

ELECTION CODE

TITLE 15. REGULATING POLITICAL FUNDS AND CAMPAIGNS

CHAPTER 253. RESTRICTIONS ON CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

Sec. 253.001. CONTRIBUTION OR EXPENDITURE IN ANOTHER'S NAME PROHIBITED. (a) A person may not knowingly make or authorize a political contribution in the name of or on behalf of another unless the person discloses in writing to the recipient the name and address of the person actually making the contribution in order for the recipient to make the proper disclosure.

(b) A person may not knowingly make or authorize a political expenditure in the name of or on behalf of another unless the person discloses in writing to the person on whose behalf the expenditure is made the name and address of the person actually making the expenditure in order for the person on whose behalf the expenditure is made to make the proper disclosure.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1134, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 253.003. UNLAWFULLY MAKING OR ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTION.

(a) A person may not knowingly make a political contribution in violation of this chapter.

(b) A person may not knowingly accept a political contribution the person knows to have been made in violation of this chapter.

(c) This section does not apply to a political contribution made or accepted in violation of Subchapter F.

(d) Except as provided by Subsection (e), a person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(e) A violation of Subsection (a) or (b) is a felony of the third degree if the contribution is made in violation of Subchapter D.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 2, eff. June 16, 1995.

Sec. 253.004. UNLAWFULLY MAKING EXPENDITURE. (a) A person may not knowingly make or authorize a political expenditure in violation of this chapter.

(b) This section does not apply to a political expenditure made or authorized in violation of Subchapter F.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 2, eff. June 16, 1995.

Sec. 253.005. EXPENDITURE FROM UNLAWFUL CONTRIBUTION. (a) A person may not knowingly make or authorize a political expenditure wholly or partly from a political contribution the person knows to have been made in violation of this chapter.

(b) This section does not apply to a political expenditure that is:

- (1) prohibited by Section [253.101](#); or
- (2) made from a political contribution made in violation of Subchapter F.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 2, eff. June 16, 1995.

Sec. 253.006. CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES BY LOBBYISTS RESTRICTED. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person required to register under Chapter [305](#), Government Code, may not knowingly make or authorize a political contribution or political expenditure that is a political contribution to another candidate, officeholder, or political committee, or direct campaign expenditure, from political contributions accepted by:

- (1) the person as a candidate or officeholder;
- (2) a specific-purpose committee for the purpose of supporting the person as a candidate or assisting the person as an

officeholder; or

(3) a political committee that accepted a political contribution from a source described by Subdivision (1) or (2) during the two-year period immediately before the date the political contribution or expenditure was made.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 839 (H.B. [2677](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 27, 2019.

Sec. 253.007. PROHIBITION ON LOBBYING BY PERSON MAKING OR AUTHORIZING CERTAIN POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND DIRECT CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES. (a) In this section, "administrative action," "communicates directly with," "legislation," "member of the executive branch," and "member of the legislative branch" have the meanings assigned by Section [305.002](#), Government Code.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and except as provided by Subsection (c), a person who knowingly makes or authorizes a political contribution or political expenditure that is a political contribution to another candidate, officeholder, or political committee, or direct campaign expenditure, from political contributions accepted by the person as a candidate or officeholder may not engage in any activities that require the person to register under Chapter [305](#), Government Code, during the two-year period after the date the person makes or authorizes the political contribution or direct campaign expenditure.

(c) Subsection (b) does not apply to a person who:

(1) communicates directly with a member of the legislative or executive branch only to influence legislation or administrative action on behalf of:

(A) a nonprofit organization exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(a), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as an organization described by Section 501(c)(3) of that code;

(B) a group of low-income individuals; or

(C) a group of individuals with disabilities; and

(2) does not receive compensation other than reimbursement for actual expenses for engaging in communication

described by Subdivision (1).

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 839 (H.B. [2677](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 27, 2019.

SUBCHAPTER B. CANDIDATES, OFFICEHOLDERS, AND POLITICAL COMMITTEES

Sec. 253.031. CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE WITHOUT CAMPAIGN TREASURER PROHIBITED. (a) A candidate may not knowingly accept a campaign contribution or make or authorize a campaign expenditure at a time when a campaign treasurer appointment for the candidate is not in effect.

(b) A political committee may not knowingly accept political contributions totaling more than \$500 or make or authorize political expenditures totaling more than \$500 at a time when a campaign treasurer appointment for the committee is not in effect.

(c) A political committee may not knowingly make or authorize a campaign contribution or campaign expenditure supporting or opposing a candidate for an office specified by Section [252.005](#)(1) in a primary or general election unless the committee's campaign treasurer appointment has been filed not later than the 30th day before the appropriate election day.

(d) This section does not apply to a political party's county executive committee that accepts political contributions or makes political expenditures, except that:

(1) a county executive committee that accepts political contributions or makes political expenditures shall maintain the records required by Section [254.001](#); and

(2) a county executive committee that accepts political contributions or makes political expenditures that, in the aggregate, exceed \$25,000 in a calendar year shall file:

(A) a campaign treasurer appointment as required by Section [252.001](#) not later than the 15th day after the date that amount is exceeded; and

(B) the reports required by Subchapter F, Chapter [254](#), including in the political committee's first report all political contributions accepted and all political expenditures

made before the effective date of the campaign treasurer appointment.

(e) This section does not apply to an out-of-state political committee unless the committee is subject to Chapter 252 under Section 251.005.

(f) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.04, eff. Jan. 1, 1992; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 531, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1079 (H.B. 1647), Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 2005.

