Alabama Secretary of State
Campaign Finance System (FCPA)
User Guide

Version 1.0

Who Should Use This Manual

This user guide is intended for members of Principal Campaign Committees (PCCs) and Political Action Committees (PACs) who are responsible for managing campaign finance activities in the Alabama Secretary of State (SOS) Campaign Finance System (FCPA). Whether you are new to the process or returning with prior experience, this manual provides step-by-step instructions to help you register, report, and maintain compliance. It is written with the understanding that some users may have limited experience with online financial reporting, and it uses clear, direct language to support users of all technical backgrounds.

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Overview

This user guide provides step-by-step instructions for using the FCPA, it is the official online platform for campaign finance reporting, committee administration, and compliance in Alabama. The manual is organized by core tasks and workflows. From getting started and registering your committee, to entering transactions, filing reports, and managing all required disclosures.

The FCPA supports Principal Campaign Committees (PCCs), Political Action Committees (PACs), and their authorized agents in meeting Alabama's legal requirements for transparency and timely reporting. Whether you are new to electronic filing or an experienced treasurer, this guide is structured to help you confidently navigate all required features, understand your responsibilities, and resolve common issues.

Throughout this document, you will find clear role-based instructions, practical tips, troubleshooting guidance, and references to support resources.

Introduction

The Alabama Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA), codified at Ala. Code § 17-5-1 et seq. was enacted in 1988, replacing the earlier Corrupt Practices Act. The FCPA established guidelines and regulations governing campaign finance activities specifically for state and local elections in Alabama. It aims to promote transparency, accountability, and fairness by mandating that candidates, elected officials, and political committees disclose all campaign contributions and expenditures to the public.

The FCPA outlines procedures for handling campaign funds, prohibits specific contributions, including those from foreign nationals, and requires timely electronic reporting of campaign finance activities.

All state and local candidates must establish a Principal Campaign Committee (PCC) upon receiving or spending contributions exceeding $1,000, as stated in Ala. Code § 17-5-2(a)(1)(b). A PCC must continue reporting until it files a termination report and has no outstanding debts or obligations.

All Political Action Committees (PACs) must be registered and begin reporting under the Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA) before accepting or spending any funds for political purposes. PACs must continue reporting until they file a termination report and have no outstanding obligations.

The Alabama Secretary of State's Office oversees compliance with the FCPA and publishes various informational resources and guidelines to assist candidates, committees, and elected officials in understanding and adhering to the Act's requirements. Following revisions to the FCPA in 2015, the Secretary of State's Office collaborates with the Alabama Ethics Commission to prepare these informational materials.

Compliance violations under the FCPA can lead to significant civil fines and potential criminal charges, emphasizing Alabama's commitment to maintaining integrity within its electoral processes.

Tyler Technologies Application Platform

The Tyler Application Platform is a flexible data tracking and management platform that provides the ability to develop and deploy case management and business process management. With the Application Platform, the Alabama Secretary of State (SOS) can accurately capture, track, and report on the data that drives operations forward and provide transparency to the public on all PCC and PAC activities.

Application Platform Key Features

The Application Platform provides the following key technology features:

- Focuses on the information that must be captured, using a data-first approach.
- Simplifies development with one environment for business and IT.
- Offers superior extensibility, interoperability, and portability.
- Extends functionality with fully integrated modules, including mobility and file management.
- Conforms to your specific workflows through fully configurable Application Accelerators or Agile development.
- Provides unparalleled flexibility through platform-independent, open architecture.

Getting Started with Alabama FCPA

This guide provides information about how to use FCPA to enter, store, view, and report data entered into the system.

- Registering for FCPA PCC or PAC Access
- Logging into the FCPA for the First Time
- Home Screen
- Queues Tab
- Management Tab
- Changing a Password
- Logging Out of the System

This user-friendly, secure, online platform is designed specifically for candidates, Principal Campaign Committees (PCCs), and Political Action Committees (PACs) to effectively manage campaign finance reporting in compliance with Alabama's Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA).

FCPA enables streamlined reporting of campaign contributions and expenditures, maintains transparent records accessible to the public, and assists committees in adhering to all required campaign finance regulations. Whether you're establishing your committee, reporting transactions, or managing committee documentation, FCPA simplifies your administrative responsibilities, letting you focus more on your campaign or political initiatives.

This section provides a comprehensive overview and helps you begin your journey with FCPA, from understanding the type of committee you represent to completing your initial registration.

Understanding Committee Types

Before you begin using FCPA, it's essential to clearly understand the type of committee you're representing. In Alabama, there are primarily two types of political committees that utilize the Campaign Finance Management System: the Principal Campaign Committee (PCC) and the Political Action Committee (PAC).

A Principal Campaign Committee (PCC) must be established by any candidate who receives or spends campaign contributions exceeding $1,000 during an election cycle. This committee type is directly associated with the candidate and is responsible for all financial reporting, including disclosure of contributions and expenditures, throughout the candidate's campaign.

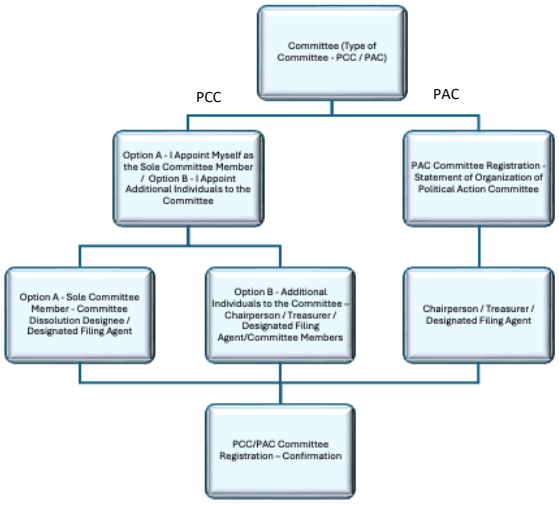
In contrast, a Political Action Committee (PAC) is an organization formed specifically to raise, manage, and spend money to influence the outcome of elections independently from a specific candidate's campaign. PACs can support multiple candidates, political parties with certain restrictions, or specific political issues and must report all financial activities transparently according to Alabama state laws.

Each committee type carries distinct registration processes, reporting schedules, and compliance obligations. FCPA provides clear, guided pathways for both PCCs and PACs to ensure that reporting

requirements are efficiently met, simplifying your administrative responsibilities and helping you maintain compliance with state election laws.

The registration process in FCPA begins with choosing your committee type and following the appropriate organizational steps. The flowchart below provides a visual overview of the decisions and required actions for registering a Principal Campaign Committee (PCC) or Political Action Committee (PAC). Use this diagram to identify your starting point and see the main options for appointing committee members, completing forms, and confirming your registration.

Figure 1 - Committee Registration Process: PCCs and PACs



This flowchart offers a step-by-step visual overview of the registration process for Principal Campaign Committees (PCCs) and Political Action Committees (PACs) in the FCPA. It illustrates the main decisions - such as appointing yourself as the sole member or adding additional members - and highlights the required forms and actions for each committee type. Use this diagram to identify your starting point and ensure all required steps are completed before moving on to detailed instructions.

Once you have identified the path that matches your committee's structure, continue to the next section for detailed, step-by-step instructions for each registration scenario.

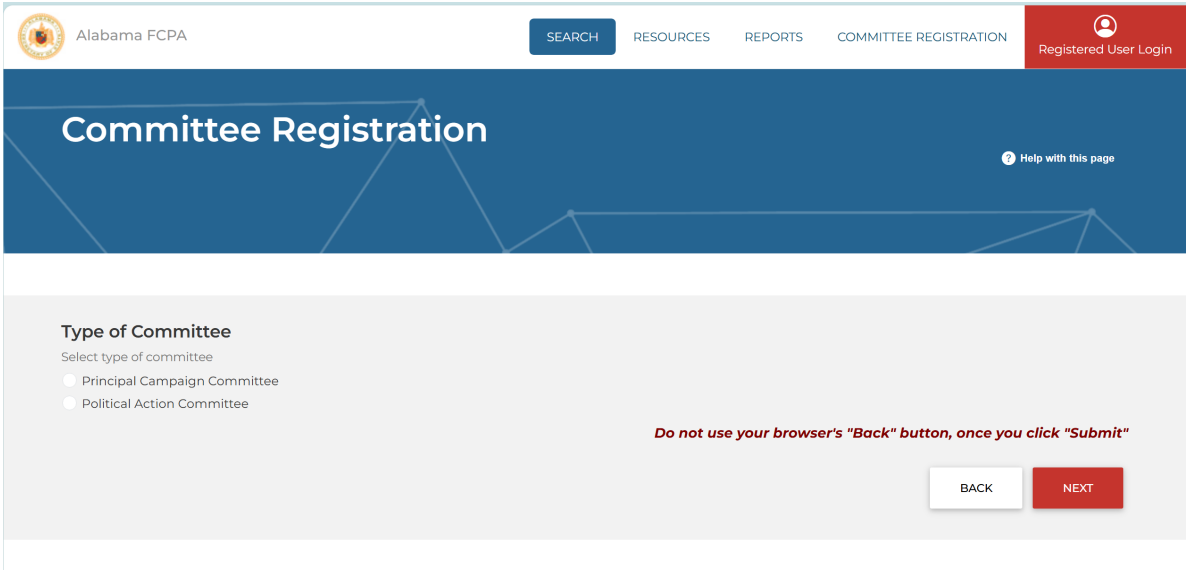
Principal Campaign Committee (PCC) Registration Process

The registration path for a PCC applies to any candidate who qualifies as a candidate or receives or spends more than $1,000 in contributions or expenditures, whichever comes first. Each candidate is legally required to form a PCC and appoint key roles to ensure compliance with campaign finance law.

