

Treasurer's Handbook

It is the law that political organizations report the money that they spend and receive to NYS. All Town and Wards should have a treasurer, a bank account and report regularly to the New York State Board of Elections (BOE). This handbook will help guide you through the process.

NYS BOE has a handbook. (attachment 6) It is more detailed and contains information designed for many different kinds of committees. I have attempted to sift out the information local committees probably will not need. This should make your job less confusing.

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1) EIN and Bank Account

Before you set up a bank account, you need to get an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS.

Go to: <https://sa.www4.irs.gov/modiein/individual/index.jsp>

Tap” begin application”. On next screen tap “view additional types...”. on next screen tap “political organization” Continue to follow instructions to get EIN. If website changes, go to IRS website and look for link to obtain EIN.

Once you have an EIN you can set up an account at a bank. You will probably need to have all officers sign forms and at least 2 current officers should have access to the account. You may need a copy of the resolution, signed by the Secretary, designating the treasurer and other signers. While only the treasurer should deposit or withdraw funds, it is important to have a backup in case something happens to the treasurer. You don’t want your account hung up in legal limbo.

2) Registering with NYSBOE

a) Registering as treasurer-

If you are a new treasurer and your committee did not have a previous treasurer, you need to register as treasurer and register your committee with the State Board of Elections. A form to register treasurer and committee is included as Attachment 1a or go to https://www.elections.ny.gov/NYSBOE/download/finance/CF02type3-7type3h-7h_rev012021.pdf and print out fillable form.

If your committee is acting for/authorized by candidate/s. You should fill out Attachment 1b and update it when candidates change. You can find the fillable form here: <https://www.elections.ny.gov/NYSBOE/download/finance/cf03.pdf>

Mail forms to: NYSBOE, Att: Compliance Unit, 40 N Pearl St Suite 5, Albany, N.Y., 12207-2729

If your committee is already registered and you are replacing a retiring treasurer the retiring treasurer must resign and file a final report (Attachment 9). You may then register as treasurer.

b) Setting up online accounts.

After you are registered with the BOE as treasurer, you will be able to set up an online account with your own passwords. They will send you the instructions to do this after you have registered. I have a note on the file (where I keep paper copies of reports). The note includes my id #, password, website address for filing , the email address I sign in with and the help phone #. You might also bookmark the webpage on your browser.

3) Record Keeping

Record keeping is an important job for any treasurer, but it is especially important for political organizations. Good records make filing much easier and less stressful. There is also a remote possibility that you could be audited. You should keep all records for at least 5 years.

Before I write any check, I make certain that I have a receipt that contains all the information that I will need for disclosure. This receipt should state the name and address of the vender, date of purchase, and amount of transaction. After I write the check, I write the check # on the receipt and place it in my folder. If I am reimbursing Jane Doe for items she purchased from staples for the committee, I attach a note to the staples receipt stating that I reimbursed Jane Doe. I include her address and the number of the check I used to pay her.

If I write checks before I have this information, I may find myself sitting down to do disclosures and lacking information I need to file. People procrastinate much less when they want to be reimbursed or paid. In the interim, I can forget that I am waiting on them to send information until I sit down to do disclosures. I find that it avoids a great deal of stress to follow this procedure.

I make a copy of every check before I deposit it. The check should have the name and address of the donor on the check. This ensures that I have name, address, check number, and amount for disclosure. Special precautions should be taken if you are saving check copies without redacting the account number. To prevent identity theft they should not be accessible online. I consider the date received as the date I deposit it to our account.

For Act Blue contributions: I download their csv (comma separated value file), hide unnecessary fields and make a copy of all contributions from their spread sheet. I want name, address, amount, recurrence, date of check, act blue fee. I also use codes to identify the type of contribution. You may not need this. Attachment 2 is a sample print out.

I make a cover sheet (spread sheet) for each bank deposit (Attachment 3) that tallies up all checks and contributors for each deposit.

This spreadsheet summarizes:

total contributions for that deposit

the actual amount that was deposited (since Act Blue deducts fees)

Act Blue fees

itemized and unitemized totals

contribution categories

This spread sheet has all the information that I need to enter into my account log. When I go to file disclosure, it will also make that process easier I use a money program to keep a bank account log.

4) Filing

When it is time to do disclosures, I print out all account transactions from my money program log for the relevant period.

If you are not contributing to candidates or their campaigns in this general election cycle, you only need to file twice a year (January and July). If you are contributing money to candidates for an election or financially assisting their campaigns, you must file 3 extra times that year (32 days before the general election, 11 days before the general election and 27 days after the election).

If you do not have any transactions, the rest will be relatively easy. You can file a no activity report.

Attachment 4 shows what my screen looks like when I open the website.

Start in the left hand column.

Enter the ID number that they gave you when you registered. The one I have written on my folder.

Enter your Committee Name

Add year of report

Election type (usually State/local)

For Report Type: Choose periodic, if you are filing semi annual report

Choose general, if you are filing one of the 3 reports around an election

Select election date, if applicable

Disclosure type: if you have not had any transactions, you can choose “no activity” and you are almost done. If you have had activity choose “itemized”.

Disclosure period: If you chose General, you will need to select 32 day pre-general, 11 day pre-general, or 28 day post-general. If you chose “periodic” you will need to designate it as January Periodic or July Periodic.

