

AkPhA Establishes its Own Political Action Committee (PAC)!

Political Action Committees 101

What is a PAC?

The term PAC is commonly used when talking about a group of individuals who have an interest in common and want to support or oppose candidates. Under the Alaska Campaign Disclosure law, a political action committee, or PAC, is another name for a group. A “group” is two or more individuals who act jointly to influence the outcome of an election of a state or municipal candidate or ballot measure. (AS 15.13.400(5)(B)). Most PACs represent business, labor or ideological interests. PACs in Alaska can give up to \$1,000 in a calendar year to a Statewide Senate or House candidate per election and up to \$1,000 annually in a calendar year to a political party. A PAC must register with the Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC) prior to engaging in any activity and the PAC Treasurer must provide them with periodic reports.

The Alaska Pharmacists Association formed AkPhA-PAC to give its members an opportunity to affect public policy in regards to the practice of pharmacy.

Why should I participate?

You should contribute to AkPhA-PAC because you benefit directly. The profession has one way to ensure that what is being legislated in Juneau is productive to your professional and business interests- by being heard! There has never been a more important time for Alaska’s pharmacists to pool their political resources with their professional colleagues. The government is increasingly involved in all aspects of healthcare, making it critical for pharmacists to participate in the political process. Your contribution reminds lawmakers that pharmacists are politically aware and actively involved in the issues affecting Alaska professionals and businesses.

What candidates will AkPhA-PAC support?

Realizing that laws affecting healthcare require support from across the political spectrum, AkPhA-PAC will support those candidates who generally support and recognize the value of our profession in the healthcare system, regardless of political affiliation. By voluntarily contributing to AkPhA-PAC, the combined contribution greatly enhances our ability to provide meaningful support to candidates who will support our common goals.

Why doesn’t AkPhA-PAC use dues money to support candidates?

PAC money comes from voluntary contributions from individual members rather than association dues. Federal election law refers to these accounts as “separate segregated funds” because money contributed to a PAC is kept in a bank account separate from the association’s operating funds. Further, these funds are only used to support political campaigns.... *not to pay for our lobbying activities or other association business.* AkPhA-PAC was organized so that it could give a voice to pharmacists in the political arena. In order for us to continue to grow and wield influence at the State Capitol where so many decisions affecting the practice of pharmacy are made, ***we need EVERY PHARMACIST throughout the state to contribute to AkPhA-PAC.***

Why can't I write a check from my business account?

All contributions must be satisfied by a money order or personal check. No corporate checks are allowed under campaign finance election law. Contributors must provide full name, home address, employer, occupation and amount of contribution if a contributor exceeds \$100 in a calendar year.

What if I already contributed to the candidate and party of my choice?

Great! You should continue to contribute to the candidates and party of your choice. But AkPhA-PAC provides you the opportunity to have a statewide impact on the election of candidates who will shape the legislation that affects the practice of pharmacy.

What are the contribution limits?

FROM	TO CANDIDATE	TO GROUP (PAC)	TO PARTY
<i>Individual</i>	\$500	\$500	\$5,000
<i>Corporations, Businesses, Organizations, Unions</i>	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
<i>Group (PAC) (based in Alaska)</i>	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Group (based outside AK)</i>	Prohibited	A non-resident group may contribute to an Alaska group or party an amount not to exceed \$1,000 ONLY if the non-resident group first registers with APOC AND receives no contributions prohibited by state law.	

When may a candidate for state office begin accepting contributions?

Once a candidate for state office files a **Letter of Intent** with the APOC or a **Declaration of Candidacy** with the Division of Elections, he or she may accept contributions beginning 18 months before the general election with one additional caveat. Under legislative ethics law, a legislator running for legislative office may not accept contributions while the legislature is in session with limited exception.

Contributions to the AkPhA-PAC can be sent to:

AkPhA-PAC

Attn: Leif Holm, Treasurer AkPhA-PAC

167 S Santa Claus Lane

North Pole, AK 99705

Make checks payable to: AkPhA-PAC