Step 1: Select Principal Campaign Committee (PCC)

Visit the FCPA log in site and select “Principal Campaign Committee” when prompted for committee type.

Figure 2 - Committee Registration - Start Screen - Type of Committee



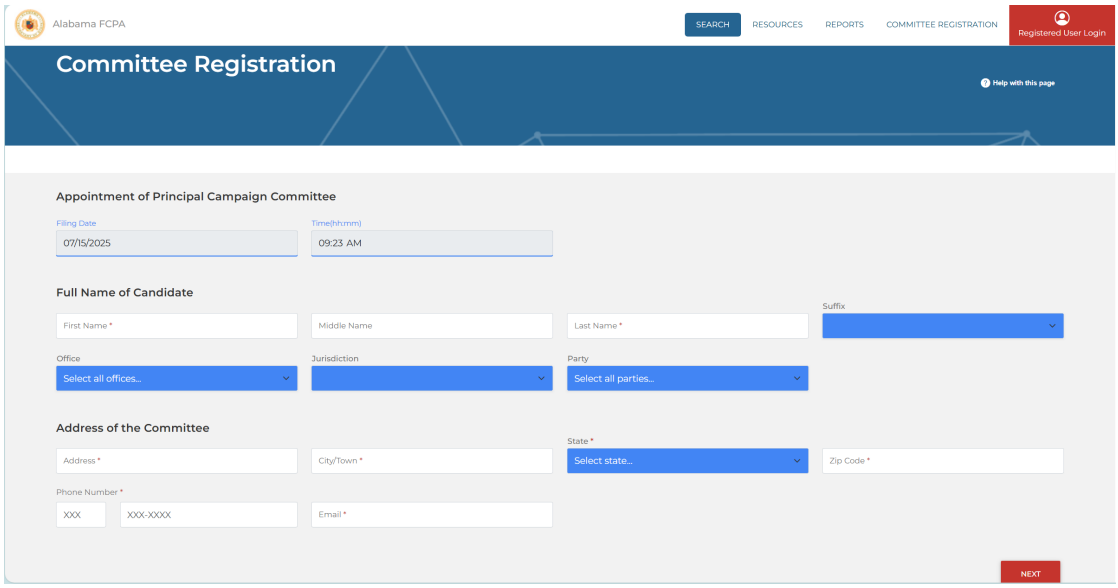
This figure shows the initial screen where users select the type of committee they are registering. It is the starting point for both PCC and PAC paths.

Step 2: Enter Candidate and Campaign Details

You will be asked to provide the following information:

- Candidate's Full Legal Name
- Office Sought
- Jurisdiction (State, County, District)
- Political Party
- Committee Name and Mailing Address
- Contact Information (phone and email)

Figure 3 - Committee Registration - Appointment of Principal Campaign Committee

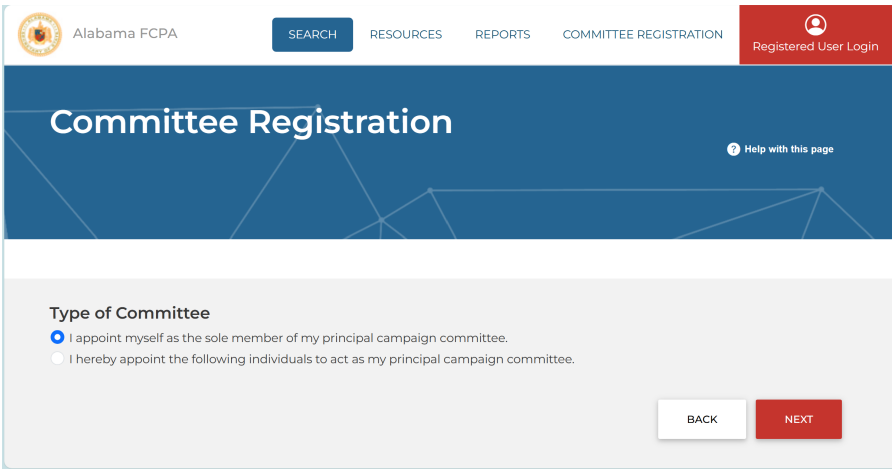


This figure illustrates the screen where PCC users enter candidate contact information, office sought, jurisdiction, and other campaign details.

Step 3: Choose Committee Structure

At this stage in the registration process, you will select how your Principal Campaign Committee (PCC) will be organized. FCPA presents two options depending on whether you plan to serve as the sole committee member or designate additional individuals to help manage the campaign's financial responsibilities.

Figure 4 - Committee Registration - Type of Committee



This screen allows PCC candidates to select between managing the committee independently or assigning roles to additional members.

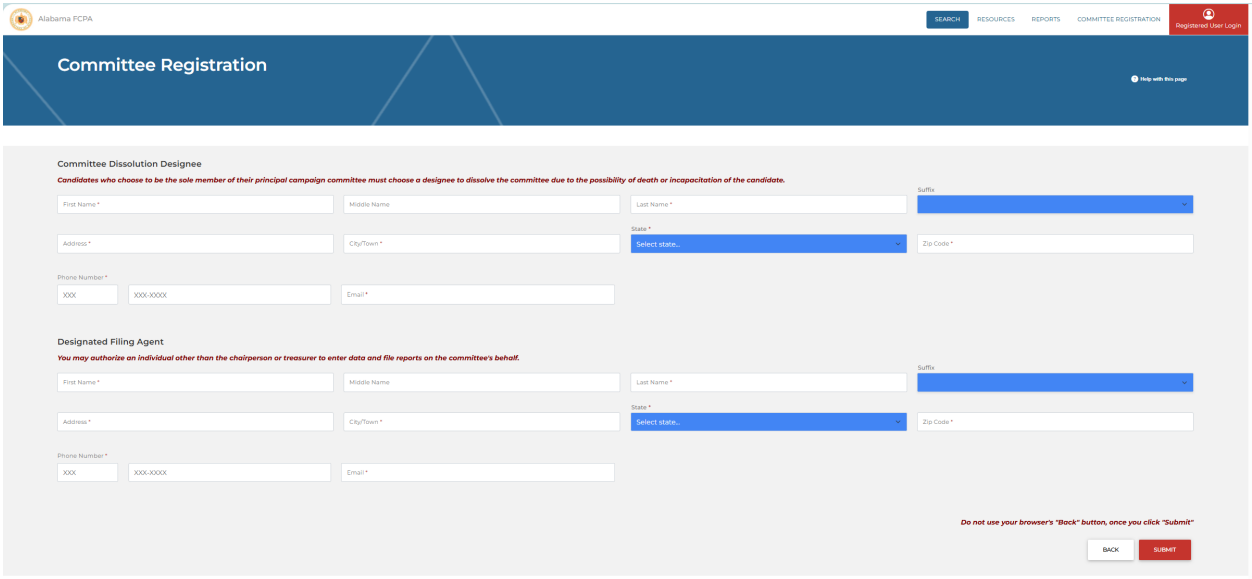
Option A: I Appoint Myself as the Sole Committee Member

If you are running your campaign independently and will be solely responsible for all reporting, financial, and compliance duties, you may choose to serve as the only member of your PCC. In this scenario, FCPA will prompt you to complete the following actions:

- Enter your full contact information, including address, email, and phone number.
- You must also assign a Committee Dissolution Designee, which must be a separate individual from the candidate who will be responsible for officially closing the committee in the event the candidate becomes incapacitated or deceased and is unable to file. This person ensures that all debts are settled, reports are finalized, and any remaining funds are disbursed according to law in case the candidate is unable to do so.

Note: You will not be able to add other committee members during the registration if you select this option. If you later decide to expand your committee, you must contact the Elections Division for guidance.

Figure 5 - Committee Registration - Committee Dissolution Designee / Designated Filing Agent



This figure highlights the fields required for sole PCC registrants to name their designated filer and the person responsible for closing the committee.

