

FLORIDA STATUTES ON
POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS

Section [106.011\(15\)](#), F.S. Definition of political advertisement.

(15) "Political advertisement" means a paid expression in a communications medium prescribed in subsection (4), whether radio, television, newspaper, magazine, periodical, campaign literature, direct mail, or display or by means other than the spoken word in direct conversation, which expressly advocates the election or defeat of a candidate or the approval or rejection of an issue. However, political advertisement does not include:

- (a) A statement by an organization, in existence before the time during which a candidate qualifies or an issue is placed on the ballot for that election, in support of or opposition to a candidate or issue, in that organization's newsletter, which newsletter is distributed only to the members of that organization.
- (b) Editorial endorsements by a newspaper, a radio or television station, or any other recognized news medium.

Section [106.011\(12\)\(a\)](#), F.S. Independent expenditure.

(12)

(a) "Independent expenditure" means an expenditure by a person for the purpose of expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate or the approval or rejection of an issue, which expenditure is not controlled by, coordinated with, or made upon consultation with, any candidate, political committee, or agent of such candidate or committee. An expenditure for such purpose by a person having a contract with the candidate, political committee, or agent of such candidate or committee in a given election period is not an independent expenditure.

(b) An expenditure for the purpose of expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate which is made by the national, state, or county executive committee of a political party, including any subordinate committee of the political party, an affiliated party committee, a political committee, or any other person is not considered an independent expenditure if the committee or person:

1. Communicates with the candidate, the candidate's campaign, or an agent of the candidate acting on behalf of the candidate, including a pollster, media consultant, advertising agency, vendor, advisor, or staff member, concerning the preparation of, use of, or payment for, the specific expenditure or advertising campaign at issue;
2. Makes a payment in cooperation, consultation, or concert with, at the request or suggestion of, or pursuant to a general or particular understanding with the candidate, the candidate's campaign, a political committee supporting the candidate, or an agent of the candidate relating to the specific expenditure or advertising campaign at issue;
3. Makes a payment for the dissemination, distribution, or republication, in whole or in part, of a broadcast or a written, graphic, or other form of campaign material prepared by the candidate, the candidate's campaign, or an agent of the candidate, including a pollster, media consultant, advertising agency, vendor, advisor, or staff member;
4. Makes a payment based on information about the candidate's plans, projects, or needs communicated to a member of the committee or person by the candidate or an agent of the candidate, provided the committee or person uses the information in any way, in whole or in part, either directly or indirectly, to design, prepare, or pay for the specific expenditure or advertising campaign at issue;

5. After the last day of the qualifying period prescribed for the candidate, consults about the candidate's plans, projects, or needs in connection with the candidate's pursuit of election to office and the information is used in any way to plan, create, design, or prepare an independent expenditure or advertising campaign, with:
 - a. An officer, director, employee, or agent of a national, state, or county executive committee of a political party or an affiliated party committee that has made or intends to make expenditures in connection with or contributions to the candidate; or
 - b. A person whose professional services have been retained by a national, state, or county executive committee of a political party or an affiliated party committee that has made or intends to make expenditures in connection with or contributions to the candidate;
6. After the last day of the qualifying period prescribed for the candidate, retains the professional services of a person also providing those services to the candidate in connection with the candidate's pursuit of election to office; or
7. Arranges, coordinates, or directs the expenditure, in any way, with the candidate or an agent of the candidate.

Section [106.071](#), F.S. Independent expenditure disclaimer.

- 1) Each person who makes an independent expenditure with respect to any candidate or issue, and each individual who makes an expenditure for an electioneering communication which is not otherwise reported pursuant to this chapter, which expenditure, in the aggregate, is in the amount of \$5,000 or more, shall file periodic reports of such expenditures in the same manner, at the same time, subject to the same penalties, and with the same officer as a political committee supporting or opposing such candidate or issue. The report shall contain the full name and address of the person making the expenditure; the full name and address of each person to whom and for whom each such expenditure has been made; the amount, date, and purpose of each such expenditure; a description of the services or goods obtained by each such expenditure; the issue to which the expenditure relates; and the name and address of, and office sought by, each candidate on whose behalf such expenditure was made.
- 2) Any political advertisement paid for by an independent expenditure shall prominently state "Paid political advertisement paid for by (Name and address of person paying for advertisement) independently of any (candidate or committee)."
- 3) Subsection (2) does not apply to novelty items having a retail value of \$10 or less which support, but do not oppose, a candidate or issue.
- 4) Any person who fails to include the disclaimer prescribed in subsection (2) in any political advertisement that is required to contain such disclaimer commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. [775.082](#) or s. [775.083](#).

Section [106.025\(1\)\(C\)](#), F.S. Campaign fund raisers.

- 1)
 - (a) No campaign fund raiser may be held unless the person for whom such funds are to be so used is a candidate for public office.
 - (b) All money and contributions received with respect to such a campaign fund raiser shall be deemed to be campaign contributions, and shall be accounted for, and subject to the same restrictions, as other campaign contributions. All expenditures made with respect to such a campaign fund raiser which are made or reimbursed by a check drawn on the campaign depository of the candidate for whom the funds are to be used and

shall be deemed to be campaign expenditures to be accounted for, and subject to the same restrictions, as other campaign expenditures.