Sec. 253.032. LIMITATION ON CONTRIBUTION BY OUT-OF-STATE COMMITTEE. (a) In a reporting period, a candidate, officeholder, or political committee may not knowingly accept political contributions totaling more than \$500 from an out-of-state political committee unless, before accepting a contribution that would cause the total to exceed \$500, the candidate, officeholder, or political committee, as applicable, receives from the out-of-state committee:

(1) a written statement, certified by an officer of the out-of-state committee, listing the full name and address of each person who contributed more than \$100 to the out-of-state committee during the 12 months immediately preceding the date of the contribution; or

(2) a copy of the out-of-state committee's statement of organization filed as required by law with the Federal Election Commission and certified by an officer of the out-of-state committee.

(b) This section does not apply to a contribution from an out-of-state political committee if the committee appointed a campaign treasurer under Chapter 252 before the contribution was made and is subject to the reporting requirements of Chapter 254.

(c) A person who violates Subsection (a) commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(d) A candidate, officeholder, or political committee shall include the statement or copy required by Subsection (a) as a part of the report filed under Chapter 254 that covers the reporting period to which Subsection (a) applies.

(e) A candidate, officeholder, or political committee that accepts political contributions totaling \$500 or less from an out-of-state political committee shall include as part of the report filed under Chapter 254 that covers the reporting period in which the contribution is accepted:

(1) the same information for the out-of-state political committee required for general-purpose committees by Sections 252.002 and 252.003; or

(2) a copy of the out-of-state committee's statement of organization filed as required by law with the Federal Election Commission and certified by an officer of the out-of-state committee.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 996, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 253.033. CASH CONTRIBUTIONS EXCEEDING \$100 PROHIBITED. (a) A candidate, officeholder, or specific-purpose committee may not knowingly accept from a contributor in a reporting period political contributions in cash that in the aggregate exceed \$100.

(b) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.034. RESTRICTIONS ON CONTRIBUTIONS DURING AND FOLLOWING REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION. (a) During the period beginning on the 30th day before the date a regular legislative session convenes and continuing through the 20th day after the date of final adjournment, a person may not knowingly make a political contribution to:

- (1) a statewide officeholder;
- (2) a member of the legislature; or

(3) a specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting a statewide officeholder or member of the legislature.

(b) A statewide officeholder, a member of the legislature, or a specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting a statewide officeholder or member of the legislature may not knowingly accept a political contribution, and shall refuse a political contribution that is received, during the period prescribed by Subsection (a). A political contribution that is received and refused during that period shall be returned to the contributor not later than the 30th day after the date of receipt. A contribution made by United States mail or by common or contract carrier is not considered received during that period if it was properly addressed and placed with postage or carrier charges prepaid or prearranged in the mail or delivered to the contract carrier before the beginning of the period. The date indicated by the post office cancellation mark or the common or contract carrier documents is considered to be the date the contribution was placed in the mail or delivered to the common or contract carrier unless proven otherwise.

(c) This section does not apply to a political contribution that was made and accepted with the intent that it be used:

(1) in an election held or ordered during the period prescribed by Subsection (a) in which the person accepting the contribution is a candidate if the contribution was made after the person appointed a campaign treasurer with the appropriate authority and before the person was sworn in for that office;

(2) to defray expenses incurred in connection with an election contest; or

(3) by a person who holds a state office or a member of the legislature if the person or member was defeated at the general election held immediately before the session is convened or by a specific-purpose political committee that supports or assists only that person or member.

(d) This section does not apply to a political contribution made to or accepted by a holder of an office to which Subchapter F applies.

(e) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.05, eff. Jan. 1, 1992; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1134, Sec. 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 249, Sec. 2.05, 2.06, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 426 (H.B. 2065), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 253.0341. RESTRICTIONS ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUSES DURING AND FOLLOWING REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION. (a) During the period beginning on the 30th day before the date a regular legislative session convenes and continuing through the 20th day after the date of final adjournment, a person not a member of the caucus may not knowingly make a contribution to a legislative caucus.

(b) A legislative caucus may not knowingly accept from a nonmember a contribution, and shall refuse a contribution from a nonmember that is received, during the period prescribed by Subsection (a). A contribution that is received and refused during that period shall be returned to the contributor not later than the 30th day after the date of receipt. A contribution made by United States mail or by common or contract carrier is not considered received during that period if it was properly addressed and placed with postage or carrier charges prepaid or prearranged in the mail or delivered to the contract carrier before the beginning of the period. The date indicated by the post office cancellation mark or the common or contract carrier documents is considered to be the date the contribution was placed in the mail or delivered to the common or contract carrier unless proven otherwise.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(d) A person who knowingly makes or accepts a contribution in violation of this section is liable for damages to the state in the amount of triple the value of the unlawful contribution.

(e) In this section, "legislative caucus" means an

organization that is composed exclusively of members of the legislature, that elects or appoints officers and recognizes identified legislators as members of the organization, and that exists for research and other support of policy development and interests that the membership hold in common. The term includes an entity established by or for a legislative caucus to conduct research, education, or any other caucus activity. An organization whose only nonlegislator members are the lieutenant governor or the governor remains a "legislative caucus" for purposes of this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 43, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1134, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 249, Sec. 2.07, 2.08, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 426 (H.B. 2065), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 253.035. RESTRICTIONS ON PERSONAL USE OF CONTRIBUTIONS. (a) A person who accepts a political contribution as a candidate or officeholder may not convert the contribution to personal use.

(b) A specific-purpose committee that accepts a political contribution may not convert the contribution to the personal use of a candidate, officeholder, or former candidate or officeholder.

(c) The prohibitions prescribed by Subsections (a) and (b) include the personal use of an asset purchased with the contribution and the personal use of any interest and other income earned on the contribution.