Option B: I Appoint Additional Individuals to the Committee

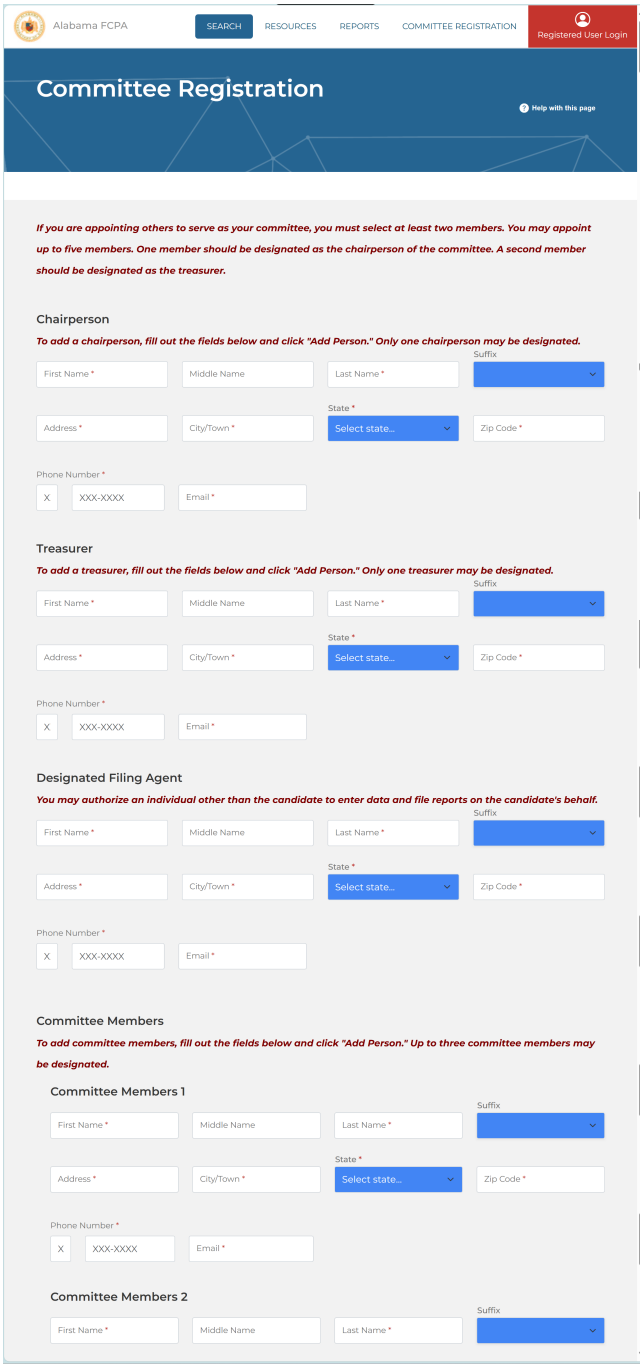
If other individuals will be involved in your campaign's financial reporting or oversight, you should select this option.

For each individual, you will need to enter their:

- Full legal name
- Mailing address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Assigned role within the committee

Each person will receive system credentials (if applicable) and will be expected to fulfill the legal responsibilities associated with their role.

Figure 6 - Committee Registration - Chairperson/Treasurer/Designated Filing Agent/Committee Members



This screen allows PCC users to enter multiple committee members and define their roles to manage compliance responsibilities.

Political Action Committee (PAC) Registration Process

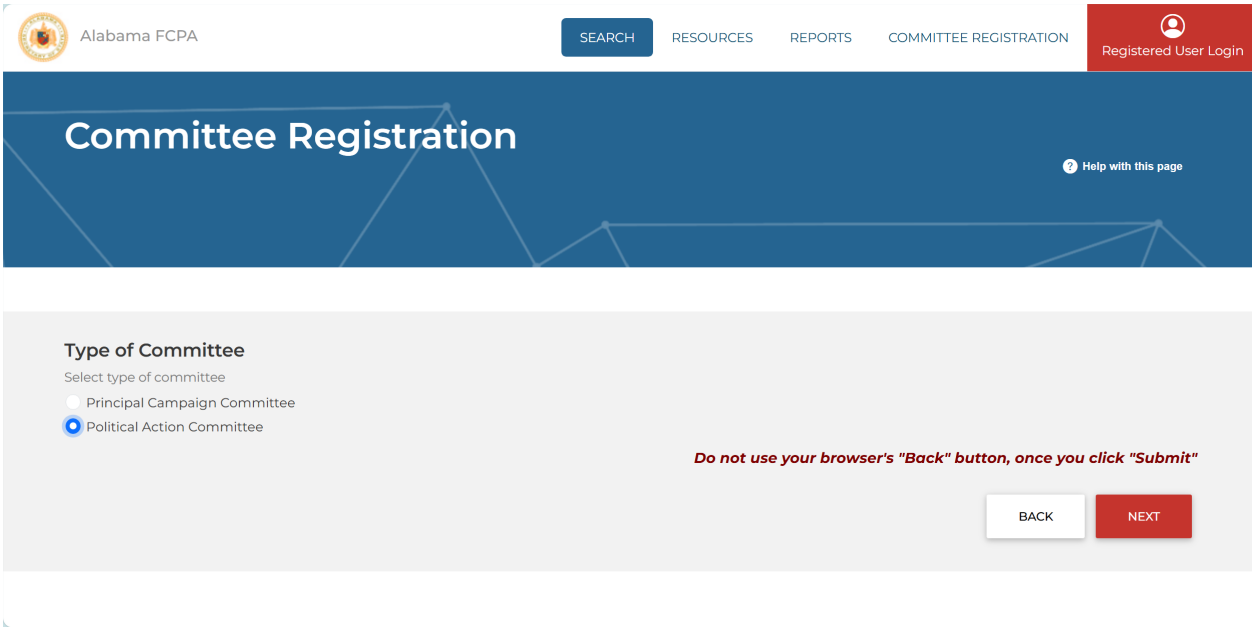
The FCPA registration process ensures the PAC is properly documented and eligible to submit reports and manage transactions in compliance with the Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA).

Step 1: Select Political Action Committee (PAC)

To begin the registration, visit the FCPA log in and select "Political Action Committee" when prompted to choose your committee type.

This selection will open the PAC-specific registration path in the FCPA system.

Figure 7 - Committee Registration - Type of Committee



This figure shows the initial screen where users select the type of committee they are registering. It is the starting point for both PCC and PAC paths.

Step 2: Enter Committee Details

The system will prompt you to provide the following:

- Committee Name
- Acronym (if applicable)
- Mailing Address
- Phone Number and Email Address
- Date PAC Was Established
- Purpose of the PAC
- PAC Type
    - Continuing PAC: Ongoing organization with no set end date.

    - Short-Term PAC: Created for a specific purpose or election cycle. Requires an anticipated end date.
- Residual Funds Disposal Description: Explanation of how remaining funds will be handled upon dissolution.

PACs must ensure all identifying and contact information is accurate, as this becomes part of the public record and is essential for compliance. In the event a PAC's members or details change, it is the sole responsibility of the PAC to promptly update the information in the FCPA reporting system.

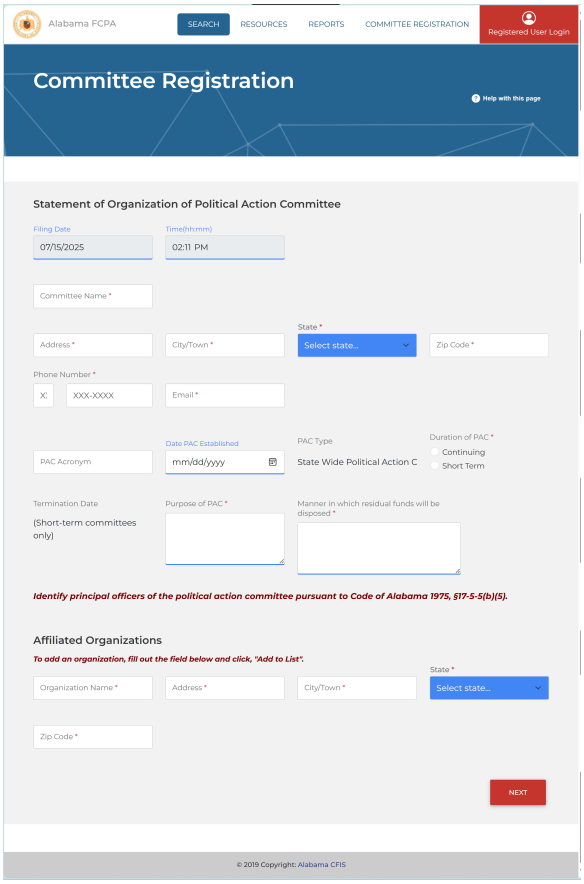
Step 3: Add Affiliated Organizations (if applicable)

If the PAC is connected to or sponsored by another entity (such as a corporation, union, trade association, or advocacy group), you must provide:

- Organization Name
- Address
- City, State, Zip Code

Affiliated organizations are disclosed to promote transparency and accountability in political finance. If no affiliations exist, you may skip this section.

Figure 8 - Committee Registration - Statement of Organization of Political Action Committee



This figure presents the first PAC screen, where the committee enters general information including name, acronym, mailing address, and committee type.

