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TITLE 9. POLITICAL REFORM [81000 - 91014] (Title 9 added June 4, 1974, by initiative Proposition 9.)

CHAPTER 4.6. Online Disclosure Act of 1997 [84600 - 84616] (Chapter 4.6 added by Stats. 1997, Ch. 866, Sec. 1.)

84600. This chapter may be known and may be cited as the Online Disclosure Act.

(Amended by Stats. 2001, Ch. 917, Sec. 1. Effective October 14, 2001.)

84601. The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

- (a) The people of California enacted one of the nation's most comprehensive campaign and lobbying financial disclosure laws when they voted for Proposition 9, the Political Reform Act of 1974, an initiative statute.
- (b) Public access to campaign and lobbying disclosure information is a vital and integral component of a fully informed electorate.
- (c) Advances in technology have made it necessary for the State of California to develop a new, data-driven online filing and disclosure system that provides public disclosure of campaign finance and lobbying information in a user-friendly, easily understandable format.
- (d) Members of the public, including voters, journalists, and researchers, should be able to access campaign finance and lobbying information in a robust and flexible manner, including through searches and visual displays such as graphs and maps.

(Amended by Stats. 2016, Ch. 845, Sec. 1. (SB 1349) Effective January 1, 2017.)

84602. (a) To implement the Legislature's intent, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commission, notwithstanding any other provision of this code, shall do all of the following:

- (1) Develop online and electronic filing processes for use by persons and entities specified in Section 84605 that are required to file statements and reports with the Secretary of State's office pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 85100), and Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100). Those processes shall each enable a user to comply with all of the disclosure requirements of this title and shall include, at a minimum, both of the following:

(A) A means or method whereby filers subject to this chapter may submit required filings free of charge. Any means or method developed pursuant to this subparagraph shall not provide any additional or enhanced functions or services that exceed the minimum requirements necessary to fulfill the disclosure provisions of this title.

(B) The definition of a nonproprietary standardized record format or formats using industry standards for the transmission of the data that is required of those persons and entities specified in Section 84605 and that conforms with the disclosure requirements of this title. The Secretary of State shall hold public hearings before development of the record format or formats as a means to ensure that affected entities have an opportunity to provide input into the development process.

- (2) Accept test files from software vendors and others wishing to file reports electronically, for the purpose of determining whether the file format is in compliance with the standardized record format developed pursuant to paragraph (1) and is compatible with the Secretary of State's system for receiving the data. A list of the software and service providers who have submitted acceptable test files shall be published by the Secretary of State and made available to the public. Acceptably formatted files shall be submitted by a filer in order to meet the requirements of this chapter.

- (3) Develop a system that provides for the online or electronic transfer of the data specified in this section using telecommunications technology that ensures the integrity of the data transmitted and that creates safeguards against efforts to tamper with or subvert the data.

(4) Make all the data filed available on the internet in an easily understood format that provides the greatest public access. The data shall be made available free of charge and as soon as possible after receipt. All late contribution and late independent expenditure reports, as defined by Sections 84203 and 84204, respectively, shall be made available on the internet within 24 hours of receipt. The data made available on the internet shall not contain the street name and building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on the electronically filed forms or any bank account number required to be disclosed pursuant to this title.

(5) Develop a procedure for filers to comply with the requirement that they sign under penalty of perjury pursuant to Section 81004.

(6) Maintain all filed data online for 10 years after the date it is filed, and then archive the information in a secure format.

(7) Provide assistance to those seeking public access to the information.

(8) Implement sufficient technology to seek to prevent unauthorized alteration or manipulation of the data.

(9) Provide the Commission with necessary information to enable it to assist agencies, public officials, and others with the compliance with, and administration of, this title.

(b) (1) To implement the Legislature's intent, as described in Section 84601, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commission, shall develop an online filing and disclosure system for use by persons and entities specified in Section 84605 that are required to file statements and reports with the Secretary of State's office pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 85100), and Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100). The system shall enable a user to comply with all of the disclosure requirements of this title and shall include, at minimum, all of the following:

(A) A data-driven means or method that allows filers subject to this chapter to submit required filings free of charge in a manner that facilitates public searches of the data and does all of the following:

(i) Enables a filer to comply with all of the disclosure requirements of this title, including by entering or uploading requisite data or by indicating that the filer had no reportable activity during a particular reporting period.