(d) In this section, "personal use" means a use that primarily furthers individual or family purposes not connected with the performance of duties or activities as a candidate for or holder of a public office. The term does not include:

(1) payments made to defray ordinary and necessary expenses incurred in connection with activities as a candidate or in connection with the performance of duties or activities as a public officeholder, including payment of rent, utility, and other

reasonable housing or household expenses incurred in maintaining a residence in Travis County by members of the legislature who do not ordinarily reside in Travis County, but excluding payments prohibited under Section 253.038; or

(2) payments of federal income taxes due on interest and other income earned on political contributions.

(e) Subsection (a) applies only to political contributions accepted on or after September 1, 1983. Subsection (b) applies only to political contributions accepted on or after September 1, 1987.

(f) A person who converts a political contribution to the person's personal use in violation of this section is civilly liable to the state for an amount equal to the amount of the converted contribution plus reasonable court costs.

(g) A specific-purpose committee that converts a political contribution to the personal use of a candidate, officeholder, or former candidate or officeholder in violation of this section is civilly liable to the state for an amount equal to the amount of the converted contribution plus reasonable court costs.

(h) Except as provided by Section 253.0351 or 253.042, a candidate or officeholder who makes political expenditures from the candidate's or officeholder's personal funds may reimburse those personal funds from political contributions in the amount of those expenditures only if:

(1) the expenditures from personal funds were fully reported as political expenditures, including the payees, dates, purposes, and amounts of the expenditures, in the report required to be filed under this title that covers the period in which the expenditures from personal funds were made; and

(2) the report on which the expenditures from personal funds are disclosed clearly designates those expenditures as having been made from the person's personal funds and that the expenditures are subject to reimbursement.

(i) "Personal use" does not include the use of contributions for:

(1) defending a criminal action or prosecuting or defending a civil action brought by or against the person in the person's status as a candidate or officeholder; or

(2) participating in an election contest or participating in a civil action to determine a person's eligibility to be a candidate for, or elected or appointed to, a public office in this state.

(j), (k) Repealed by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.20, eff. Jan. 1, 1992.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.06, eff. Jan. 1, 1992; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 996, Sec. 9, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 864, Sec. 240, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 253.0351. LOANS FROM PERSONAL FUNDS. (a) A candidate or officeholder who makes political expenditures from the candidate's or officeholder's personal funds may report the amount expended as a loan and may reimburse those personal funds from political contributions in the amount of the reported loan.

(b) Section [253.035](#)(h) applies if the person does not report an amount as a loan as authorized by Subsection (a).

(c) A candidate or officeholder who deposits personal funds in an account in which political contributions are held shall report the amount of personal funds deposited as a loan and may reimburse the amount deposited as a loan from political contributions or unexpended personal funds deposited in the account. The reimbursement may not exceed the amount reported as a loan. Personal funds deposited in an account in which political contributions are held are subject to Section [253.035](#) and must be included in the reports of the total amount of political contributions maintained required by Sections [254.031](#)(a)(8) and [254.0611](#)(a).

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 996, Sec. 8, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 864, Sec. 241, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., 1st C.S., Ch. 4 (S.B. [1](#)), Sec. 76.01, eff. September 28, 2011.

Sec. 253.036. OFFICEHOLDER	CONTRIBUTIONS	USED	IN
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CONNECTION WITH CAMPAIGN. An officeholder who lawfully accepts officeholder contributions may use those contributions in connection with the officeholder's campaign for elective office after appointing a campaign treasurer.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.037. RESTRICTIONS ON CONTRIBUTION OR EXPENDITURE BY GENERAL-PURPOSE COMMITTEE.

(a) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 209 (H.B. 3580), Sec. 5(1), eff. September 1, 2019.

(b) A general-purpose committee may not knowingly make a political contribution to another general-purpose committee unless the other committee is listed in the campaign treasurer appointment of the contributor committee.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 209 (H.B. 3580), Sec. 5(1), eff. September 1, 2019.

(d) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 531, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 209 (H.B. 3580), Sec. 5(1), eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 253.038. PAYMENTS MADE TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY OR TO RENT CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY PROHIBITED. (a) A candidate or officeholder or a specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting the candidate or officeholder may not knowingly make or authorize a payment from a political contribution to purchase real property or to pay the interest on or principal of a note for the purchase of real property.

(a-1) A candidate or officeholder or a specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting the candidate or officeholder may not knowingly make or authorize a payment from a political contribution for the rental or purchase of real property from:

(1) a person related within the second degree by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Chapter 573, Government Code, to the candidate or officeholder; or

(2) a business in which the candidate or officeholder or a person described by Subdivision (1) has a participating interest of more than 10 percent, holds a position on the governing body, or serves as an officer.

(b) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor.

(c) This section does not apply to a payment made in connection with real property that was purchased before January 1, 1992.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.07, eff. Jan. 1, 1992.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1087 (H.B. 3066), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1087 (H.B. 3066), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 253.039. CONTRIBUTIONS IN CERTAIN PUBLIC BUILDINGS PROHIBITED. (a) A person may not knowingly make or authorize a political contribution while in the Capitol or a courthouse to:

(1) a candidate or officeholder;  
(2) a political committee; or  
(3) a person acting on behalf of a candidate, officeholder, or political committee.

(b) A candidate, officeholder, or political committee or a person acting on behalf of a candidate, officeholder, or political committee may not knowingly accept a political contribution, and shall refuse a political contribution that is received, in the Capitol or a courthouse.

(c) This section does not prohibit contributions made in the Capitol or a courthouse through the United States postal service or a common or contract carrier.