Step 4: Assign Required Roles

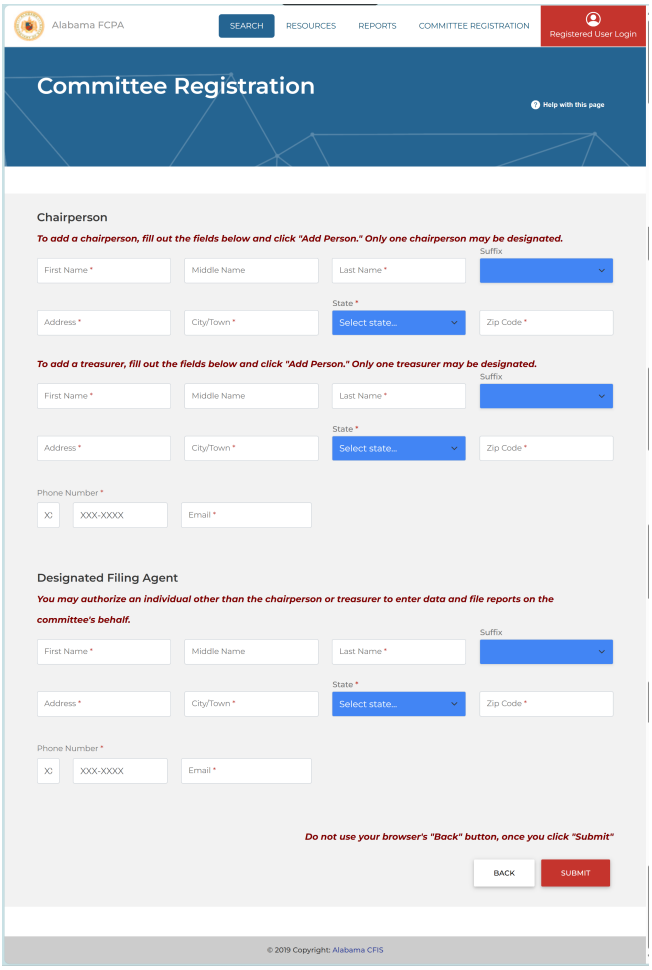
Each PAC must formally designate individuals to fill the following roles:

- Chairperson – Serves as the lead contact and strategic head of the committee.
- Treasurer – Responsible for all financial reporting, recordkeeping, and compliance.
- Designated Filing Agent – Authorized to submit reports on behalf of the PAC through FCPA.

Each committee member must have full contact details entered into the system (name, address, phone number, and email). These roles must be confirmed before registration can be submitted.

Note: The same person may serve in multiple roles if needed (e.g., one person can be both Treasurer and Filing Agent).

Figure 9 - Committee Registration - Chairperson/Treasurer/Designated Filing Agent



This screen allows PACs to designate key roles required for operation: Chairperson, Treasurer, and Designated Filing Agent.

How do I Finalize and Submit Committee Registration (PCC and PAC)

After entering all required information in the Campaign Finance Management System (FCPA), the final step is to review and submit your committee registration. This process applies to both Principal Campaign Committees (PCCs) and Political Action Committees (PACs), with slight differences noted below.

Step 1: Review Your Information

Before submission:

- Carefully verify all committee information you have entered; this includes contact details, roles (Chairperson, Treasurer, Filing Agent, etc.), and the purpose of the committee.
- Ensure your web browser allows pop-ups, as the completed registration form will open in a new window.

Once you click Submit, the system will generate a Statement of Organization (for PACs) or Appointment of Principal Campaign Committee form (for PCCs). This document will include a timestamp indicating the date and time of submission.

Step 2: Print and Sign the Registration Form

Download, print, and sign the completed form using the link provided on the confirmation screen.

Scanned, faxed, or photocopied forms will not be accepted. Only original signed forms can be submitted.

Step 3: Mail the Completed Form

Send the signed form to:

Elections Division
Office of the Secretary of State
P.O. Box 5616
Montgomery, AL 36103-5616

Your registration is not considered complete until the original signed form is received and reviewed by the Elections Division. Your registration will remain in a "pending" status and will not be a final document viewable to the public until the Elections Division receives your original form signed by ALL committee members.

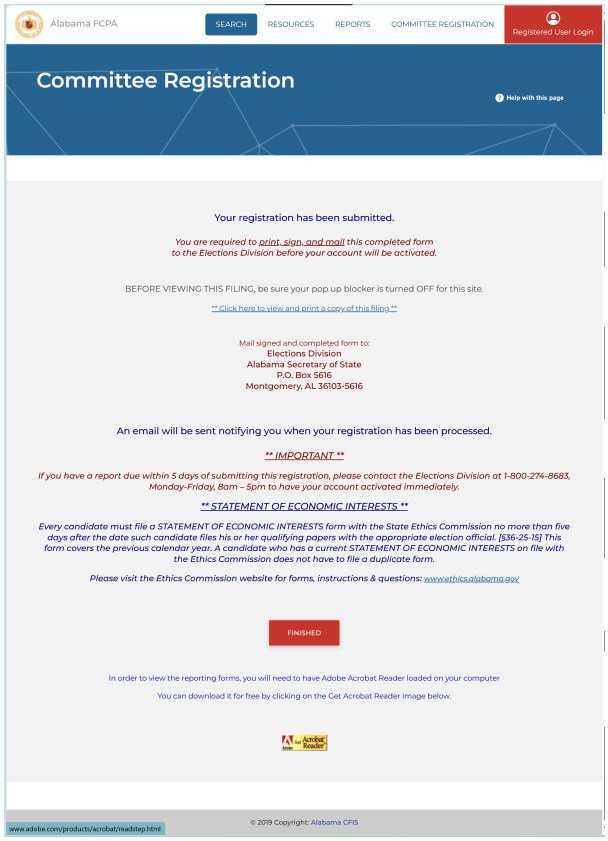
Step 4: Receive Your FCPA Credentials

Once your submission is approved, the Elections Division will send a confirmation email containing:

- Committee members username
- A temporary password for the FCPA portal
- You will use these credentials to log in, set a new password, and begin performing key tasks in FCPA, including:
- Submitting campaign finance reports
- Recording contributions and expenditures
- Managing supporting documentation

- Updating committee member information
- Maintaining compliance with Alabama's Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA)

Figure 10 – PCC/PAC Committee Registration – Confirmation



This screen confirms successful PCC/PAC registration and provides a print option for the completed form, which must be submitted to the Secretary of State.

Troubleshooting Registration Issues

This section provides users with solutions to the most common registration problems, so they can resolve issues quickly and continue with onboarding.

If you encounter issues during the committee registration process, consult the table below for solutions to frequent problems. If your issue is not listed or remains unresolved, contact Elections Division support for assistance.

Table 1 - Common Trouble Shooting Problems and Solutions

Problem	Solution
No confirmation email received	- Check your email spam or junk folder. - Verify you entered your email address correctly during registration. - Wait up to 24 hours, as some confirmations may be delayed. - If you still do not receive an email, contact Elections Division support.
Error message when submitting registration form	- Ensure all required fields are filled in correctly. - Double-check for typos or invalid data. - Try submitting the form using a different web browser. - If the error persists, take note of the error message and contact support.
Duplicate registration warning or unable to continue	- You may have already registered using the same information. - Contact Elections Division support to verify and resolve duplicate account issues.
Cannot proceed due to missing/incomplete information	- Review all fields to make sure required information is provided. - Use the "Help" tool or instructions in this manual for field-specific guidance. - If you are stuck, reach out to support for direct assistance.

This troubleshooting table provides quick solutions to the most common registration issues. If your problem is not listed here or remains unresolved, contact Elections Division support for assistance.

After Registration

Once you have completed committee registration, follow these steps to set up your FCPA account and begin managing your campaign activities:

- Check your email inbox (and your spam or junk folder) for a confirmation message from the FCPA. This email contains your username and a temporary password.
- Go to the FCPA login page: https://fcpa.alabamavotes.gov/
- Log in using your credentials: Enter your username and the temporary password provided in your confirmation email.
- Set your new password: When prompted at first login, create a secure password for your account.
- Review and update your profile: Verify your contact details and update any incorrect or missing information to ensure you receive important communications and alerts.
- Add additional committee members (if you are an Administrator): Use the Committee Member tab to invite new users and assign the appropriate roles for their responsibilities.
- Open the Tracking Inbox: After setup, proceed to your dashboard (Tracking Inbox) to review outstanding tasks, view upcoming report deadlines, and get familiar with the system layout.

Tip: For detailed instructions on logging in and using your dashboard, refer to the "Logging into FCPA for the First Time" and "Home Screen" sections of this manual.

Tip: If you have trouble at any step or do not receive the confirmation email, check your spam folder and verify your registration information. For further assistance, contact Elections Division support (see the Support section for details).

User Permissions and Access

FCPA uses a role-based access control (RBAC) system to assign specific permissions and responsibilities to users based on their role within a committee. This approach ensures that sensitive data is protected, that users only have access to the system functions necessary for their duties, and that accountability is maintained through clear separation of roles.

Roles and Permissions

Understanding user roles and access rights is essential for committee security, compliance, and effective operation in FCPA. Each committee member is assigned a defined system role, controlling what features and data they can view or manage. Assign the minimum permissions necessary for each user's responsibilities, and review role assignments regularly, especially after staffing changes.

Common Roles in FCPA:

- Committee Administrator
- Committee Member Update Only
- Committee Member Read Only

Best Practice:

Assign roles carefully based on actual duties and trust level. When in doubt, consult the permissions matrix below or contact Elections Division support.

After completing the Quick Start steps, every committee member needs to understand what they can and cannot do within the FCPA. User permissions and roles are set during committee registration and directly determine each person's responsibilities and access within the system.

