

Coalition for Integrity

FAQs about the Virginia Integrity Challenge:

Why should candidates disclose beyond the bare minimum of what is required by law?

We believe that candidates should be proactive about transparency and take affirmative steps to show voters that they will be open and accountable to those they serve. Making personal and campaign finance disclosures publicly available and easily accessible sends a strong message to voters who want to elect candidates they can trust.

Aren't candidate campaign committee contributions and expenditures already disclosed? Yes. But finding these disclosures requires citizens to search the Virginia Department of Elections Campaign Finance Reports [database](#). By posting contributions and expenditures on their campaign websites, candidates provide voters with an easy way to see who is supporting their campaigns.

Are you asking candidates to disclose contributions to their campaign committees more often than required by law? No. For November elections, Virginia law requires candidates to meet several [filing deadlines](#) prior to (and after) election day. While we are asking candidates to pledge to disclose contributions on their campaign websites at the same time they file their contribution reports with the Virginia Department of Elections, we strongly encourage candidates to disclose contributions within 48 hours of receipt.

Aren't candidate financial disclosure forms already available to voters? Candidate financial disclosure forms are filed twice a year with the Virginia Conflicts of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council. The forms are available to the public via a [searchable database](#) on the Council's website. **By posting their financial disclosure forms on their campaign websites twice a year, at the same time they are required to file with the Virginia Conflicts of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council, candidates save voters the step of searching for the forms.** Proactively posting their forms on their campaign websites signals a willingness to make this information publicly available and easily accessible.

How is a gift defined? Under Virginia law, a [gift](#) is any item having monetary value such as a gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan or forbearance. "Gift" does not include gifts that are returned or given to charity, gifts valued at \$20 or less, food and drink consumed while attending an event related to official duties, awards of appreciation such as plaques or trophies, campaign contributions and gifts from relatives. Gifts from personal friends are generally permitted, though the term "personal friend" is not defined. Admission, entertainment, food and beverages accepted or received while in attendance at a "widely attended event" are also permissible. A widely attended event is an event at which at least 25 persons have been invited or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 25 people will attend the event, the event is open to individuals who share a common interest, are members of a public, civic, charitable or professional organization, who are from a particular industry or profession, or who represent persons interested in a particular issue. See [here](#) for more information about gifts that are permitted/prohibited.