run the batch user reports.

Reports (Continued)

- Board Reports
  - Generates required Board reports into an up-loadable file
  - Compiles all needed schedules for report
  - Print off a copy for your own records
  - Electronic certification same as a signature
  - The report will prompt to transfer automatically upon creation or can be transferred via the File Transfer screen.
  - Go to **reports…Board Reports** to run the board report.

Data Merge

- Letters (e.g. Thank You letters)
- Lists (e.g. phone/constituent lists)
- PCR Receipts
- Note: You must define who you want in the letter/list via selection criteria
- Detailed instructions can be found in the technical bulletin Creating letters at
  - https://cfb.mn.gov/filer-resources/self-help/education-and-tools/campaign-finance_reporter-software-bulletins/

Entity Merge

- Consolidates duplicate entities into a single entity
  - Retains all transactions from both entities
  - Select the entity to be merged on left (only entities entered by the committee are available)
  - Select the entity to be retained on the right (all committees of the selected type are now available)
  - Go to **Tools…Entity Merge**… to run the entity merge process.

Loans/Projects

- Like Entities, must setup the Loan or Project before being able to use it
- Assign the Loan or Project to transactions
- Can generate reports on each project

New Year Initialization

- Each committee is stored in separate set of database files corresponding to the year
- Preliminary New Year Initialization creates a new set of database files for the subsequent year
- Final New Year Initialization carries forward any unpaid bills, outstanding loans and carries the ending cash balance forward
  - If Preliminary New Year Initialization has not been completed, it is performed.
- Go to **Tools…Initialize New Year** to run new year initialization.

PCR Receipts

- The Minnesota political contribution refund program will be reinstated July 1, 2017.
- The date of receipt is the day the candidate, committee, or party unit receives the contribution; not the deposit date.
- The program is open to major and minor party units and candidates who have a signed public subsidy agreement on file with the Board.
- The amount of the refund is $50 per person per calendar year or $100 for a married couple filing a joint refund request form.
- The Board will distribute paper political contribution refund receipt books free of charge to party units and to candidates who have signed public subsidy agreements on file with the Board.
- The Board's Campaign Finance Reporter software will allow users to automatically generate valid political contribution refund receipts.

Campaign Finance Reporter Tips and Tricks

- For easiest navigation, use the Tab key.
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- For even faster movement around forms, use shortcut keys. Hold down the Alt key and press the letter of the shortcut to activate the button or move to the field.
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- For date entry, always use the format mm/dd/yy.
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- Skip the decimal point and cents part of a number if you are entering an even dollar amount.
- Use the Look button on each form to find items that you previously created using that form.
- To get rid of an item that has not been reported to the Board, use the Look button to find the item and bring it back into the form where it was created. Then use the Delete button to get rid of it.
- When finding a name or an item in a list, start typing the name or item. The list will home in on the item you want. Press the Enter key to select the highlighted item.

Campaign Finance Reporter Tips and Tricks (cont.)

- When entering a transaction that uses a name that is not found in the dropdown list, enter the name Last Name, First Name and then Tab. You will jump to the Entity Maintenance form where you may complete setting up the new name. Click OK on the entity maintenance form to return to the transaction you were working on.

- When you are entering a transaction and need to jump to an entity associated with the transaction, place the cursor in the name field and click the right mouse button.

- Use the New button to save a transaction and keep the form open for entering more of the same type of transactions.

- Set up joint entities before going to the receipts form to enter the contributions. For non-joint entities it is easier to set them up from the receipts form using tip number 8 above if needed.

- To record the return of a contribution that you received, go to the receipt transaction and reduce the amount of the receipt. Do not just try to do an expenditure for the refund. That will not reduce the original receipt.