Committee Roles and Access

Each committee must specify the following roles during registration:

- Committee Chairperson: Generally, the primary contact and responsible party for official actions.
- Treasurer: Handles all financial reporting and transactions.
- Designated Filing Agent: Authorized by the committee to enter data and electronically file reports.
- Committee Member: May be added for transparency or oversight; access rights depend on assignment.
- Committee Dissolution Designee: Required if the candidate serves as their committee; cannot be the candidate.

These roles are designated on the principal campaign committee or PAC registration form, and each person must provide a valid email address and mailing address per state rules.

Table 2 - Roles and Access Rights

Role	Who Can Serve	Required for All Committees	Main Functions
Chairperson	Candidate or appointee	Yes	Official sign-off, overall responsibility
Treasurer	Chairperson or another person	Yes	Manages finances, files reports
Designated Filing Agent	Optional additional person	Optional	Files reports, handles daily filings
Committee Dissolution Designee	Must be different from candidate	Yes (if candidate is sole member)	Handles official closure in case of incapacity

Detailed User Permissions Breakdown

Describes who can serve in each mandatory or optional role and their main functions for compliance.

Below is a more granular matrix outlining typical permission levels for each system role. This structure matches both the committee's regulatory requirements and best practices for campaign management systems:

Table 3 - Committee User Permission by Role

Role	Committee BTO	Committee Member CTO	Transaction CTO	Report Filing CTO	Document CTO	Affiliated Organization CTO	Election Cycle Calendar	Filing Schedule	Audit Log
Committee Administrator	Update (no create or delete)	Create / Update / No Delete	Create / Update / Delete (if not filed)	Create / Update / Delete (if not filed)	Create / Update	Create / Update / Delete	No Access	No Access	Read Only
Committee Member Update Only	Read Only	Read Only	Update	Update	Update	Read Only	No Access	No Access	Read Only
Committee Member Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only	Read Only

Access for committee members (other) is configurable and may include only "view" capabilities or limited entry.

Table 4 - Expanded User Role Permissions Matrix

Role	Description and Permissions Summary
Committee Administrator	Users with full administrative access to manage all aspects of the committee's FCPA account. Can create, update, and delete committee data, members, financials, filings, and supporting documents (except for certain admin-only setup/data).
Committee Member with Update Rights	Can modify transactions and filings but cannot create or delete major records; typically, cannot alter committee structure or membership. Intended for staff who support data entry and reporting.
Committee Member with Read-Only Access	Can only view committee data, transactions, and filings. No rights to alter anything; intended for transparency or auditor-type members.

This table outlines the roles and actions each role can perform.

Troubleshooting Access Issues

Access issues in FCPA are usually caused by incorrect credentials, outdated contact information, or insufficient permissions. If you or another user cannot log in or access expected features, use the steps in the table below to quickly identify and resolve the problem.

Table 5 - Troubleshooting Access Issues

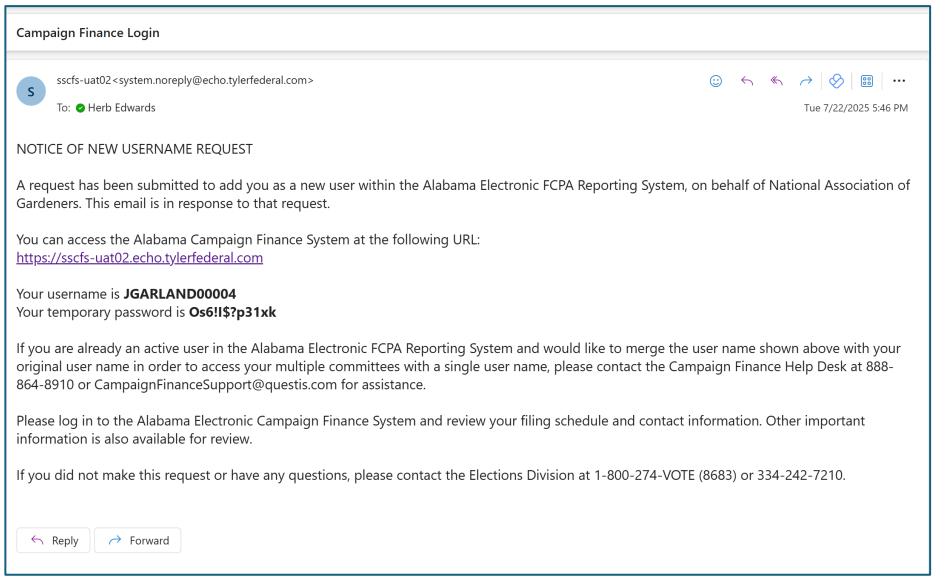
Problem	Solution
Unable access committee information	Confirm your assigned role has filing permissions
New member cannot log in	Double-check proper registration and role assignment
Wrong access level	Contact committee chair or designate to request review

Clear documentation and regular review of committee user permissions safeguard your committee's reporting accuracy and compliance responsibilities 22

Receiving Login Credentials

After your committee registration is approved by the Elections Division, the designated contact will receive an email with your FCPA username, a temporary password, and a direct link to the system's login portal. Check your spam or junk folder if the email does not arrive promptly.

Figure 11 - FCPA Confirmation Email Example



This email provides your username, temporary password, and URL for first-time access to FCPA. Save this information for future reference.

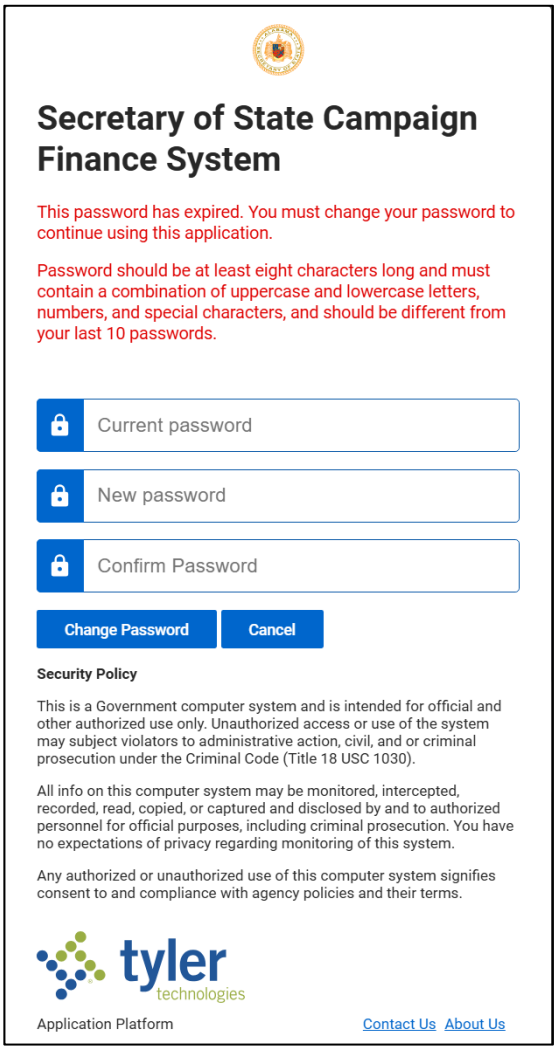
Logging into FCPA for the First Time

To access your FCPA account for the first time:

- Click the link in your confirmation email or visit: https://fcpa.alabamavotes.gov
- Enter your assigned username and temporary password.
- You will be prompted to set a new password that meets all system requirements (minimum 12 characters, including uppercase, lowercase, number, and special character). For additional security, update your password every 90 days.
- Click Change Password.

Tip: For optimal performance, it is recommended that you use Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome and disable pop-up blockers.

Figure 12 - FCPA Initial Logon Screen

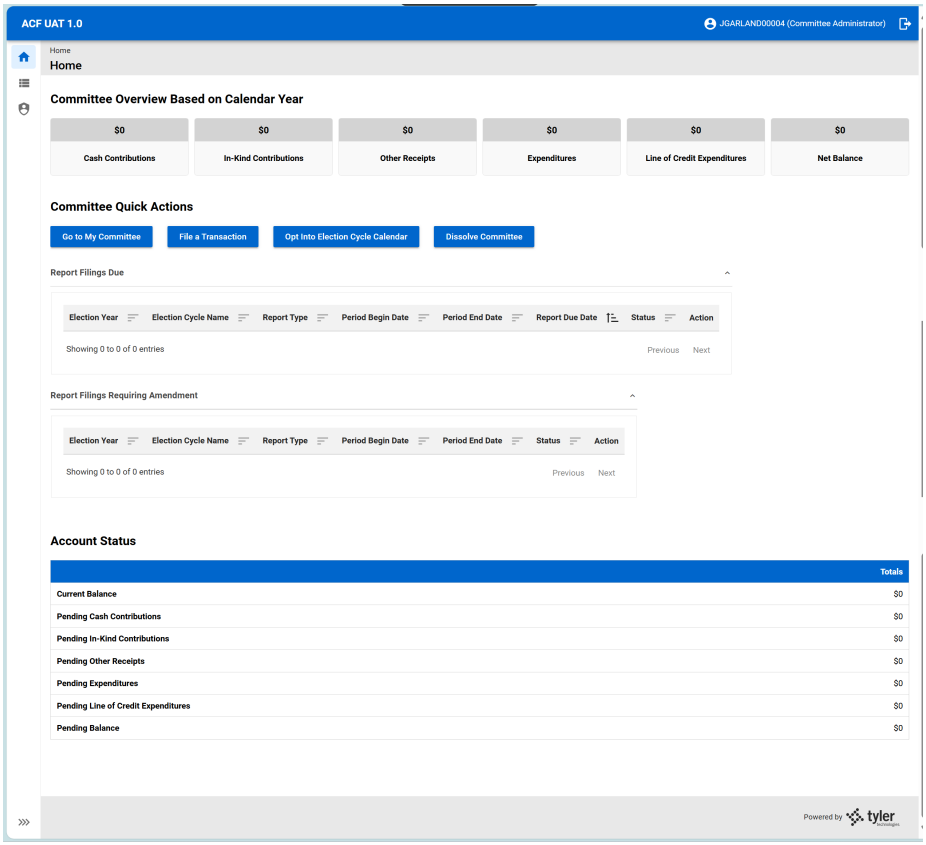


The login screen is where you enter your credentials to access the system for the first time.

