



San Francisco Ethics Commission

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Announcement of Interested Persons Meetings to Discuss Potential Changes to City Rules Regarding Campaign Finance and Committee Coordination

Tuesday, March 3, 2026 – 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

And

Friday, March 6, 2026 – 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

These meetings will be conducted remotely using an online meeting platform. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to trishia.lim@sfgov.org and you will be provided with a link to the meeting.

Please join staff from the Policy Division of the San Francisco Ethics Commission to share your thoughts on ways to strengthen San Francisco's campaign finance laws. As part of its ongoing review of current program areas, the Commission is prioritizing a review of several aspects of the City's campaign finance rules. Staff are interested in hearing from the public, advocates, and members of the regulated community regarding the following policy areas and how they might be improved.

- **Candidate Controlled Committees:** Currently, candidates for City elective office may control other committees in addition to the committee for their City office campaign. For example, candidates can control Ballot Measure committees, Legal Defense Funds, or General Purpose committees. Unlike the committee raising and spending money for their candidacy, these other committees are not subject to contribution limits. This project will look at what potential issues arise from candidates controlling multiple committees simultaneously and explore ways to address such issues.
- **Committee Coordination:** Third party groups that are not formally connected to a candidate are allowed to raise and spend unlimited amounts of money in local elections, as long as those expenditures are not coordinated with the candidate who benefits from them. However, there are situations in which these expenditures are not considered independent and are treated as contributions to the candidate benefiting from such expenditures. Current law provides a set of rebuttable presumptions of coordination and narrow exceptions ([SF C&GCC Section 1.115](#)). This project will look at when outside expenditures should be considered contributions and if there is a need to strengthen the current rules regarding coordination.
- **Legal Defense Funds:** Money donated to Legal Defense Funds can be used by candidates and elected officials to defray costs for attorney's fees and other related legal



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costs. State law provides some limits on how money from these funds can be used, but this money can currently be used to pay penalties incurred for violations of ethics and campaign finance rules. This project will review how these funds are used and assess if further restrictions are needed on the use of such funds.

During these Interested Persons Meetings, Staff will share information on how these rules currently function, several identified issue areas, and potential reforms to strengthen these rules – but the focus of the meetings will be on hearing from participants to better understand where reforms are needed and what potential reforms are preferred.

The Commission looks forward to hearing from the public about these matters. The two meetings will each have the same agenda, and participants are welcome to attend one or both meetings.

Staff also welcome written comments, which can be sent via email to trishia.lim@sfgov.org, or via U.S. mail to San Francisco Ethics Commission, 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 220, San Francisco, CA 94102.

The meetings will be conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams. The week of the meetings, Staff will distribute links to the meetings via email to all attendees who RSVP.

For questions about the upcoming interested persons meetings, or to RSVP, please contact Trishia Lim at trishia.lim@sfgov.org. We welcome your input and hope to see you at one of our upcoming online meetings.