(c) Any tickets or advertising for a campaign fund raiser must comply with the requirements of s. [106.143](#).

(d) Any person or candidate who holds a campaign fund raiser, or consents to a campaign fund raiser being held, in violation of the provisions of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. [775.082](#) or s. [775.083](#).

(2) This section shall not apply to any campaign fund raiser held on behalf of a political party by the state or county executive committee or an affiliated party committee of such party, provided that the proceeds of such campaign fund raiser are reported pursuant to s. [106.29](#).

Sections [106.143](#), F.S. Political advertisements circulated prior to election; requirements.

(1)(a) Any political advertisement that is paid for by a candidate, except a write-in candidate, and that is published, displayed, or circulated before, or on the day of, any election must prominently state:

1. "Political advertisement paid for and approved by (name of candidate), (party affiliation), for (office sought)"; or

2. "Paid by (name of candidate), (party affiliation), for (office sought) ."

(b) Any political advertisement that is paid for by a write-in candidate and that is published, displayed, or circulated before, or on the day of, any election must prominently state:

1. "Political advertisement paid for and approved by (name of candidate) , write-in candidate, for (office sought) "; or

2. "Paid by (name of candidate), write-in candidate, for (office sought)."

(c) Any other political advertisement published, displayed, or circulated before, or on the day of, any election must prominently:

1. Be marked "paid political advertisement" or with the abbreviation "pd. pol. adv."

2. State the name and address of the persons paying for the advertisement.

3. State whether the advertisement and the cost of production is paid for or provided in kind by or at the expense of the entity publishing, displaying, broadcasting, or circulating the political advertisement.

(d) Any political advertisement made pursuant to s. [106.021](#)(3)(d) must prominently state the name and address of the political committee or political party paying for the advertisement.

(2) Political advertisements made as in-kind contributions from a political party must prominently state: "Paid political advertisement paid for in-kind by (name of political party) . Approved by (name of person, party affiliation, and office sought in the political advertisement)."

(3) Any political advertisement of a candidate running for partisan office shall express the name of the political party of which the candidate is seeking nomination or is the nominee. If the candidate for partisan office is running as a candidate with no party affiliation, any political advertisement of the candidate must state that the candidate has no party affiliation. A political advertisement of a candidate running for nonpartisan office may not state the candidate's political party affiliation. This section does not prohibit a political advertisement from stating the candidate's partisan-related experience. A candidate for nonpartisan office is prohibited from campaigning based on party affiliation.

(4) It is unlawful for any candidate or person on behalf of a candidate to represent that any person or organization supports such candidate, unless the person or organization so

represented has given specific approval in writing to the candidate to make such representation. However, this subsection does not apply to:

- (a) Editorial endorsement by any newspaper, radio or television station, or other recognized news medium.
- (b) Publication by a party committee advocating the candidacy of its nominees.

(5)(a) Any political advertisement not paid for by a candidate, including those paid for by a political party or affiliated party committee, other than an independent expenditure, offered on behalf of a candidate must be approved in advance by the candidate. Such political advertisement must expressly state that the content of the advertisement was approved by the candidate, unless the political advertisement is published, displayed, or circulated in compliance with subparagraph (1)(a)2., and must state who paid for the advertisement. The candidate shall provide a written statement of authorization to the newspaper, radio station, television station, or other medium for each such advertisement submitted for publication, display, broadcast, or other distribution.

(b) Any person who makes an independent expenditure for a political advertisement shall provide a written statement that no candidate has approved the advertisement to the newspaper, radio station, television station, or other medium for each such advertisement submitted for publication, display, broadcast, or other distribution. The advertisement must also contain a statement that no candidate has approved the advertisement.

(6) No political advertisement of a candidate who is not an incumbent of the office for which the candidate is running shall use the word "re-elect." Additionally, such advertisement must include the word "for" between the candidate's name and the office for which the candidate is running, in order that incumbency is not implied. This subsection does not apply to bumper stickers or items designed to be worn by a person.

(7) Political advertisements paid for by a political party or an affiliated party committee may use names and abbreviations as registered under s. [103.081](#) in the disclaimer.

(8) This section does not apply to novelty items having a retail value of \$10 or less which support, but do not oppose, a candidate or issue.

(9) Any political advertisement which is published, displayed, or produced in a language other than English may provide the information required by this section in the language used in the advertisement.

(10) This section does not apply to any campaign message or political advertisement used by a candidate and the candidate's supporters or by a political committee if the message or advertisement is:

- (a) Designed to be worn by a person.
- (b) Placed as a paid link on an Internet website, provided the message or advertisement is no more than 200 characters in length and the link directs the user to another Internet website that complies with subsection (1).
- (c) Placed as a graphic or picture link where compliance with the requirements of this section is not reasonably practical due to the size of the graphic or picture link and the link directs the user to another Internet website that complies with subsection (1).
- (d) Placed at no cost on an Internet website for which there is no cost to post content for public users.
- (e) Placed or distributed on an unpaid profile or account which is available to the public without charge or on a social networking Internet website, as long as the source of the

message or advertisement is patently clear from the content or format of the message or advertisement. A candidate or political committee may prominently display a statement indicating that the website or account is an official website or account of the candidate or political committee and is approved by the candidate or political committee. A website or account may not be marked as official without prior approval by the candidate or political committee.