Home Screen and Tracking Inbox Tab

After logging into FCPA, you arrive at the Home Screen. The Home Screen provides a summary of your committee's activity, financial position, and tasks requiring action. It is designed for quick reference, offering direct access to key functions, reports, and your committee's status. The Tracking Inbox Tab, located within the Home Screen, is where you can monitor required filings, track pending amendments, and quickly complete critical compliance actions.

Figure 13 - Home Screen and Tracking Inbox Tab



The image displays the layout of the Home Screen and Tracking Inbox Tab, showing major features such as the committee overview metrics, quick action buttons, report filings due, filings requiring amendment, and key account status indicators.

Understanding the Tracking Inbox Information

The information displayed on the Tracking Inbox Tab is designed to give committee members a clear, real-time summary of their financial activity, required compliance actions, and current account status. Each section of this screen serves as both a monitoring tool and a launch point for day-to-day tasks; making it easy to track contributions, expenditures, pending items, and outstanding reports.

This overview helps you:

- Quickly assess your committee's financial health for the current calendar year
- Identify filings or amendments that require immediate attention
- Access shortcuts to the most common tasks, such as submitting transactions or viewing committee details
- Monitor your reporting obligations and ensure that all account activity is complete and compliant

By reviewing the summary metrics, action items, and tables in the Tracking Inbox, you ensure nothing critical is missed and that your committee remains in good standing with campaign finance regulations. These functions align with best practices in campaign finance reporting; as promoted by agencies such as the FEC and state election boards - to support transparency, compliance, and ease of use for all committee roles.

Committee Overview Based on Calendar Year

This section displays summary boxes for your committee's core financial categories:

- Cash Contributions: All monetary donations received.
- In-Kind Contributions: Non-monetary donations of goods or services.
- Other Receipts: Miscellaneous income, such as loans, refunds or interest.
- Expenditures: All outgoing payments reported.
- Line of Credit Expenditures: Funds spent via a line of credit facility.
- Net Balance: Current calculated funds on hand.

What to do:

Check these figures frequently to ensure your financial activity is up to date and accurately entered. If you expected activity that is not listed, review recent transactions or consult the Transactions or Filing screens for pending data.

Committee Quick Actions

Directly below the overview are high-visibility action buttons:

- Go to My Committee: Opens your committee's detail page for information review and updates.
- File a Transaction: Shortcut to enter new contributions or expenditures.
- Opt Into Election Cycle Calendar: Allows your committee to enable cycle-based reminder and deadline tracking.
- Dissolve Committee: Begins the official process to close your account (this requires the appropriate permissions).

What to do:
Use these for common administrative tasks; such as quickly entering new contributions or updates or starting the committee dissolution workflow when applicable.

Report Filings Due

Displays a table of all currently required financial filing reports for your committee. Each row lists:

- Election Year and Cycle
- Report Type
- Period Covered
- Due Date
- Status
- Action Link (to begin or continue a filing)

What to do:
Locate any reports appearing here and use the Action link to begin or resume the filing process. Always verify all transactions for the period are entered before submitting a report.

Report Filings Requiring Amendment

If any of your previous submissions need corrections or additional information, they will be listed in this table. You will see details similar to the "Filings Due" section.

What to do:
Select the Action link next to the amendment required filing. Review the feedback or system notes and make any necessary corrections before resubmitting. Once resolved, the item will be removed from this list.

Account Status

This section provides a detailed view of your committee's financial workflow:

- Current Balance: Latest calculated account total.
- Pending Cash Contributions: Monetary contributions not yet posted to the account.
- Pending In-Kind Contributions: Non-monetary support awaiting inclusion.
- Pending Other Receipts/Expenditures/Line of Credit Expenditures: Items entered but not finalized.
- Pending Balance: The sum of all not-yet-posted items.

What to do:

Monitor pending items to verify that all entries are progressing and nothing remains incomplete ahead of filing deadlines. Reconcile the "Current Balance" with your internal records frequently for accuracy and compliance.

Using the Tracking Inbox Tab

- Review your Tracking Inbox every time you access FCPA to stay ahead of any deadlines or issues.
- Use the available Action links to work directly on outstanding items instead of browsing through menus.
- The minimize/expand feature allows you to focus on the sections most relevant to you.
- For questions or concerns about missing filings, data discrepancies, or trouble accessing reports, consult the Troubleshooting section of this manual or contact support.

Committee Member Management

Keeping your committee's member list accurate is essential for compliance, security, and smooth committee operations. Member management covers adding new users, updating roles or contact information, resetting passwords, and promptly removing access when responsibilities change. Managing members is required whenever staffing changes, after onboarding new treasurers or agents, at the start and end of a campaign cycle, and after any audit or compliance review.

Viewing Committee Members

All users:

- Go to the Committee Member tab from your Committee Page.
- Review the list of current members, including names, contact information, assigned roles, and current status (active, inactive, or pending).
- Use this view to confirm that all current officers and staff are listed and registered under correct roles.

Tip: If a member is missing, or their information is incorrect, contact your Committee Administrator to review access and make updates.

Adding a New Member (for Committee Administrators only)

To add a new member to your committee:

- Go to the Committee Member tab.
- Click the +New button on the toolbar.
- Complete all required fields, including the individual's name, email address, and the appropriate role (Administrator, Treasurer, Filing Agent, etc.).
- Optionally set a temporary password or use the system's auto-generated invitation.
- Click Save to complete the addition.

The new member will receive an email with login instructions. After they log in, encourage them to update their password and review their contact information.

Assign permissions carefully; refer to the roles and permissions matrix (see Table 4 – Feature/Action Permissions by System Role) to grant only the access needed for each user's responsibilities.

Updating Member Information (for Committee Administrators only)

When a member's contact information, role, or status changes:

- In the Committee Member tab, click on the member's name to open their profile.
- Edit fields as needed (phone, email address, assigned role, or status).
- Click Save to apply changes.

Tip: Always keep email addresses up to date so members continue to receive system notifications, reminders, and critical alerts related to filings or compliance.

Removing or Deactivating a Member (for Committee Administrators only)

To revoke access from someone no longer serving on the committee:

- Select the member's entry in the Committee Member tab.
- Click Delete (or Deactivate, depending on system options).
- Confirm the removal when prompted.

Once removed, the former member cannot log in or access the committee's records. Their historical actions remain documented for auditing and compliance.

Note: Deactivate a member rather than delete if you may need to reinstate their access in the future.

Resetting Member Passwords (for Committee Administrators only)

If a member cannot log in due to a forgotten password or account lockout:

- Select the member's entry in the Committee Member tab.
- Click the Reset Password button.
- The system sends a temporary password or reset link to the member's registered email address.

Remind the member to check spam or junk folders if they do not receive the email promptly.

Troubleshooting Member Access Issues

Common issues and solutions:

While using FCPA, you may occasionally encounter obstacles that disrupt your workflow or prevent you from completing tasks as expected. Common issues can range from login difficulties and permission errors to trouble saving transactions or missing system emails. Access challenges, file upload problems, and questions about membership or reporting are all typical scenarios for users, especially new ones.

Many of these problems are solved easily once you know what to check, such as reviewing your assigned role, double-checking your information, or following a few quick troubleshooting steps. To help you resolve common problems efficiently and keep your committee running smoothly, we've compiled the table below. It lists typical issues by topic and provides straightforward solutions or next steps for each.

Review the Troubleshooting Matrix table to find answers to the types of challenges most users face, and use it as your first stop before reaching out to support.

Table 6 - Comment Problems and Solutions

Problem	Solution
Member cannot log in.	Confirm their registered email address and assigned role are correct, reset their password, and ensure their account status is active.
Member does not see expected tabs or options.	Verify the user's assigned role includes the permissions needed for the action. Refer to the permissions matrix.
Error message when adding or removing a member.	Make sure you are logged in as a Committee Administrator and all required information is entered.
Member not receiving system emails.	Check that the email on file is correct and instruct the member to check spam/junk folders. Update the email and resend if necessary.
Former member still appears active.	Remove or deactivate the member using the Committee Member tab.

This table presents frequent issues members may encounter when accessing or managing committee membership in FCPA, along with direct solutions for each problem. It covers typical login difficulties, missing features, system email issues, and steps for correcting member access or status. Use this table to quickly troubleshoot and resolve common committee member management problems before contacting support.

