

351—4.25(68A,68B) Legitimate expenditures of campaign funds.

4.25(1) Expenses which may be paid from campaign funds for campaign purposes include, but are not limited to, the following items so long as the items promote or enhance the candidacy of the candidate:

- a.* Electronic media advertising, such as radio, cable television and commercial television.
- b.* Published advertising, such as newspaper, magazine, newsletter and shopper advertising.
- c.* Printed promotional materials, such as brochures, leaflets, flyers, invitations, stationery, envelopes, reply cards, return envelopes, campaign business cards, direct mailings, postcards and “cowboy” political cards.
- d.* Political signs, such as yard signs, car signs, portable outdoor advertising, stationary outdoor advertising and billboards.
- e.* Political advertising specialty items, such as campaign buttons, campaign stickers, bumper stickers, campaign pins, pencils, pens, matchbooks, balloons, scratch pads, calendars, magnets, key chains, and articles of clothing that are political advertising.
- f.* Travel and lodging expenses of the campaign workers for campaign purposes and political party activities. Travel and lodging expenses for a candidate to attend a national political party convention are also permitted.
- g.* Contributions to political party committees.
- h.* The purchase of tickets to a meal for the candidate and one guest so long as the attendance at the meal by the candidate and guest is for the sole purpose of enhancing the candidacy of any person.
- i.* General campaign expenditures, such as printing, copy machine charges, office supplies, campaign photographs, gambling permits, fund-raiser prizes, postage stamps, postage meter costs, bulk mail permits, telephone installation and service, facsimile charges, and computer services. However, the purchase or rental of formal wear to attend a political event is not a permissible general campaign expenditure.
- j.* Purchase or lease of campaign equipment, such as copy machines, telephones, facsimile machines, computer hardware, software and printers.
- k.* Purchase or lease of campaign office space, parking lots or storage space and the payment for campaign office utilities and maintenance.
- l.* Payment of salaries, fringe benefits, bonuses, and payroll taxes of paid campaign staff. As provided in Iowa Code section 68A.302(2) “*k*,” family members who perform actual work or services for a campaign and are not the candidate, candidate’s spouse, or candidate’s dependent children may be compensated for such work or services.
- m.* Payment for check printing and financial institution banking service charges.
- n.* Lease or rental of a campaign vehicle, provided that a detailed trip log which provides dates, miles driven, destination and purpose is maintained, and that noncampaign miles are reimbursed to the committee at an amount not to exceed the current rate of reimbursement allowed under the standard mileage rate for computations of business expenses pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code. However, the purchase of a campaign vehicle is prohibited.
- o.* Reimbursement to candidates and campaign workers for mileage driven for campaign purposes in a personal vehicle, provided that a detailed trip log which provides dates, miles driven, destination and purpose is maintained, and that reimbursement is paid at an amount not to exceed the current rate of reimbursement allowed under the standard mileage rate for computations of business expenses pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code.
- p.* Payment for food expenses and supplies for campaign-related activities, such as the purchase of food, beverages and table service for fund-raising events or campaign volunteers. However, except as provided in paragraph “*h*,” the purchase of tickets for meals or fund-raising events for other candidates is prohibited, and the purchase of groceries for the candidate or candidate’s family is also prohibited. Payment for meals for the candidate (other than those involving tickets for fund-raiser events as addressed in paragraph “*h*”) is permitted as an allowable expenditure for campaign purposes if the meal was associated with campaign-related activities.
- q.* Payment of civil penalties and hearing costs assessed by the board.

r. Payment for the services of attorneys, accountants, consultants or other professional persons when those services relate to campaign activities.

s. Subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals that circulate within the area represented by the office that a candidate is seeking or holds, that contain information of a general nature about the state of Iowa, or that contain information useful to all candidates such as The Wall Street Journal and Roll Call. Candidates who are unsure whether a subscription is permissible shall seek guidance from the board prior to paying for the subscription with campaign funds.

t. Membership in service organizations including a local chamber of commerce that the candidate joins solely for the purpose of enhancing the candidate's candidacy.

u. Repayment of campaign loans made to the committee. Candidates who make loans to their own committees shall not charge interest on the loans.

v. Purchase of reports of other candidates and political committees so long as the reports' contents are not used for solicitation or commercial purposes.

w. Donations to charitable organizations unless the candidate or the candidate's spouse, child, stepchild, brother, brother-in-law, stepbrother, sister, sister-in-law, stepsister, parent, parent-in-law, or stepparent is employed by the charitable organization and will receive a direct financial benefit from a donation.

x. Contributions to federal, state, county and city political party committees.

y. Refunds to contributors when a contribution has been accepted in error, or when a committee chooses to dispose of leftover funds by refunding them in prorated shares to the original contributors.

z. Payment for items with a purchase price not to exceed \$250 per person that are presented to committee workers in recognition of services to the committee.

aa. Expenses incurred with respect to an election recount as provided in Iowa Code section 50.48.

bb. The sharing of information in any format such as computer databases containing yard sign locations or lists of registered voters with another candidate's committee.

4.25(2) Expenses which may be paid from campaign funds for educational and other expenses associated with the duties of office include, but are not limited to, the following items:

a. Purchase or lease of office supplies and equipment, such as paper, copy machines, telephones, facsimile machines, computer hardware, software and printers.

b. Travel, lodging and registration expenses associated with attendance at an educational conference of a state, national, or regional organization whose memberships and officers are primarily composed of state or local government officials or employees. However, meal expenses are not allowable as expenses associated with the duties of office under any circumstances.

c. Meals and other expenses incurred in connection with attending a local meeting to which the officeholder is invited and attends due to the officeholder's official position as an elected official.

d. Purchases of small, incidental items such as pencils, pens, rulers and bookmarks provided to members of the public touring the offices of the state or a political subdivision. However, such items distributed on public property shall not expressly advocate the election or defeat of a candidate or the adoption or defeat of a ballot issue as prohibited in Iowa Code section 68A.505. For example, a bookmark bearing the state seal could be distributed on public property, while a bookmark that identified the donor as a candidate for office could not be distributed on public property.

e. Gifts purchased for foreign dignitaries when the officeholder is part of an official trip out of the country such as a trade mission or exchange program.

f. Printing of additional stationery and supplies above the standard allotment of the state or political subdivision.

4.25(3) Expenses which may be paid from campaign funds for constituency services include, but are not limited to, the following items:

a. Mailings and newsletters sent to constituents.

b. Polls and surveys conducted to determine constituent opinions.

c. Travel expenses incurred in communicating with members of an elected official's constituency, provided that a detailed trip log which provides dates, miles driven, destination and purpose is maintained, and that reimbursement is paid at an amount not to exceed the current rate of reimbursement

allowed under the standard mileage rate for computations of business expenses pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code. However, meal expenses are not allowable as expenses associated with constituency services under any circumstances.

d. Holiday and other greeting cards sent to constituents.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 68A.301, 68A.302, and 68A.303.
[ARC 7647B, IAB 3/25/09, effective 4/29/09; ARC 7801B, IAB 6/3/09, effective 7/8/09; ARC 5525C, IAB 3/24/21, effective 4/28/21]