

Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission

Democracy Voucher Program Limits on Campaign Contributions

Relevant Authority

SMC 2.04.690.D provides that the Commission may reasonably adjust the contribution limits per contributor provided in subsection 2.04.630.B (but the Commission shall not set a contribution limit for qualifying candidates that exceeds the contribution limit specified for candidates in Section 2.04.370). SMC 2.04.690.D further provides that the adjustments should account for inflation or deflation and ensure the goals and purposes of the Program including democracy and accountability, high rates of candidate participation, heavy utilization of vouchers by those who have not previously donated to Seattle political campaigns, and high public satisfaction with the Program. SMC 2.04.690.D.

Administrative Rule Establishing Democracy Voucher Program Limits on Campaign Contributions

Originally the Democracy Voucher program limited participating candidates to contributions from any individual or entity at \$500 for Mayoral candidates or \$250 for City Attorney or City Council candidates during one election cycle, including any contribution used to qualify for democracy vouchers, but excluding the value of democracy vouchers assigned to such candidate (subject to exceptions provided in Subchapter VIII of SMC Chapter 2.04). SMC 2.04.630.B.3. The inflation rate since the enactment of the Democracy Voucher Program is 30.07 percent.

Based on the authority provided by SMC 2.04.690.D, and to ensure consistency with campaign contribution limits established in 2.04.370.B, and to meet the goals and purposes of the Program, the Commission establishes updated Democracy Voucher program limits on campaign contributions at \$650 for Mayoral candidates and \$350 for City Attorney or City Council candidates during the 2025 election cycle, as calculated by SMC 2.04.630.B.3, effective as of February 7, 2024.