If you are unable to resolve a member issue after these steps, contact Elections Division support with the person's name, email address, current status, and a short description of the problem.

Entering and Managing Transactions

Recording all financial activity promptly and accurately is essential for compliance with Alabama campaign finance law. The FCPA Transactions tab allows committees to enter new transactions, update or correct existing records, and track all contributions, expenditures, and receipts that your committee must disclose. Data entered here feeds directly into the required filings and audit trail.

Understanding Transaction Types

- Before entering financial activity, make sure you know how to classify the transaction:
- Contributions: Money or tangible resources received by the committee. Includes direct donations, in-kind goods/services, and.
- Expenditures: Payments made for campaign expenses; advertising, staff, office space, supplies; or any financial obligation incurred.
- Other Receipts: Additional income not fitting the above types, such as loans, refunds, bank interest, or returned checks.

Tip: If you're unsure how to classify a transaction, consult the Elections Division guidance or use the in-system help links.

Adding a Transaction (For Committee Administrators, Treasurers, and Designated Filing Agents)

- Go to the Transactions tab on your Committee Page.
- Click the +New button on the toolbar.
- Select the transaction type needed; Contribution, Expenditure, or Other Receipt.
- Complete all required fields. This will usually include the date, amount, donor or payee information, and a transaction description. Attach any supporting documentation if available or required.
- Double-check all information for accuracy.
- Click Save to add the transaction.

Tip: Enter transactions as soon as possible after they occur to avoid missing deadlines or omitting key details.

Editing or Deleting a Transaction (For Committee Administrators, Treasurers, and Designated Filing Agents)

To Edit:

- On the Transactions tab, find the entry you wish to update (use filters for date, type, or amount if the list is long).
- Click the transaction to open its detail window.
- Make your corrections.
- Click Save to apply the changes.

To Delete:

Deletion is only possible if the transaction has NOT been included in a filed report.

- Select the transaction in the list.
- Click the Delete button (may look like a trash can icon).
- Confirm deletion when prompted.

Note: If the transaction has already been filed in a report, you must instead amend the report.

Reviewing Transaction History

All users (as permitted):

- Use the Transactions tab to view all past transactions for your committee.
- Filter by date, amount, type, or contributor/payee for easier searching.
- Reviewing your history regularly helps reconcile against your bank records and ensures accuracy before each filing deadline.

Tip: Double-check your records for completeness before each scheduled report is due.

Correcting Errors (Troubleshooting and FAQ)

This section helps users quickly identify and resolve common issues that may occur when entering, editing, or managing transactions in FCPA. It provides practical troubleshooting steps for typical errors; such as problems saving or deleting transactions, entering an incorrect type, or locating missing records. Users are guided to check required fields, review permissions, and follow proper procedures for correcting mistakes. The FAQ component offers clear answers to frequently asked questions, helping committees correct errors efficiently and maintain accurate, compliant records without unnecessary delays or support requests.

Table 7 - Correcting Errors (Troubleshooting and FAQ)

Problem	Solution
Unable to save a new or edited transaction.	Check that all required fields are filled and formats (dates, amounts) are correct. Make sure you have the necessary permissions.
Entered the wrong transaction type.	If possible, delete the incorrect entry and re-enter with the correct type. If already filed, correct by amending the relevant report.
Can’t find a transaction.	Use the filtering tools for date, type, or contributor/payee. If it’s still missing, verify that it was saved and not deleted before filing.
Can’t delete a transaction.	Once a transaction is included in a filed report, it cannot be deleted; use the amendment process instead.

This table lists common problems users may encounter when entering or managing transactions in FCPA, along with clear, step-by-step solutions for each issue. It covers typical errors such as saving problems, misclassified transaction types, missing records, and deletion restrictions. Use this table as a quick reference to troubleshoot and resolve transaction-related issues efficiently, ensuring your committee records remain accurate and compliant.

Tip: If you encounter persistent issues with transaction entry or editing, contact Elections Division support with the transaction details and error message if possible.

Exporting or Printing Transactions

- Many users can export their committee’s transaction list as a spreadsheet (CSV or Excel) by clicking the Export button in the Transactions tab.
- To print your records, use the print function on your filtered or full transaction list, or export the file and print from your local device.

Tip: Regularly save and print transaction records for your own files. This makes preparing reports or conducting audits much easier.

Affiliated Organizations

This section explains what affiliated organizations are, why disclosure matters for compliance, and exactly how to view, add, edit, or remove affiliations in the Alabama FCPA. Only Committee Administrators may create or manage affiliated organization records. All users can view current affiliations.

What are Affiliated Organizations? (Definition and Compliance)

An affiliated organization is any entity or group that maintains a formal relationship with your committee. This can include parent organizations, PACs with overlapping leadership or funding, advocacy coalitions, business entities, or other committees with shared control or decision-making.

Alabama law requires all such relationships to be disclosed; during registration and anytime the affiliations change. This transparency prevents unreported influence and is critical for campaign finance compliance.

Examples of affiliated organizations include:

- Parent PACs or umbrella groups
- State or local party organizations with financial ties
- Advocacy groups participating in joint campaign activity
- Businesses with leadership overlapping your committee

Failing to disclose an affiliation can result in fines or audit findings.

Viewing Affiliations

All users:

- Go to the Affiliated Organizations tab on your Committee Page.
- There you'll see a list of every currently disclosed organization associated with your committee, including the name, relationship type, start date, and description.
- Review this list regularly; especially after a change in committee structure or relationships.

Tip: If you expect to see an affiliated group that is missing, contact your Committee Administrator to review or update the list.

Adding or Editing Affiliated Organizations (for Committee Administrators only)

To disclose a new affiliation or update an existing one:

- Navigate to the Affiliated Organizations tab.
- Click +New to add a new affiliation or select an existing organization and click Edit to update its details.
- Complete all required fields: organization name, relationship type (such as parent, coalition, supporting business), founded or linked date, and a brief description.

- Click Save to finish. The affiliation is now disclosed and publicly reported as required.

Tip: Enter or edit affiliations as soon as a new relationship becomes formal. Outdated or missing information can cause compliance problems.

Removing Affiliations (for Committee Administrators only)

If your committee is no longer connected to an affiliated organization:

- In the Affiliated Organizations tab, find the entry for the organization you wish to remove.
- Select the organization and click Delete (or "Remove").
- Confirm your action when prompted.

Note: Only remove affiliations that are truly ended. Maintaining an accurate public record protects your committee's compliance status.

Importance of Accurate Disclosure

Regularly review your affiliations and update as soon as organizational ties begin or end. Transparent and up-to-date disclosure:

- Fulfills Alabama's legal requirements
- Ensures the public, auditors, and regulators understand who influences or supports your work
- Protects your committee from penalties and fosters public trust

If you are ever unsure whether a group qualifies as an affiliation, contact the Elections Division for guidance before proceeding.

If you have trouble adding, editing, or removing an affiliated organization, check your permissions or contact Elections Division support for assistance.

Managing Documents

This section explains how to upload, organize, locate, and manage your committee's documents in FCPA. Maintaining a complete and well-organized set of records is crucial for audit readiness, reporting compliance, and efficient committee management. Most document actions require Committee Administrator rights; all users can review available documents unless restricted by your committee's settings.

Purpose of the Document Tab

The Document tab in FCPA acts as your committee's secure digital filing cabinet. It allows you to store receipts, invoices, supporting correspondence, and other documentation required for compliance and internal review. An organized document library makes audits, reconciliations, and report preparation much easier and faster. Please note that documents tab is for supplemental information. This is not intended for transactions or report filings.

Uploading and Attaching Documents (for Committee Administrators)

To add a new document or attach a file to a transaction or report:

- Go to the Document tab from the main Committee Page.
- Click the Upload or +New button in the toolbar.
- In the upload window, select the file to upload from your computer (formats like PDF, JPG, PNG, or DOCX are accepted).
- Fill in a clear document name, select the type (such as Receipt, Bank Statement, Invoice), and add a brief description if needed.
- If you need to link the document to a specific transaction or report, follow the in-form instructions for linking.
- Click Save or Upload. The new document will now appear in your committee's document list.

Tip: Use consistent naming (for example, "2025_May_Report_Receipt1.pdf") to easily locate files later.

Filtering and Searching Documents

All users:

- At the top of the Document tab, use search and filter options to locate documents by type, date, name, transaction link, or any keywords.
- Combine filters (for example, "Receipts" from a specific month or "Invoices" for a vendor) to narrow down results.
- Sort by columns like date or document name to quickly find the newest or oldest files.

Tip: Frequent filter and search use makes managing and retrieving files much easier, especially as your list grows.

Downloading, Printing, and Managing Records

All users (as permitted):

- To download: Click the document's name in the list, then select the download icon.
- To print: Download the document first, open it in your PDF viewer or browser, then use the print option within that application.
- To update or remove: Committee Administrators can change a document's description or type, and (if policy allows) delete outdated or duplicate files. Use caution; do not delete documents required for audits or legal compliance.

Note: Always retain documents for the period required by state law or until the end of any pending audit or investigation.