(d) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(h) In this section, "courthouse" means any building owned by the state, a county, or a municipality, or an office or part of a building leased to the state, a county, or a municipality, in which a justice or judge sits to conduct court proceedings.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.07, eff. Jan. 1, 1992.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1219 (S.B. [1152](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 253.040. SEPARATE ACCOUNTS. (a) Except as provided by Section [253.0351\(c\)](#), each candidate or officeholder shall keep the person's campaign and officeholder contributions in one or more accounts that are separate from any other account maintained by the person.

(b) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 249, Sec. 2.09, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., 1st C.S., Ch. 4 (S.B. [1](#)), Sec. 76.02, eff. September 28, 2011.

Sec. 253.041. RESTRICTIONS ON CERTAIN PAYMENTS. (a) A candidate or officeholder or a specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting the candidate or officeholder may not knowingly make or authorize a payment from a political contribution if the payment is made for personal services rendered by the candidate or officeholder or by the spouse or dependent child of the candidate or officeholder to:

(1) a business in which the candidate or officeholder has a participating interest of more than 10 percent, holds a position on the governing body of the business, or serves as an officer of the business; or

(2) the candidate or officeholder or the spouse or dependent child of the candidate or officeholder.

(b) A payment that is made from a political contribution to

a business described by Subsection (a) and that is not prohibited by that subsection may not exceed the amount necessary to reimburse the business for actual expenditures made by the business.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor.  
Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.07, eff. Jan. 1, 1992.

Sec. 253.042. RESTRICTIONS ON REIMBURSEMENT OF PERSONAL FUNDS AND PAYMENTS ON CERTAIN LOANS. (a) A candidate or officeholder who makes political expenditures from the candidate's or officeholder's personal funds may not reimburse those personal funds from political contributions in amounts that in the aggregate exceed the following amounts for each election in which the person's name appears on the ballot:

(1) for a statewide office other than governor, \$250,000; and

(2) for governor, \$500,000.

(b) A candidate or officeholder who accepts one or more political contributions in the form of loans, including an extension of credit or a guarantee of a loan or extension of credit, from one or more persons related to the candidate or officeholder within the second degree by affinity or consanguinity may not use political contributions to repay the loans in amounts that in the aggregate exceed the amount prescribed by Subsection (a).

(c) The total amount of both reimbursements and repayments made by a candidate or officeholder under this section may not exceed the amount prescribed by Subsection (a).

(d) A person who is both a candidate and an officeholder covered by Subsection (a) may reimburse the person's personal funds or repay loans from political contributions only in one capacity.

(e) This section does not prohibit the payment of interest on loans covered by this section at a commercially reasonable rate, except that interest on loans from a candidate's or officeholder's personal funds or on loans from the personal funds of any person related to the candidate or officeholder within the second degree by affinity or consanguinity is included in the amount prescribed

by Subsection (a), (b), or (c).

(f) A person who violates this section commits an offense.

An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(g) The commission shall study possible restrictions on amounts of reimbursements under Subsection (a) in connection with the offices of state senator and state representative and shall make appropriate recommendations to the legislature on those matters.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.07, eff. Jan. 1, 1992. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 864, Sec. 242, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 253.043. POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS USED IN CONNECTION WITH APPOINTIVE OFFICE. A former candidate or former officeholder who lawfully accepts political contributions may use those contributions to make an expenditure to defray expenses incurred by the person in performing a duty or engaging in an activity in connection with an appointive office of a state board or commission.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 249, Sec. 2.09, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

#### SUBCHAPTER D. CORPORATIONS AND LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Sec. 253.091. CORPORATIONS COVERED. This subchapter applies only to corporations that are organized under the Texas Business Corporation Act, the Texas For-Profit Corporation Law, the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Law, federal law, or law of another state or nation.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 481 (H.B. 2492), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 253.092. TREATMENT OF INCORPORATED POLITICAL COMMITTEE. If a political committee the only principal purpose of

which is accepting political contributions and making political expenditures incorporates for liability purposes only, the committee is not considered to be a corporation for purposes of this subchapter.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.093. CERTAIN ASSOCIATIONS COVERED. (a) For purposes of this subchapter, the following associations, whether incorporated or not, are considered to be corporations covered by this subchapter: banks, trust companies, savings and loan associations or companies, insurance companies, reciprocal or interinsurance exchanges, railroad companies, cemetery companies, government-regulated cooperatives, stock companies, and abstract and title insurance companies.

(b) For purposes of this subchapter, the members of the associations specified by Subsection (a) are considered to be stockholders.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.094. CONTRIBUTIONS PROHIBITED. (a) A corporation or labor organization may not make a political contribution that is not authorized by this subchapter.

(b) A corporation or labor organization may not make a political contribution in connection with a recall election, including the circulation and submission of a petition to call an election.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1009 (H.B. 2359), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1009 (H.B. 2359), Sec. 2, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 253.095. PUNISHMENT OF AGENT. An officer, director, or other agent of a corporation or labor organization who commits an offense under this subchapter is punishable for the grade of offense applicable to the corporation or labor organization.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.096. CONTRIBUTION ON MEASURE. A corporation or labor organization may make campaign contributions from its own property in connection with an election on a measure only to a political committee for supporting or opposing measures exclusively.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.097. CONTRIBUTION FROM CORPORATION OR LABOR ORGANIZATION. A corporation or labor organization may make campaign contributions from its own property to a political committee that has filed an affidavit with the committee's campaign treasurer appointment in accordance with Section [252.003\(a\)\(4\)](#) or [252.0031\(a\)\(2\)](#).

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1127 (H.B. [2586](#)), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 253.098. COMMUNICATION WITH STOCKHOLDERS OR MEMBERS.  
(a) A corporation or labor organization may make one or more direct campaign expenditures from its own property for the purpose of communicating directly with its stockholders or members, as applicable, or with the families of its stockholders or members.