It will then give you the cut off date for the transactions that are included in that report and the filing deadline.

Hit apply!

If you re filing a “no activity”, you can skip ahead to “We have entered all information now” on the last page.

Contributions:

Attachment 5 shows the screen that would then appear, if I had typed in info for 2021-27 day post-general. Go to the drop down menu in the right hand screen and select transaction type.

Schedules

Most of your contributions will probably be from individuals. That will be the first choice in the drop down, “monetary contributions from individuals and...” (schedule A) Contributions from other local committees, like TCDC, will be listed on schedule C, “monetary contributions received from all other”. Interest is reported in schedule E, “other receipts received”

The account transactions, I have printed out from my bank log, show each of the deposits made in this period. I can pull out a corresponding packet of information for each deposit-(incl. cover sheet, act blue printout/s, copies of checks).

Once you have selected the form (in our example, we are using individual contributions), hit apply. Then tap new transaction and a window appears. You can then enter in information. Working from Attachments 2 & 3, we can readily fill out the form.

Itemized

If I start with the Act Blue sheet.(attachment 2) There are 2 individuals whose transactions must be itemized. Jane Doe is a recurring transaction. She will give \$100 or more over the course of the year. So her contributions must be itemized. All the necessary information is on the act blue print out.

Attachment 7 depicts the income transaction form.

First line asks if transaction is itemized. Leave this as yes.

Fill in date with date of deposit
contribution type (usually individual)

F name, L name, address,

use drop down to indicate method of payment they used, the amount, their check number(if check is used). Since this is through act blue, I indicate online processor.

The amount is \$25

Hit save and get another transaction window.

We also need to report information for Sue Jones for \$142, because the transaction is \$100 or more. Fill in the window as before and save the transaction. These 2 transactions should show up on the lower right panel of your screen.

Unitemized

Smith, Chuzzlewit and Micawber’s contributions were under \$100 and they do not need to be itemized. Smith through Act Blue and Chuzzlewit and Micawber wrote checks.

My spread sheet (attachment 3) has already added up the total unitemized contributions for me. I simply need to open another window. Choose unitemized on the first line and enter \$65.

We have completed income. The system will do autofill and help you out with addresses etc. once it recognizes people.

Expenditures:

Schedules

For most expenditures you will use schedule F, “expenditures and payments”. Any contributions to a candidate’s campaign committee will be reported as “transaction out”.

Follow the process we used to select the contributions transaction form to select expenditure transaction form. Remember to hit apply.

The account transaction print out from my account log will show each expenditure with a check # and My file folder contains all receipts with check #, so receipts are easily matched to each expenditure.

We must itemize all expenditures and payments of \$50 or over. Under \$50 can be aggregated and marked as unitemized expenses. Simply, switch from itemized to unitemized in the drop down menu shown in attachment 8. Fill in the few details and save.

Attachment 8 demonstrates the window for expenses. It is very straight forward for all expenses paid directly to vender. The first line asks if it is itemized. The next 3 lines will probably remain no.

Date is on receipt

Payee or vendor is on receipt

Fill in the address from receipt

You will need to select a purpose code. If your transaction does not fit any of their purposes, choose other and give explanation.

If you choose check for method, you will need to provide the check number that is written on your receipt.

Reimbursement

It is a little more complicated, if you are reimbursing someone. In this case, start reporting with the person you reimbursed. Their name and the number of the check you used should be attached to the receipt, so you can easily fill out window. For the purpose code select reimbursement and this window will be followed by another. In the following window, you fill in the amount, address, date on the vender’s receipt. The “original payee” here is the individual that we reimbursed directly. The “details payee” is the vender.

Because my committee uses Act Blue there is another expense. There are the Act Blue fees. On my coversheet (attachment 3) they have been totaled for each deposit. We must report \$7.39 in this case.

All the information you are typing in should be illustrated on the bottom section of right hand panel. You can select the columns that you view here. Scroll through the “select column” and check the ones you want in your view. Then tap set preferences.

We have entered all our information now.

Go to the top of the screen and there are various options. Look in the upper right. You can choose “full period report” or ‘csv’. I choose pdf.

You will need to enter in the information for the specific report that you want in the left hand panel again and hit apply. (I keep mentioning hit apply because this was one of my early errors, that caused nothing to happen.) Then the pdf appears. I go to the last page and compare the closing balance with the closing balance in my bank account at the end of this reporting period. If they match I exhale a sigh of relief because I am almost done, I print the pdf for my records.

Go back to the top left of the screen and tap “file a disclosure report” Once again you need to go to the left panel and enter the information for the report you wish to file. Just follow the directions to send it off and you are done.

Further Information and Assistance

As you become more comfortable with filing, you may wish to learn more or unusual transactions may occur that require more research.

There is a NYSBOE handbook (ill 6)There are training videos for those who would find this helpful. I learn by figuring my way through things, so I don’t care for videos.. Either way, I hope this helps get you started.

If you need help you can always contact the State BOE, Tompkins County BOE, or TCDC treasurer.

NYS BOE
Campaign Finance Unit
40 N Pearl St Suite 5
Albany, NY 12207-2729
1-800-458-3453
cinfo@elections.ny.gov
Web site Elections.ny.gov

Tompkins BOE
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