

Public Subsidy Training



Filing A Public Subsidy Agreement

- First step to participate in the public subsidy program is to register a principal campaign committee with the Board: cfb.mn.gov/filer-resources/complete-a-filing/campaign-finance-filings/registration/
- Second step is to sign and file a public subsidy agreement with the Board: cfb.mn.gov/reports/#/public-subsidy-agreement/
- Public subsidy agreements expire at end of election cycle

Political Contribution Refund Program

- Candidates who sign and file public subsidy agreement with the Board may issue Political Contribution Refund (PCR) receipts to contributors
 - Monetary contributions only
 - Paper PCR receipt (EP3) from Board or CFRO
 - Dept. of Revenue application - revenue.state.mn.us/political-contribution-refund
- Judicial, federal, and local candidates are not eligible to issue PCR receipts
- PCR receipts may be issued prior to reaching affidavit of contributions threshold

Political Contribution Refund, cont.

- Contribution **must** have been received on or after date the candidate filed public subsidy agreement
- Refunds only available to eligible Minnesota voters
- \$75 per individual per year (\$150 per married couple), tracked by Dept. of Revenue by social security number
- Warn donor to send small PCR receipts in all at one time
- Starting in 2027, contributors will be able to claim a refund electronically

Political Contribution Refund, cont.

- If a contribution consists of money paid for goods or services, including items purchased via auction, the value of the purchase generally must be deducted from the amount paid when issuing a PCR receipt
 - If a contributor pays \$100 for a \$75 gift card via a silent auction, issue PCR receipt for \$25
 - If a contributor pays \$75 for a \$100 gift card, a PCR receipt cannot be issued
- See [Revenue Notice #91-16](#) for more information

Contributions Needed to file Affidavit of Contributions

- To qualify for public subsidy payment campaign must raise specified amount from MN eligible voters counting no more than first \$50 of contribution
- Cannot count anonymous contributions
- Must collect name and address if you wish to count \$20 and less contributions
- How to file affidavit of contributions:
cfb.mn.gov/reports/#/affidavit-of-contributions/



Public Subsidy Payments

- To receive a General Account payment, must be running with a major political party
- Party Account payment, must be with major or minor political party
- Must win the primary election and be opposed in either the primary or general election

Public Subsidy Payments, cont.

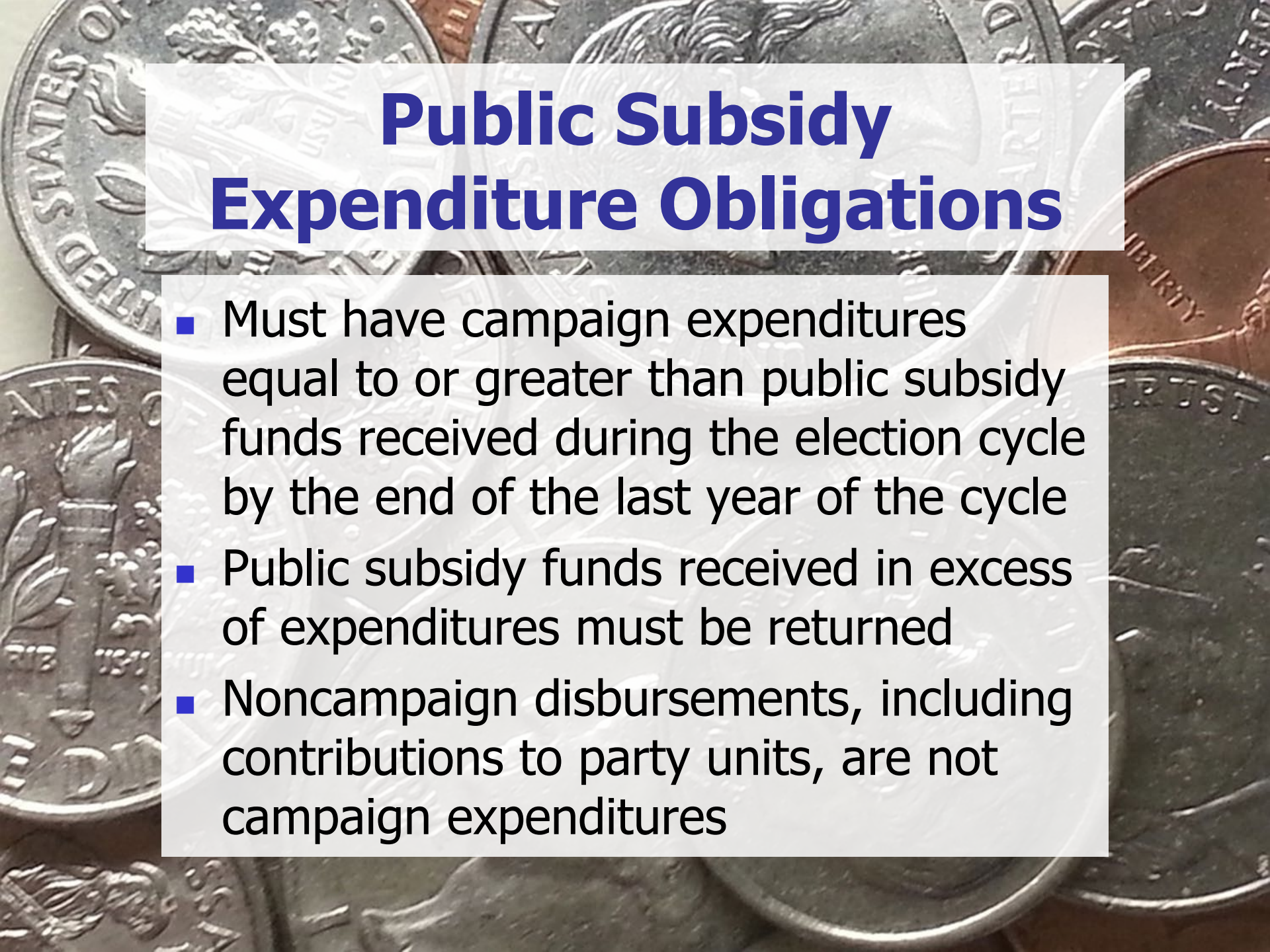
- To receive public subsidy payment candidate must:
 - File signed agreement for the election cycle
 - Raise specified amount in contributions from eligible Minnesota voters counting only first \$50 from each donor AND file affidavit of contributions
 - House candidate must raise \$1,500 and Senate candidate must raise \$3,000 in contributions of \$50 or less by July 20, 2026, file signed agreement by July 21, 2026 (or earlier), and file affidavit by July 27, 2026