(f) Distributed as a text message or other message via Short Message Service, provided the message is no more than 200 characters in length or requires the recipient to sign up or opt in to receive it.

(g) Connected with or included in any software application or accompanying function, provided that the user signs up, opts in, downloads, or otherwise accesses the application from or through a website that complies with subsection (1).

(h) Sent by a third-party user from or through a campaign or committee's website, provided the website complies with subsection (1).

(i) Contained in or distributed through any other technology-related item, service, or device for which compliance with subsection (1) is not reasonably practical due to the size or nature of such item, service, or device as available, or the means of displaying the message or advertisement makes compliance with subsection (1) impracticable.

(11) Any person who willfully violates any provision of this section is subject to the civil penalties prescribed in s. [106.265](#).

Section [106.1437](#), F.S. Miscellaneous advertisements.

Any advertisement, other than a political advertisement, independent expenditure, or electioneering communication, on billboards, bumper stickers, radio, or television, or in a newspaper, a magazine, or a periodical, intended to influence public policy or the vote of a public official, shall clearly designate the sponsor of such advertisement by including a clearly readable statement of sponsorship. If the advertisement is broadcast on television, the advertisement shall also contain a verbal statement of sponsorship. This section does not apply to an editorial endorsement. For purposes of this chapter, an expenditure made for, or in furtherance of, a miscellaneous advertisement is not considered to be a contribution to or on behalf of a candidate, and does not constitute an independent expenditure. Such expenditures are not subject to the limitations applicable to independent expenditures.

Section [106.147](#), F.S. Telephone solicitation; disclosure requirements; prohibitions; exemptions; penalties.

(1)

(a) Any telephone call supporting or opposing a candidate, elected public official, or ballot proposal must identify the persons or organizations sponsoring the call by stating either: "paid for by " (insert name of persons or organizations sponsoring the call) or "paid for on behalf of " (insert name of persons or organizations authorizing call). This paragraph does not apply to any telephone call in which both the individual making the call is not being paid and the individuals participating in the call know each other prior to the call.

(b) Any telephone call conducted for the purpose of polling respondents concerning a candidate or elected public official which is a part of a series of like telephone calls that consists of fewer than 1,000 completed calls and averages more than 2 minutes in duration is presumed to be a political poll and not subject to the provisions of paragraph (a).

- (c) No telephone call shall state or imply that the caller represents any person or organization unless the person or organization so represented has given specific approval in writing to make such representation.
 - (d) No telephone call shall state or imply that the caller represents a nonexistent person or organization.
- (2) Any telephone call, not conducted by independent expenditure, which expressly advocates for or against a candidate or ballot proposal requires prior written authorization by the candidate or sponsor of the ballot proposal that the call supports. A copy of such written authorization must be placed on file with the qualifying officer by the candidate or sponsor of the ballot proposal prior to the time the calls commence.
- (3)
- (a) Any person who willfully violates any provision of this section commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. [775.082](#) or s. [775.083](#).
 - (b) For purposes of paragraph (a), the term “person” includes any candidate; any officer of any political committee, affiliated party committee, or political party executive committee; any officer, partner, attorney, or other representative of a corporation, partnership, or other business entity; and any agent or other person acting on behalf of any candidate, political committee, affiliated party committee, political party executive committee, or corporation, partnership, or other business entity.

Section [106.1475](#), F.S. Telephone solicitation; registered agent requirements; penalty.

- 1) Any person or organization that conducts any business in this state which consists of making paid telephone calls supporting or opposing any candidate or elected public official must, prior to conducting such business, have and continuously maintain, for at least 180 days following the cessation of such business activities in the state, a registered agent for the purpose of any service of process, notice, or demand required or authorized by law and must file with the division a notice of such registered agent. Such registered agent must be an individual who is a resident of this state, a domestic corporation, or a foreign corporation authorized to do business in this state. However, this subsection does not apply to any person or organization already lawfully registered to conduct business in this state.
- 2) For purposes of this section, conducting business in this state as specified in subsection (1) includes both placing telephone calls from a location in this state and placing telephone calls from a location outside this state to individuals located in this state.
- 3) (a) The division shall create and maintain forms for the notice required by subsection (1), which, at a minimum, must elicit all of the following information:
 - 1) The name, address, and telephone number of the registered agent.
 - 2) The name, address, and telephone number of the person or organization conducting business in this state as specified in subsection (1).

b) The person or organization conducting business in this state as specified in subsection (1) must immediately notify the division of any changes in the information required in paragraph (a).
- 4) Any person or organization that violates this section commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. [775.082](#) or s. [775.083](#).