

Small Dollar Elections

Public financing of elections can help candidates – even while fundraising within contribution limits – raise enough to ensure that large independent expenditures cannot overwhelm candidate campaign spending.

- Participation is voluntary
- Applies to all state level elections (statewide, legislative, and judicial)
- To be implemented starting with the 2026 election cycle

Matching

Oregonians age 18 and older get matched – once in the primary and again in the general

The match is tiered:

- 1st tier: 20:1 match on the first \$25
- 2nd tier: 10:1 match to \$50

The average donor (demographically) gives \$25 or less. Matching donors above \$25 amplifies a demographically skewed population. The tiered system of matching reduces the skewed amplification.

Donor Type	Primary Limit	General Limit
Individuals	\$250	\$250
Candidate committees	\$1,000	\$1,000
Small donor committees	\$20,000 statewide \$10,000 district	\$20,000 statewide \$10,000 district
Caucus committees	\$20,000 statewide \$10,000 district	\$20,000 statewide \$10,000 district
Party committees	\$20,000 statewide \$10,000 district	\$20,000 statewide \$10,000 district
Any source (seed money)	\$6,000 total, self-funded is okay, otherwise \$500/donor	-
Other rules	Matching funds may only be spent on legitimate campaign expenses, cannot be used to pay relatives, etc.	

Qualifying contributions

To participate, candidates must show they have community support by collecting many \$5-250 contributions:

Governor	Senate/House	SOS, BOLI, AG, Treas	Supreme Court	Appeal/Tax Court	Circuit Court/DAs
1500	200	200	150	50	25

Match caps

- There is a cap on how much each candidate can collect in matching funds.
- Races vary in how costly they are year to year and district by district. Candidates in less costly races could collect enough contributions to qualify for the program and be subject to the lower match cap. Candidates in more costly races will want to collect significantly more small contributions, to qualify for the middle or even high match caps.

Cap	Governor	Senate/House	SOS, BOLI, AG, Treas.
Low	1500 donors → \$4 million cap	200 donors → \$75,000 cap	200 donors → \$300,000 cap
Medium	4000 donors → \$6 million cap	300 donors → \$300,000 cap	-
High	8000 donors → \$8 million cap	450 donors → \$600,000 cap	1000 donors → \$750,000 cap

Cap	Supreme Court	Appeal/Tax Court	Circuit Court/DAs
Low	150 donors → \$30,000 cap	50 donors → \$10,000 cap	25 donors → \$5,000 cap
Medium	-	150 donors → \$150,000 cap	250 donors → lesser of \$250,000 or \$1
High	450 donors → \$300,000 cap		per District resident

Small Donor Elections program funded with 0.25% of the general fund in an unsweepable fund.

Creates an oversight commission, the Oregon Elections Commission:

- Oversees program implementation and make administrative rules.
- Makes recommendations to the legislature for changes to the law over time.
- Updates numbers to keep up with changes to the campaign finance climate, within limits (<20% change), such as:
 - match rate
 - matchable amount
 - match caps
- Creates and announces a plan on how to handle potential fund insolvency in a manner that is least disruptive to participation.
- Oversee program implementation and make administrative rules.

Consists of 11 members, including:

- 3 experts in running competitive elections
- 3 campaign finance reform experts
- 2 budget and implementation experts
- Each of Oregon's six congressional districts gets at least one member