Troubleshooting Document Issues

Table 8 - Common Troubleshooting Problems and Solutions

Problem	Solution
Can't upload a document.	Verify you're using an accepted file format and are within file size limits. Only Committee Administrators may upload; check your role if the option isn't available. Try another browser if problems persist.
Document doesn't appear after upload.	Refresh your Document tab, search by name or type, and check that you clicked Save. If not visible, upload again.
Can't attach a document to a transaction or report.	Ensure all required fields are filled and the document isn't open elsewhere. Only Admins (or those with higher rights) may attach, depending on settings.
Can't download or print.	Confirm your access level. Try downloading with a different browser or device. For printing, always open the document fully before printing.

This table lists frequent problems users may encounter when uploading, finding, attaching, downloading, or printing documents in FCPA. For each issue, the table provides straightforward solutions or steps to resolve the problem quickly. Use this reference to efficiently troubleshoot common document management errors before contacting support.

If you continue to experience issues, contact Elections Division support and include the document name, type of problem, and steps you've tried.

Filing Reports

This section explains how committees identify required report types and deadlines, file new reports, amend or correct submissions, view filed reports, and respond to returns or rejections in FCPA. Accurate and timely reporting is essential for legal compliance in Alabama.

Overview of Report Types and Deadlines

Committees must periodically disclose their financial activity by filing campaign finance reports according to state law and the committee type.

Missing a deadline can result in fines or other compliance actions. Mark all key dates on your personal calendar and check your FCPA dashboard regularly for alerts.

Filing a New Report

(For Committee Administrators, Treasurers, and Designated Filing Agents)

- From the Home Screen or Tracking Inbox, identify the report due. Reports with “Due” or “Pending” status will be listed with their corresponding reporting period.
- Click the Action or Start button next to the report you want to file.
- Confirm the report period and ensure all contributions, expenditures, and other relevant transactions have been entered for that timeframe.
- Review the transactions auto-populated in the report draft; double-check amounts, dates, and descriptions for accuracy.
- Upload all required supporting documents (such as receipts or bank statements).
- Use the Preview or Review feature if available to double-check totals, itemization, and compliance flags.
- Click Submit Report and confirm when prompted.
- On successful submission, FCPA will lock the report for further editing unless it is returned by the Elections Division for correction.

Amending or Correcting a Filed Report

(For Committee Administrators, Treasurers, and Designated Filing Agents)

If you discover an error or omission after you have submitted a report:

- Go to the Submitted Reports or Filings Requiring Amendment section.
- Find the relevant report and click Amend.
- Make the necessary corrections; add transactions, update data, or clarify descriptions. You may be required to enter a brief statement explaining the amendment.
- Save the changes and click Resubmit to send the amended report to the Elections Division.

Note: Always document what was changed in the amendment and keep a record for your committee’s files.

Viewing Submitted Reports

All users can view their committee's history of filed campaign finance reports:

- Go to the Reports or Submitted Reports tab from your Committee Page.
- Each filed report shows the type, period covered, date filed, and current status (e.g., Accepted, Pending, Returned).
- Click on any filed report to open, review details, or download/print it for your records.

Tip: Regularly review your filed reports to ensure a complete compliance history and prepare for potential audits.

Account and Security Management

This section explains how to keep your FCPA account secure. Keeping your account information accurate and protected ensures that only authorized individuals can access or change committee data.

Session Management & Logging Out

All users:

- Always log out of FCPA when you are finished with your session, especially when using a shared or public computer.
- To log out, click the Log Out icon. 
- If you forget to log out or are inactive for an extended time, the system will automatically end your session for security.

Tip: Logging out protects your committee's sensitive information from unauthorized access.

Additional Accessibility Tips

FCPA is designed to meet ADA accessibility standards and can be used with most screen readers and assistive technologies.

- Request large-print or alternate format versions of this manual or online help from Elections Division support.
- If you need further accessibility assistance, contact support for accommodations or guidance on using accessibility features.
- Use browser zoom controls or high-contrast settings if you have visual impairments.

If you encounter barriers related to accessibility while using FCPA, notify Elections Division support. The system is periodically updated to improve accessibility for all users.

Appendices

Troubleshooting & FAQ

This section provides quick solutions to common problems users experience in FCPA and answers frequently asked questions. It also gives you easy access to support contacts and a glossary of important campaign finance terms.

Table 9 - Troubleshooting Matrix

Problem	Solution
Can’t delete a transaction	If included in a filed report, it cannot be deleted; file an amendment instead.
Can’t find a glossary definition	See the Glossary below or use your browser’s search (“Ctrl + F” or “Cmd + F”).
Can’t log in	Check email and password for typos. If forgotten, use “Forgot Password” or contact Admin.
Error saving transaction	Check all fields for completion and correct formats. Review required/optional fields.
File upload fails	Ensure file type/size complies with system limits. Try a different browser if needed.
How can I resolve a returned/rejected report?	Open the returned report, review staff notes, correct flagged issues, and use the “Resubmit” option.
How do I add or remove committee members?	Only Administrators may do this. Go to the Committee Member tab, use the “+New” or “Delete” options, and assign the appropriate role.
How do I contact support if I am stuck?	See below for contact details and what information to provide.

Problem	Solution
How do I file a report?	Select the report marked as “Due” or “Pending” in your dashboard, review all included transactions, upload required documents and click “Submit.”
How do I find upcoming report deadlines?	Check your Tracking Inbox and Home Screen for “Filings Due” alerts and see your committee’s reporting calendar.
How do I reset my password?	Use the “Forgot Password” link at the FCPA login screen. Enter your registered email; a reset link will be sent automatically.
How do I update committee information (address, officers, etc.)?	Committee Administrators must edit details from the Committee Information section and save changes. Certain fields may require support approval.
I have a new member who can’t access the system.	Verify that the account invitation was accepted and role assigned by an Administrator.
I have a permission error message	Confirm your role; ask an Administrator to review or update your permissions if necessary.
I’m not receiving FCPA emails.	Check spam/junk folder. Confirm your registered email is up to date in your account profile.
My report will not submit.	Verify that all required sections are complete and free of validation errors.
The system timeout or session ended.	Log back in; save progress often to prevent data loss from inactivity.
Trouble amending a report.	Use the “Amend” or “Edit” function. If unavailable, contact Elections Division support.

Problem	Solution
Where are my filings or due dates?	Refresh Tracking Inbox or contact Elections Division if deadlines do not appear as expected.

Getting Help and Support

FCPA Elections Division Support

Voice: 334-242-7210

Toll-Free: 1-800-274-8683

Jeff Elrod - jeff.elrod@sos.alabama.gov (Director of Elections)

Mary Dean - mary.dean@sos.alabama.gov (Election Analyst).

When to call/contact:

- If you encounter persistent technical errors not solved by this guide
- If you need to update protected information or resolve access/security issues
- When you cannot submit/amend a filing despite following all instructions
- Information to provide:
    - Your full name, committee name and ID (if available)
    - A description of the issue or your question (include screen messages or error codes)
    - Steps you have already tried to fix the problem

User Tip: Save screenshots of error messages when contacting support; this helps resolve issues faster.

Glossary of Terms

Affiliated Organization - An entity formally connected to a committee through shared leadership, financial ties, or coordinated activities. Examples include parent organizations, advocacy groups, or related political committees.

Audit Log - A system feature that records all changes made to committee records, including timestamps, user actions, and data modifications.

FCPA (Campaign Finance Management System) - The online platform used by the Alabama Secretary of State's Office to manage campaign finance reporting for PCCs and PACs.

Committee Administrator - A user role with the highest level of access within a committee. Responsible for managing members, transactions, filings, and documents.

Committee Member - An individual assigned to assist with campaign operations. Roles vary from read-only access to update permissions.

Committee Dissolution Designee - An individual appointed to officially close a campaign committee. Responsible for settling debts, distributing surplus funds, and filing final reports.

Designated Filing Agent - An authorized individual who prepares and submits campaign finance reports on behalf of a PCC or PAC.

Document Tab - A section within FCPA where users can upload, manage, and view documents related to their committee.

Election Cycle Calendar - A schedule within FCPA that defines reporting periods based on the election year and office sought.

FCPA (Fair Campaign Practices Act) - Alabama law governing campaign finance, requiring disclosure of contributions and expenditures, and outlining penalties for non-compliance.

Filing Schedule - The timeline of required campaign finance reports based on the election cycle and committee type.

Home Screen and Tracking Inbox Tab - The landing page in FCPA that provides a summary of committee status, pending filings, and quick access links.

PAC (Political Action Committee) - A group formed to raise and spend money to influence elections. Must register and report under the FCPA before engaging in political activity.

PCC (Principal Campaign Committee) - The official campaign committee formed by a candidate upon receiving or spending more than $1,000. Responsible for all financial reporting.

Report Filing Tab - The interface used to submit campaign finance reports. Includes electronic signature and validation features.

Residual Funds Disposable Description - Explanation of how leftover campaign funds will be handled upon committee dissolution.

Transaction Tab - The section where users enter, update, and manage financial transactions such as contributions and expenditures.

Treasurer - An individual responsible for managing the financial records of a campaign committee and ensuring compliance with reporting requirements.