(b) An expenditure under this section is not reportable under Chapter [254](#).

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.099. NONPARTISAN VOTER REGISTRATION AND GET-OUT-THE-VOTE CAMPAIGNS. (a) A corporation or labor

organization may make one or more expenditures to finance nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns aimed at its stockholders or members, as applicable, or at the families of its stockholders or members.

(b) An expenditure under this section is not reportable under Chapter 254.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.100. EXPENDITURES FOR GENERAL-PURPOSE COMMITTEE.

(a) A corporation, acting alone or with one or more other corporations, may make one or more political expenditures to finance the establishment or administration of a general-purpose committee. In addition to any other expenditure that is considered permissible under this section, a corporation may make an expenditure for the maintenance and operation of a general-purpose committee, including an expenditure for:

- (1) office space maintenance and repairs;
- (2) telephone and Internet services;
- (3) office equipment;
- (4) utilities;
- (5) general office and meeting supplies;
- (6) salaries for routine clerical, data entry, and administrative assistance necessary for the proper administrative operation of the committee;
- (7) legal and accounting fees for the committee's compliance with this title;
- (8) routine administrative expenses incurred in establishing and administering a general-purpose political committee;
- (9) management and supervision of the committee, including expenses incurred in holding meetings of the committee's governing body to interview candidates and make endorsements relating to the committee's support;
- (10) the recording of committee decisions;
- (11) expenses incurred in hosting candidate forums in which all candidates for a particular office in an election are

invited to participate on the same terms;

(12) expenses incurred in preparing and delivering committee contributions; or

(13) creation and maintenance of the committee's public Internet web pages that do not contain political advertising.

(b) A corporation may make political expenditures, including fully or partially matching contributions to an organization that is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to finance the solicitation of political contributions to a general-purpose committee assisted under Subsection (a) from the stockholders, employees, or families of stockholders or employees of one or more corporations.

(c) A labor organization may engage in activity authorized for a corporation by this section. For purposes of this section, the members of a labor organization are considered to be corporate stockholders.

(d) A corporation or labor organization may not make expenditures under this section for:

(1) political consulting to support or oppose a candidate;

(2) telephoning or telephone banks to communicate with the public;

(3) brochures and direct mail supporting or opposing a candidate;

(4) partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives;

(5) political fund-raising other than from its stockholders or members, as applicable, or the families of its stockholders or members;

(6) voter identification efforts, voter lists, or voter databases that include persons other than its stockholders or members, as applicable, or the families of its stockholders or members;

(7) polling designed to support or oppose a candidate other than of its stockholders or members, as applicable, or the

families of its stockholders or members; or

(8) recruiting candidates.

(e) Subsection (d) does not apply to a corporation or labor organization making a campaign contribution to a political committee under Section [253.097](#) or an expenditure to communicate with its stockholders or members, as applicable, or with the families of its stockholders or members as provided by Section [253.098](#).

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 249, Sec. 2.26, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1306 (H.B. [2525](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1127 (H.B. [2586](#)), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1239 (H.B. [3044](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 253.101. UNLAWFUL CONTRIBUTION OR EXPENDITURE BY COMMITTEE. (a) A political committee assisted by a corporation or labor organization under Section [253.100](#) may not make a political contribution or political expenditure in whole or part from money that is known by a member or officer of the political committee to be dues, fees, or other money required as a condition of employment or condition of membership in a labor organization.

(a-1) Subsection (a) does not prohibit a political committee from making a political contribution or political expenditure wholly or partly from a campaign contribution made by a corporation or labor organization to the political committee under Section [253.096](#) or [253.097](#).

(b) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1127 (H.B. [2586](#)), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 253.102. COERCION PROHIBITED. (a) A corporation or labor organization or a political committee assisted by a corporation or labor organization under Section [253.100](#) commits an offense if it uses or threatens to use physical force, job discrimination, or financial reprisal to obtain money or any other thing of value to be used to influence the result of an election or to assist an officeholder.

(b) A political committee assisted by a corporation or labor organization under Section [253.100](#) commits an offense if it accepts or uses money or any other thing of value that is known by a member or officer of the political committee to have been obtained in violation of Subsection (a).

(c) An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.103. CORPORATE LOANS. (a) A corporation may not make a loan to a candidate, officeholder, or political committee for campaign or officeholder purposes unless:

(1) the corporation has been legally and continuously engaged in the business of lending money for at least one year before the loan is made; and

(2) the loan is made in the due course of business.

(b) This section does not apply to a loan covered by Section [253.096](#).

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.104. CONTRIBUTION TO POLITICAL PARTY. (a) A corporation or labor organization may make a contribution from its own property to a political party to be used as provided by Chapter [257](#).

(b) A corporation or labor organization may not knowingly

make a contribution authorized by Subsection (a) during a period beginning on the 60th day before the date of a general election for state and county officers and continuing through the day of the election.

(c) A corporation or labor organization that knowingly makes a contribution in violation of this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.08, eff. Jan. 1, 1992.

Sec. 253.105. CONTRIBUTIONS TO DIRECT EXPENDITURE ONLY COMMITTEES. (a) A corporation or labor organization may make a political contribution from its own property to a political committee that:

(1) is not established or controlled by a candidate or an officeholder;

(2) makes or intends to make direct campaign expenditures;

(3) does not make or intend to make political contributions to:

(A) a candidate;

(B) an officeholder;

(C) a specific-purpose committee established or controlled by a candidate or an officeholder; or

(D) a political committee that makes or intends to make political contributions to a candidate, an officeholder, or a specific-purpose committee established or controlled by a candidate or an officeholder; and

(4) has filed an affidavit with the commission stating the committee's intention to operate as described by Subdivisions (2) and (3).

