



# Political Financial Activities 2025

## Guidance Note:

### Campaign Expenses

Party Campaign Expenditure is regulated under Part V (**S.40-52**) of the Political Activities Ordinance (the Ordinance).

#### **2025 is a slated to be an election year for the TCI.**

As such under **S.47(7)** of the Ordinance, the **relevant period** in relation to the 2025 elections would be the 365 days prior to Election (polling) day( 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024 -6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025). This guidance note and subsequent advice and guidance, is provided to remind and assist the Registered Political Parties/Treasurers, and any Independent Candidates prior to the elections. It is part of the Integrity Commissions commitment to assist Political Parties and Independent Candidates with their statutory responsibilities in relation to campaign expenditure.

This guidance note will give an understanding of the principles of party campaign spending and the rules that have to be complied with. Spending by political parties and Candidates during the 2025 Relevant Period will be regulated by the Ordinance and there is a maximum amount that each Registered Party/Independent Candidate can spend.

**In accordance with the revised Section 47(8) of the Ordinance, the expenditure limits during the Relevant Period are as follows:**

#### **Total expenditure for Registered Party candidates S.47(8):**

- **\$40,000 in relation to each electoral district contested by the party (of which there are 10)**
- **\$50,000 in relation to each of the ALL-ISLAND candidates (of which there are 9)**
- **\$110,000 in relation to each of the parties leaders**

**Therefore, the maximum any Registered Party can spend on campaigning during the Relevant Period, is a total of \$960,000(nine hundred and sixty thousand dollars).**

**Total expenditure for Independent Candidates S.70(4):**

- **\$100,000 for ALL ISLAND Independent Candidates**
- **\$30,000 for an Independent Candidate in a specific Constituency.**

Campaign expenditure by both Political Parties and Independent Candidates covers those expenses incurred during an election campaign for election purposes. In 2025, this refers to expenses incurred by a either Parties or Independent Candidates, for the elections which are slated to be held in 2025. It can include items or services bought before the election period began, but which are used during it. It can also include items or services given to the party free of charge or at a non-commercial discount. A detailed list of campaign expenses is set out within Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the Ordinance. It includes the following:

- Party political broadcasts
- Advertising and publicity material
- Manifesto/party policy documents
- Transport
- Rallies and other events
- Temporary election staff

You must include all costs associated with each activity, this includes design and distribution costs of producing leaflets. You must also include overheads or administration costs which are associated with each activity. If you are entitled to party election broadcasts you must include any additional production or other costs incurred, which may have been associated with the broadcasts as campaign spending. You do not need to include the value of the airtime.

Election expenses are valued at either the actual expense incurred in respect of the purchase of the goods or services used; or, where goods or services are not used exclusively for election purposes, as a proportion of the total expense incurred determined by the proportion of the use of the goods/services for election purposes. Although the latter provision may require parties to make some calculations as to the proportion of the cost of an item that is to be treated as election expenses, we consider that this is important to ensure accuracy – a reasonable and honest assessment is required.

**What doesn't count as campaign spending?** There may be a number of expenses that are usually incurred by the party generally and therefore should not be included as spending for election purposes. The following does not count as campaign spending:

- Permanent or fixed term staff costs where the staff member has a direct employment contract with the party
- Ordinary office running costs, except costs that are higher than usual because of campaigning such as telephone bills
- You do not need to include volunteer time if their usual employer is not paying them for the time they spend on your campaign or they are using their annual leave

**Notional Spending:** This is the difference in value between the commercial rate, what a supplier would normally charge another customer for the same item or service, and the price you pay. You may find that you pay for items, services or activities at a lower cost than the commercial value. This may occur where for example, the supplier supports your campaign. In those circumstances, you must record the full commercial value of these items or activities in your election expenses return if:

- You receive them free of charge or at a non-commercial discount of more than 10% and;
- The difference in value between the commercial rate and what you pay is over \$200

If you receive a discount of 10% or less, or the difference in value is \$200 or less, you only need to record the amount you pay.

**Recording and Submitting Returns:** The party Treasurer or Independent Candidate is responsible for making sure that the rules on campaign spending are followed. All concerned have to keep track of the party's or their spending, because the limits on spending are not to be exceeded.

A report must be submitted to the Commission of what has been spent so that we can publish it. For each item of spending, you must record the following information to put in your spending return:

- What the spending was for – leaflets or advertising etc...
- Name and address of supplier
- Amount or value
- The date you spent the money

You must report your campaign spending to the Commission after the election and it should include the following:

- Details of your spending
- Invoices and receipts for items over \$200
- **Declaration by the Party Treasurer/all Independent Candidates, that the return is complete and correct**

**Receipt and Payment of Claims (Invoices):** Section 44 of the Ordinance sets out the relevant timescales for the receipt and payment of invoices relating to election campaign expenditure. You must obtain all your invoices from suppliers within 60 days post the election date and ensure all invoices are paid within 150 days post the election date. For the purposes of the 2025 election, that is:

- **Obtain all claims/invoices by Polling day + 60 days**
- **Payment of all claims/invoices by Polling Day + 150 days**

This is important because payment of invoices which are received or paid outside the specified periods **may** be an offence under **Section 45(3)** – it is important therefore that the above time periods are adhered to concerning the receipt and payment of invoices.

**Forms:**

The Commission has drafted appropriate forms and worksheets which must be used for reporting campaign spending. To assist, explanatory notes are also provided. The forms can be completed and submitted electronically – The Treasurer must also deliver a signed hard copy to the Commissions offices.

**Deadlines:** The date by which you must report to the Commission depends on how much you spend on your campaign. All political parties that put forward candidates for the election must submit a campaign expenditure return within **four months** after the Election (polling) day if their campaign spending was **\$250,000 or less**,

**Or, within **six months** of the polling day if their spending was **over \$250,000** (in which case an audited report is also required).** The dates for submission are therefore as follows:

- **If campaign spending was \$250,000 or less – Election (Polling) Day + 120 days**
- **If campaign spending was over \$250,000 – Election (Polling) Day + 180 days (with an Audited Report)**

Should you wish to contact the Commission in relation to campaign expenses, you can do so by using the following contact details:

General: 946-1941, 941-7847 or 338-3335, Richard Been or via e-mail:  
[deputydirector@integritycommission.tc](mailto:deputydirector@integritycommission.tc) or [secretary@integritycommission.tc](mailto:secretary@integritycommission.tc)

Integrity Commission  
Franklyn Misicks Building  
Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos Islands  
Or  
Suite 206 Cabot House  
IGA Plaza  
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*Note: These guidance notes are issued to assist political parties and candidates in complying with their obligations under the Political Activities Ordinance. They are not intended to supersede the Ordinance and Regulations and in the event of any inconsistency, the Ordinance and Regulations prevail. This also applies to any future guidance notes provided by the Integrity Commission*