

# Political Action Committee Handout

## Overview

In the simplest terms, a political action committee, or PAC, is an organization that raises funds to support the election or defeat of a political candidate. Political action committees pool resources together from numerous members, then contribute that money to a variety of methods to achieve their goals. PACs and SuperPACs have different regulations to follow when it comes to fundraising and contributions.

### PACs

There are different kinds of PACs. For example, there are connected PACs, whose members have a “connection” or belong to a group like a labor union, trade organization, corporation. Nonconnected PACs are made of people from the general public. Leadership PACs are established by a government official to support other members of their party. There are also Hybrid PACs which follow some rules of PACs and some of SuperPACs. PACs can donate funds directly to candidates, political parties, and pay for election materials such as advertisements.

### SuperPACs

SuperPACs developed after Supreme Court rulings in 2010. SuperPACs are not technically political action committees! This is because their political actions are limited, which means they are not allowed to dedicate their funds to the same methods as PACs. A better name for them is independent, expenditure committees. SuperPACs are not allowed to donate directly to candidates or political parties.

### Rules for PACs and SuperPACs

\*Rules can differ for local/ state elections, the chart below is for federal elections.

To individual Candidates	PACs can contribute SuperPACs cannot contribute
To Political Parties	PACs can contribute SuperPACs cannot contribute
Members	PACs contributions are limited SuperPACs contributions are unlimited