(b) A political contribution made by a corporation or labor organization under this section does not constitute a violation of Section 253.094(a) and the acceptance of the political contribution does not constitute a violation of Section 253.003(b).

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 209 (H.B. 3580), Sec. 1,

eff. September 1, 2019.

#### SUBCHAPTER E. CIVIL LIABILITY

Sec. 253.131. LIABILITY TO CANDIDATES. (a) A person who knowingly makes or accepts a campaign contribution or makes a campaign expenditure in violation of this chapter is liable for damages as provided by this section.

(b) If the contribution or expenditure is in support of a candidate, each opposing candidate whose name appears on the ballot is entitled to recover damages under this section.

(c) If the contribution or expenditure is in opposition to a candidate, the candidate is entitled to recover damages under this section.

(d) In this section, "damages" means:

(1) twice the value of the unlawful contribution or expenditure; and

(2) reasonable attorney's fees incurred in the suit.

(e) Reasonable attorney's fees incurred in the suit may be awarded to the defendant if judgment is rendered in the defendant's favor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.132. LIABILITY TO POLITICAL COMMITTEES. (a) A corporation or labor organization that knowingly makes a campaign contribution to a political committee or a direct campaign expenditure in violation of Subchapter D is liable for damages as provided by this section to each political committee of opposing interest in the election in connection with which the contribution or expenditure is made.

(b) In this section, "damages" means:

(1) twice the value of the unlawful contribution or expenditure; and

(2) reasonable attorney's fees incurred in the suit.

(c) Reasonable attorney's fees incurred in the suit may be awarded to the defendant if judgment is rendered in the defendant's

favor.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.133. LIABILITY TO STATE. A person who knowingly makes or accepts a political contribution or makes a political expenditure in violation of this chapter is liable for damages to the state in the amount of triple the value of the unlawful contribution or expenditure.

Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 899, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 253.134. CIVIL PENALTIES IMPOSED BY COMMISSION. This title does not prohibit the imposition of civil penalties by the commission in addition to criminal penalties or other sanctions imposed by law.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 304, Sec. 5.09, eff. Jan. 1, 1992.

#### SUBCHAPTER F. JUDICIAL CAMPAIGN FAIRNESS ACT

Sec. 253.151. APPLICABILITY OF SUBCHAPTER. This subchapter applies only to a political contribution or political expenditure in connection with the office of:

- (1) chief justice or justice, supreme court;
- (2) presiding judge or judge, court of criminal appeals;
- (3) chief justice or justice, court of appeals;
- (4) district judge;
- (5) judge, statutory county court; or
- (6) judge, statutory probate court.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Sec. 253.152. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

- (1) "Child" means a person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes.

(2) "In connection with an election" means:

(A) with regard to a contribution that is designated in writing for a particular election, the election designated; or

(B) with regard to a contribution that is not designated in writing for a particular election, the next election for that office occurring after the contribution is made.

(3) "Judicial district" means the territory from which a judicial candidate is elected or appointed.

(4) "Law firm" means a partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, professional corporation, or other entity organized for the practice of law.

(5) "Law firm group" means:

(A) a law firm;

(B) a general-purpose committee established or controlled by the law firm or a member of the law firm;

(C) a member of the law firm; and

(D) the spouse of a member of the law firm.

(6) "Member of a law firm" means:

(A) a person designated "of counsel" or "of the firm";

(B) a partner of the law firm, whether an individual or an entity;

(C) an associate of the law firm;

(D) a shareholder of the law firm, whether an individual or an entity; or

(E) an employee of the law firm.

(7) "Statewide judicial office" means the office of chief justice or justice, supreme court, or presiding judge or judge, court of criminal appeals.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 1, eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.153. CONTRIBUTION PROHIBITED EXCEPT DURING ELECTION PERIOD. (a) A judicial candidate or officeholder, a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a judicial candidate, or a specific-purpose committee for assisting a judicial officeholder may not knowingly accept a political contribution except during the period:

(1) beginning on:

(A) the 210th day before the date an application for a place on the ballot or for nomination by convention for the office is required to be filed, if the election is for a full term; or

(B) the later of the 210th day before the date an application for a place on the ballot or for nomination by convention for the office is required to be filed or the date a vacancy in the office occurs, if the election is for an unexpired term; and

(2) ending on the 120th day after the date of the election in which the candidate or officeholder last appeared on the ballot, regardless of whether the candidate or officeholder has an opponent in that election.

(b) Subsection (a)(2) does not apply to a political contribution that was made and accepted with the intent that it be used to defray expenses incurred in connection with an election, including the repayment of any debt that is:

(1) incurred directly by the making of a campaign expenditure during the period beginning on the date the application for a place on the ballot or for nomination by convention was required to be filed for the election in which the candidate last appeared on the ballot and ending on the date of that election; and

(2) subject to the restrictions prescribed by Sections 253.162 and 253.1621.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1329, Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

(d) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount of the political contributions accepted in violation of this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1329 (H.B. [4060](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1329 (H.B. [4060](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 253.154. WRITE-IN CANDIDACY. (a) A write-in candidate for judicial office or a specific-purpose committee for supporting a write-in candidate for judicial office may not knowingly accept a political contribution before the candidate files a declaration of write-in candidacy.

(b) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount of the political contributions accepted in violation of this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Sec. 253.1541. ACCEPTANCE OF POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY PERSON APPOINTED TO FILL VACANCY. (a) This section applies only to a person appointed to fill a vacancy in an office covered by this subchapter who, at the time of appointment, does not hold another office covered by this subchapter.

