

Ethics Code and Municipal Campaign Finance Code Changes

Please note, changes to the Ethics Code and Municipal Campaign Finance Code have been approved and will be effective October 1, 2024. The following changes affect candidates running for office in the City and current officeholders:

Section	Final Details	Rationale
Municipal Campaign Finance Code Sec. 2-306: Campaign Bank Account Statements	Removes the requirement to provide copies of bank account statements to the City Clerk's Office.	Texas Election Code does not require this, and removing the requirement protects sensitive information. Candidates must still maintain records of all reportable activity.
Municipal Campaign Finance Code Sec. 2-307: Electronic Filing of Campaign Finance Reports	Removes quarterly campaign finance filings and reverts to state required semi-annual submissions and specific pre-election reports.	Simplifies reporting requirements and reduces confusion caused by duplicate transactions in quarterly reports. Aligns local requirements with state regulations and minimizes additional investment in campaign finance software updates.
Municipal Campaign Finance Code Sec. 2-309: Contribution Prohibitions	Prohibits business-specific PACs and all company board members (for profit and non-profit) from contributing during high-profile contract prohibition periods. <i>Note: Change rescinds previous exception for Non-Profit Board Officers. Prohibits all non-profit board members from contributing during high-profile contract prohibition periods.</i>	Maintains public trust by preventing any perception of "pay to play" and ensures a level playing field for all entities seeking City contracts or zoning changes.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Why were these code sections updated?

- The updates were made following an extensive review to enhance transparency, ensure fair competition, and maintain public trust. They aim to clarify existing rules and prevent conflicts of interest or unethical practices.

2. When do the changes take effect?

- The changes are effective **October 1, 2024**.

3. Do the changes regarding prohibited contributions affect *all* City contracts?

- No. Contribution restrictions are only applicable to a solicitation identified as **high-profile**. This measure ensures fairness by preventing financial contributions from influencing or creating the appearance of influencing the procurement process during prohibition periods.

4. Who is prohibited from making contributions during high-profile contract periods?

- (1) Any individual seeking a high-profile contract;
- (2) Any owner, officer, officer of board, executive committee member, and general board member of an entity seeking a high-profile contract; (*revised*)
- (3) The legal signatory of the high-profile contract;
- (4) Any attorney, lobbyist or consultant hired or retained to assist the individual or entity in seeking a high-profile contract;
- (5) Subcontractors hired or retained to provide services under the high-profile contract; and
- (6) Any first-degree member of the household of any person listed under in (1), (2), (3) or (5) of this subsection.
- (7) Any corporate PAC established or formed by the entity seeking a high-profile contract. (*new*)

Note: The October 1st change eliminates the previous exception for Non-Profit Board Officers and adds restrictions to corporate PACs.

5. What are the contribution blackout periods for high-profile contracts?

- Under Section 2-309 of the Municipal Campaign Finance Code, the blackout period for high-profile contracts begins on the 10th business day after a contract solicitation is released and continues until the 30th calendar day following the contract's approval by City Council.

6. Where can I find a list of open and pending high-profile contracts?

- A list of open and pending high-profile contracts can be found on the Procurement website at: <https://www.sa.gov/Directory/Departments/Finance/About/Divisions/Procurement/Bidding-Contracting/High-Profile-Solicitations>

7. Where can I find more information about Elections and Campaign Finance at the City of San Antonio?

- More information is available on the City Clerk's website at: <https://www.sa.gov/Directory/Departments/OCC/Government/Elections-Campaign-Finance>

8. Where can I get more information or assistance?

- The following resources are available:
 - For more information on the code changes or code content, please contact the City Auditor's Office at 210-207-0080.
 - For information on the Campaign Finance System or Campaign Financial Filings, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 210-207-7253 [Option 3].