

"Paid for by" Attribution Statement

Revised 07/15

WHAT IS AN ADVERTISING ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT?

Iowa Code section 68A.405 and Board rule 351-4.38 require a "paid for by" attribution statement to be printed or displayed on political material to identify the person paying for the material. An attribution MUST contain the words "Paid for by" to comply with the law and rule.

WHAT POLITICAL ITEMS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE AN ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT?

Political material in newspapers, magazines, tabloids, shoppers, Web sites, stationery, mailings, brochures, postcards, scratch pads, posters, and outdoor political material as well as television, video, and motion picture advertising.

EXCEPTION: An individual who acts alone and spends \$100 or less of his or her own money to advocate the passage or defeat of a ballot issue is not required to place an attribution statement on such political materials.

IS THE ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT REQUIRED IN EDITORIALS AND NEWS STORIES OF A NEWSPAPER, MAGAZINE, ETC.?

No. Editorials, letters to the editor and news stories are not considered to be political material.

DOES IOWA LAW REQUIRE AN ATTRIBUTION FOR POLITICAL RADIO AND TV ADS?

Not on radio ads. However, federal law as administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) may require an attribution on radio political advertisements. Make sure to ask the station for guidance concerning what attribution is required by federal law before placing an advertisement. Effective April 8, 2010, attributions must appear for at least four seconds on television, video, and motion picture advertising.

EXACTLY WHAT MUST AN ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT CONTAIN?

If the sponsor is an individual, the words "paid for by" and the name and address of the individual. This includes a candidate who has not registered a committee by filing a statement of organization under Iowa Code section 68A.201 because the candidate has not exceeded the \$1000 filing threshold.

A candidate who has not exceeded \$1000 may file Form DR- SFA with the Ethics Board and use the shorter "paid for by" attribution.

If the sponsor is a candidate who has registered a committee by filing a statement of organization, the words "paid for by" and the official registered name of the committee.

If the sponsor is an organization, the words "paid for by" and the full name and mailing address of the organization and the name and office of one officer. This includes an organization established to pass or defeat a ballot issue but has not registered a committee.

If the sponsor is a registered party committee, central committee, or political committee (one that has registered by filing a statement of organization), the words "paid for by" and the official registered name of the committee.

If more than one individual is responsible, the words "paid for by", the names of the individuals, and either their addresses or a statement that the addresses have been submitted to the Ethics Board.

If a sponsor is donating labor or material rather than paying for the material, there is still a cost involved and the attribution statement should begin "Paid for by", and should be followed by one of the above as circumstances apply.

If the sponsor is a corporation, the words "paid for by", the name and address of the corporation, and the name and title of the corporation's chief executive officer.

If the published material is an independent expenditure with a value in excess of \$1000, the words "paid for by", the other information as set out above as circumstances apply, and a statement that the material was not authorized by any candidate, candidate's committee, or ballot issue committee.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A CAMPAIGN SIGN? IS AN ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT REQUIRED ON POLITICAL CAMPAIGN SIGNS?

A "campaign sign" is a sign with dimensions of 32 square feet or less that is erected on real estate property (land, as opposed to buildings or vehicles). Attributions are not required on campaign signs.

WHAT IS "OUTDOOR ADVERTISING"? ARE ATTRIBUTION STATEMENTS REQUIRED?

Outdoor advertising is any sign (except a yard sign as defined above) including wood, metal, plastic, or other hardboard signs which are affixed to the side of a building or painted directly on the building, affixed to the top, side, or back of a vehicle, or painted directly on the vehicle. It also includes portable signs, lighted signs, billboards, and magnetic signs temporarily affixed on vehicles or structures (rule 351-4.39).

All of the above must bear advertising attribution statements, preceded by the words "Paid for by".

WHAT ITEMS DO NOT REQUIRE AN ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT?

The law specifically excludes yard signs, matchbooks, bumper stickers, pins, buttons, pens, business cards, and similar items smaller than 2" by 4" where including the attribution would be impracticable. Also, items of clothing such as T-shirts and caps.

IS THE NEWSPAPER, SHOPPER, ETC. THAT ACCEPTS POLITICAL MATERIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTRIBUTION STATEMENT ON THE AD?

No. The "person who causes the publication" is the person who submits the political material for publication, not the publisher of the material.

DISCLAIMER

This brochure is intended to provide you with general guidance concerning the applicable laws and rules. It is not a restatement of the law and does not constitute legal advice. Please refer to the applicable laws and rules or contact the Board for further guidance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE BOARD:

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