(b) Notwithstanding Section [253.153](#), a person to whom this section applies may accept political contributions beginning on the date the person assumes the duties of office and ending on the 60th day after that date.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 552, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 3, eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.155. CONTRIBUTION LIMITS. (a) A judicial candidate or officeholder may not knowingly accept political contributions from a person that, in the aggregate, exceed the

contribution limits prescribed by Subsection (b) in connection with each election in which the judicial candidate's name appears on the ballot.

(b) The contribution limits under this section are:

(1) for a statewide judicial office, \$5,000; or

(2) for any other judicial office:

(A) \$1,000, if the population of the judicial district is less than 250,000;

(B) \$2,500, if the population of the judicial district is 250,000 to one million; or

(C) \$5,000, if the population of the judicial district is more than one million.

(c) This section does not apply to a political contribution made by a general-purpose committee.

(d) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 17(1), eff. June 2, 2019.

(d-1) In addition to the contribution limits imposed on each contributor under this section, a judicial candidate or officeholder may not accept a political contribution in excess of \$50 from a person if:

(1) the person is part of a law firm group; and

(2) the contribution, when aggregated with all political contributions accepted by the candidate or officeholder from the same law firm group in connection with the election, would exceed six times the applicable contribution limit under this section.

(e) A person who receives a political contribution that violates this section shall return the contribution to the contributor not later than the later of:

(1) the last day of the reporting period in which the contribution is received; or

(2) the fifth day after the date the contribution is received.

(f) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount of the political contributions accepted in violation of this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1096, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 4, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 17(1), eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.157. LIMIT ON CONTRIBUTION BY GENERAL-PURPOSE COMMITTEES.

(a) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 17(2), eff. June 2, 2019.

(a-1) A judicial candidate or officeholder may not knowingly accept political contributions from a general-purpose committee that, in the aggregate, exceed the contribution limits prescribed by this subsection in connection with an election in which the judicial candidate's name appears on the ballot. The contribution limits under this subsection are:

- (1) for a statewide judicial office, \$25,000; or
- (2) for any other judicial office, \$5,000.

(a-2) In addition to the contribution limits imposed on each contribution in Subsection (a-1), a judicial candidate or officeholder may not accept a political contribution in excess of \$50 from a general-purpose committee if the contribution, when aggregated with all political contributions from all general-purpose committees in connection with an election, would exceed:

(1) for a statewide judicial office, \$300,000;

(2) for the office of chief justice or justice, court of appeals:

(A) \$75,000, if the population of the judicial district is more than one million; or

(B) \$52,500, if the population of the judicial district is one million or less; or

(3) for an office other than an office included under Subdivision (1) or (2):

(A) \$52,500, if the population of the judicial

district is more than one million;

(B) \$30,000, if the population of the judicial district is 250,000 to one million; or

(C) \$15,000, if the population of the judicial district is less than 250,000.

(b) A person who receives a political contribution that violates this section shall return the contribution to the contributor not later than the later of:

(1) the last day of the reporting period in which the contribution is received; or

(2) the fifth day after the date the contribution is received.

(c) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount of the political contributions accepted in violation of this section.

(d) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 17(2), eff. June 2, 2019.

(e) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 17(2), eff. June 2, 2019.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 552, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 62, Sec. 5.16, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1096, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 5, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 6, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 17(2), eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.158. CONTRIBUTION BY SPOUSE OR CHILD. (a) For purposes of this subchapter, a contribution by the spouse of an individual is not considered to be a contribution by the individual.

(b) For purposes of this subchapter, a contribution by a

child of an individual is considered to be a contribution by the individual.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 7, eff.

June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.159. EXCEPTION TO CONTRIBUTION LIMITS. Section 253.155 does not apply to an individual who is related to the candidate or officeholder within the second degree by consanguinity, as determined under Subchapter B, Chapter 573, Government Code.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 7, eff.

June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.1601. CONTRIBUTION TO CERTAIN COMMITTEES  
CONSIDERED CONTRIBUTION TO CANDIDATE OR OFFICEHOLDER. For purposes of Sections 253.155 and 253.157, a contribution to a specific-purpose committee for the purpose of supporting a judicial candidate, opposing the candidate's opponent, or assisting a judicial officeholder is considered to be a contribution to the candidate or officeholder.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Renumbered from Election Code Sec. 253.156 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 7, eff.

June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.161. USE OF CONTRIBUTION FROM NONJUDICIAL OR JUDICIAL OFFICE PROHIBITED. (a) A judicial candidate or officeholder, a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a judicial candidate, or a specific-purpose committee for assisting a judicial officeholder may not use a political contribution to make a campaign expenditure for judicial office or

to make an officeholder expenditure in connection with a judicial office if the contribution was accepted while the candidate or officeholder:

(1) was a candidate for an office other than a judicial office; or

(2) held an office other than a judicial office, unless the person had become a candidate for judicial office and the contribution was made in connection with an election for judicial office.

(b) A candidate, officeholder, or specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting the candidate or officeholder may not use a political contribution to make a campaign expenditure for an office other than a judicial office or to make an officeholder expenditure in connection with an office other than a judicial office if the contribution was accepted while the candidate or officeholder:

(1) was a candidate for a judicial office; or

(2) held a judicial office, unless the person had become a candidate for another office and the contribution was made in connection with an election for nonjudicial office.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 17(4), eff. June 2, 2019.

(d) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount of political contributions used in violation of this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 8, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 17(4), eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.1611. CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS BY JUDICIAL CANDIDATES, OFFICEHOLDERS, AND COMMITTEES RESTRICTED. (a) A judicial candidate or officeholder or a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a judicial candidate or assisting a judicial officeholder may not use a political contribution to

knowingly make political contributions that in the aggregate exceed \$100 in a calendar year to a candidate or officeholder.