Public Subsidy Payments, cont.

- To receive public subsidy payment candidate must:
 - Cooperate with the Board's audit of the affidavit of contributions.
 - No public subsidy payment may be paid to the candidate until the audit document is approved by Board staff.
 - The audit document may be produced via CFRO when the committee files the affidavit of contributions with the Board.

Public Subsidy Payments, cont.

- Subsidy payment made after primary election
- Candidate may be released from spending limit depending on conduct of opponent
- Payment is a combination of general account and party check-off from tax form
- Estimates be will published on Board's website in May 2026. Amounts paid in previous years are available at cfb.mn.gov/citizen-resources/board-programs/public-subsidy-of-campaigns/historical-use-of-public-subsidy-program

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of several US coins, including quarters and pennies, scattered across the surface. The coins are in various orientations, showing details like the eagle on the quarter and the profile of Lincoln on the penny.

Public Subsidy Expenditure Obligations

- Must have campaign expenditures equal to or greater than public subsidy funds received during the election cycle by the end of the last year of the cycle
- Public subsidy funds received in excess of expenditures must be returned
- Noncampaign disbursements, including contributions to party units, are not campaign expenditures

Personal Contribution Limit

Office	2025 – 2026 Candidate's Personal Contribution Limit
Governor/Lt. Governor	\$20,000
Attorney General	\$12,500
Secretary of State and State Auditor	\$10,000
Senate	\$5,000
House of Representatives	\$5,000
Judicial Office	Not applicable

- Limit only applies if candidate signs public subsidy agreement
- Contributions and loans in excess of these amounts must be reported to the Board by the next business day

Candidate Spending Limits

- Campaign expenditures are limited if a public subsidy agreement is signed
 - Limit increased 10% for 1st time running for office and 20% for closely contested primary
 - 1st time running for office means
 - Never held the same office
 - Name has never appeared on primary or general election ballot for the same office
 - In the past ten years has not spent more than \$750 for any other office that represents more than 1/3 of population of current office sought

Candidate Spending Limits, cont.

- Campaign spending limit is based on two-year segment
 - Higher limit during two-year election segment
 - Lower limit in two-year non-election segment
- A list of 2025 – 2026 spending and contribution limits is available at cfb.mn.gov/pdf/camfin/contrib_limits.pdf

Candidate Spending Limits, cont.

Office	A 2025– 2026 Base Limit	B 2025 – 2026 First-Time Candidate Limit	C 2025 – 2026 Closely Contested Primary Limit	D 2025 – 2026 Limit for Candidate to whom B & C Apply
Governor/Lt. Governor	\$4,232,700	\$4,655,970	\$5,079,240	\$5,587,164
Attorney General	\$725,800	\$798,380	\$870,960	\$958,056
Secretary of State and State Auditor	\$483,900	\$532,290	\$580,680	\$638,748
Senate	\$109,100	\$120,010	\$130,920	\$144,012
House of Representatives	\$80,300	\$88,330	\$96,360	\$105,996

- These amounts will be adjusted for inflation in April 2026

Captioning by Public Subsidy Candidates

- Professional television ads must include closed captioning unless statement is filed with the Board prior to the ad running explaining why captioning was not included
- Professional visual or audio ads on the candidate's website must include closed captioning unless:
 - a transcript is posted to the website; or
 - a statement is filed with the Board prior to the ad running explaining why captioning was not included

Captioning by Public Subsidy Candidates, cont.

- Professional radio ads may not be run unless:
 - a transcript is posted to the candidate's website; or
 - a statement is filed with the Board prior to the ad running explaining why a transcript was not posted
- Civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for candidates who do not comply with the closed captioning requirements for campaign advertisements placed on broadcast or cable television, or the transcription requirements for radio advertisements
- See MNCDHH page on captioning and transcription for more information:
 - mn.gov/deaf-commission/get-involved/voting/candidate-campaign-ad-captioning/

When In Doubt Ask

- Online training videos at cfb.mn.gov/filer-resources/self-help/education-and-tools/online-videos/
- Call (651) 539-1180 or (800) 657-3889
- The website address for the Board is cfb.mn.gov
- On the website, you can access handbooks, download forms, and find contact information for staff members.