(b) A judicial candidate or a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a judicial candidate may not use a political contribution to knowingly make political contributions to a political committee in connection with a primary election.

(c) A judicial candidate or a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a judicial candidate may not use a political contribution to knowingly make a political contribution to a political committee that, when aggregated with each other political contribution to a political committee in connection with a general election, exceeds \$500.

(d) A judicial officeholder or a specific-purpose committee for assisting a judicial officeholder may not, in any calendar year in which the office held is not on the ballot, use a political contribution to knowingly make a political contribution to a political committee that, when aggregated with each other political contribution to a political committee in that calendar year, exceeds \$250.

(e) This section does not apply to a political contribution made to the principal political committee of the state executive committee or a county executive committee of a political party that provides goods or services, including political advertising or a campaign communication, to or for the benefit of judicial candidates.

(e-1) This subsection applies only to a political party required to nominate candidates by primary election. This section does not apply to a political contribution made, for the purpose of sponsoring or attending an event, to a political committee affiliated with:

(1) an organization that has been designated as an auxiliary, coalition, or county chair association of a political party as provided by political party rule or state executive committee bylaw; or

(2) a local chapter of an organization described by Subdivision (1).

(f) Repealed by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 905 (H.B.

[3903](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2017.

(g) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount of political contributions used in violation of this section.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1997. Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 937, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 905 (H.B. [3903](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 905 (H.B. [3903](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2017.

Sec. 253.1612. CERTAIN CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED. The Code of Judicial Conduct may not prohibit, and a judicial candidate may not be penalized for, a joint campaign activity conducted by two or more judicial candidates.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 9, eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.162. RESTRICTIONS ON REIMBURSEMENT OF PERSONAL FUNDS AND PAYMENTS ON CERTAIN LOANS. (a) A judicial candidate or officeholder who makes political expenditures from the person's personal funds or who accepts one or more political contributions in the form of a loan, including an extension of credit or guarantee of a loan or extension of credit, from one or more persons related to the candidate or officeholder within the second degree of affinity or consanguinity, as determined under Subchapter B, Chapter [573](#), Government Code, may not reimburse those personal funds or repay those loans from political contributions in amounts that in the aggregate exceed, for each election in which the person's name appears on the ballot:

(1) for a statewide judicial office, \$100,000; or  
(2) for an office other than a statewide judicial office, five times the applicable contribution limit under Section [253.155](#).

(b) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B.

[3233](#)), Sec. 17(5), eff. June 2, 2019.

(c) A person who is both a candidate and an officeholder may reimburse the person's personal funds in only one capacity.

(d) A person who violates this section is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed three times the amount by which the reimbursement made in violation of this section exceeds the applicable limit prescribed by Subsection (a).

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995. Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1096, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 10, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 17(5), eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.1621. APPLICATION OF CONTRIBUTION AND REIMBURSEMENT LIMITS TO CERTAIN CANDIDATES. (a) For purposes of the contribution limits prescribed by Section [253.155](#) or [253.157](#) and the limit on reimbursement of personal funds and repayment of certain loans prescribed by Section [253.162](#), the general and primary elections are considered separate elections for a candidate whose name appears on the ballot.

(b) For purposes of the contribution limits prescribed by Sections [253.155](#) and [253.157](#) and the limits on reimbursement of personal funds and repayment of certain loans prescribed by Section [253.162](#), a runoff election in which the candidate's name is on the ballot is considered a separate election.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1096, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 11, eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.167. CERTIFICATION OF POPULATION; NOTICE OF CONTRIBUTION LIMITS. (a) For purposes of this subchapter only, not later than June 1 of each odd-numbered year, the commission shall:

(1) make a written certification of the population of each judicial district for which a candidate for judge or justice must file a campaign treasurer appointment with the commission; and

(2) deliver to the county clerk of each county a written certification of the county's population, if the county:

(A) comprises an entire judicial district under Chapter 26, Government Code; or

(B) has a statutory county court or statutory probate court, other than a multicounty statutory county court created under Subchapter D, Chapter 25, Government Code.

(b) Following certification of population under Subsection (a), the commission or county clerk, as appropriate, shall make available to each candidate for an office covered by this subchapter written notice of the contribution limits applicable to the office the candidate seeks.

(c) The commission shall post the written certification required by this section on the commission's Internet website.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1164 (H.B. 2817), Sec. 40, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 12, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. 3233), Sec. 13, eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.171. CONTRIBUTION FROM OR DIRECT CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE BY POLITICAL PARTY. A political expenditure that is made by the principal political committee of the state executive committee or a county executive committee of a political party for a generic get-out-the-vote campaign or to create and distribute a written list of two or more candidates is not considered a contribution to a judicial candidate who benefits from the get-out-the-vote campaign or is included in the written list and is not subject to the limits of Section 253.155 or 253.157 if the get-out-the-vote campaign or written list:

(1) identifies the party's candidates by name and

office sought, office held, or photograph;

(2) does not include any reference to the judicial philosophy or positions on issues of the party's judicial candidates; and

(3) is not broadcast, cablecast, published in a newspaper or magazine, or placed on a billboard.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 14, eff. June 2, 2019.

Sec. 253.176. CIVIL PENALTY. (a) The commission may impose a civil penalty against a person as provided by this subchapter only after a formal hearing as provided by Subchapter E, Chapter [571](#), Government Code.

(b) The commission shall base the amount of the penalty on:

(1) the seriousness of the violation;

(2) the history of previous violations;

(3) the amount necessary to deter future violations;

and

(4) any other matter that justice may require.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 17(7), eff. June 2, 2019.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 763, Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 15, eff. June 2, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 384 (H.B. [3233](#)), Sec. 17(7), eff. June 2, 2019.