(ii) Retains previously submitted data so that a filer can access that data to amend disclosures or prepare future disclosures. The system shall permit a filer to enter a contribution or independent expenditure transaction once and have the transaction appear on both a transactional report required by Section 84203, 84204, 84204.5, 84309, or 85500 and a periodic campaign statement required by this title.

(iii) Ensures the security of data entered and stored in the system.

(iv) To the extent feasible, is compatible with potential future capability to accept statements from filers specified in subdivisions (b) to (e), inclusive, of Section 84215.

(B) The definition of a nonproprietary standardized record format or formats using industry standards for the transmission of the data that is required of those persons and entities specified in Section 84605 and that conforms with the disclosure requirements of this title.

(2) The Secretary of State shall do all of the following with respect to the online filing and disclosure system developed pursuant to this subdivision:

(A) Accept test files from software vendors and others wishing to file reports electronically for the purpose of determining whether the file format is in compliance with the standardized record format developed pursuant to this subdivision and is compatible with the Secretary of State's system for receiving the data. The Secretary of State shall publish and make available to the public a list of the software and service providers who have submitted acceptable test files. A filer shall submit acceptably formatted files in order to meet the requirements of this chapter.

(B) Make the data filed available on the internet as follows:

(i) In a user-friendly, easily understandable format that provides the greatest public access, including online searches and machine-readable downloads of all data contained in the system, except as specified in clause (iii).

(ii) Free of charge and as soon as possible after receipt, or, in the case of late contribution, late in-kind contribution, and late independent expenditure reports, as defined by Sections 84203, 84203.3, and 84204, respectively, within 24 hours of receipt.

(iii) Not containing the street name or building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on the electronically filed forms or any bank account number required to be disclosed pursuant to this title, except that a nonresidential address

of a committee under Section 82013 may be made available on the internet.

(iv) In a manner that allows the public to track and aggregate contributions from the same contributor across filers using a permanent unique identifier assigned by the Secretary of State for this purpose. The Secretary of State shall assign this identifier to, at minimum, each contributor who makes contributions totaling ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more in a calendar year to, or at the behest of, candidates or committees that file electronically with the Secretary of State pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 84215 or who files with the Secretary of State as a major donor committee under subdivision (c) of Section 82013.

(C) Develop a procedure for filers to comply electronically with the requirement to sign under penalty of perjury pursuant to Section 81004. The electronic signature procedure shall allow the filer to file with the Secretary of State and shall not require an original signature to be filed.

(D) Maintain all filed data online for at least 20 years after the date it is filed, and then archive the information in a secure format.

(E) Provide assistance to those seeking public access to the information.

(F) Implement sufficient technology to seek to prevent unauthorized alteration or manipulation of the data.

(G) Provide the Commission with necessary information to enable it to assist agencies, public officials, and others in complying with and administering this title.

(3) The Secretary of State shall do all of the following with respect to developing the online filing and disclosure system and record format pursuant to this subdivision:

(A) Consult with the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting, the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments, the Commission, users, filers, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, about functions of the online filing and disclosure system.

(B) In consultation with the Commission, and no later than July 31, 2017, hold at least one public hearing to receive input about developing the online filing and disclosure system and record format.

(C) No later than December 31, 2017, submit a report to the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments that includes a plan for the online filing and disclosure system, describes how members of the public will be able to query and retrieve data from the system, and includes a plan for integrating statements as specified in clause (iv) of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1).

(4) The Secretary of State shall make the online filing and disclosure system developed pursuant to this subdivision available for use no later than February 2021.

(5) The Secretary of State may accept any funds, services, equipment, or grants to further this subdivision, provided that the Secretary of State shall notify the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments upon accepting any amount valued at one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more.

(6) Because the provisions of this chapter need to be implemented as expeditiously as possible, the information technology procurement requirements described in Chapter 5.6 (commencing with Section 11545) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of this code, and in Section 12100 of the Public Contract Code, do not apply to development of the online filing and disclosure system pursuant to this subdivision. The Secretary of State shall consult with the Department of Technology, as appropriate, in developing the online filing and disclosure system, in order to maximize project success, minimize life-cycle costs, and ensure the security of the system and its data.

(7) (A) Before making the system developed pursuant to this subdivision available for public use, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commission, shall test the system to ensure its functionality and then certify that the system meets all the requirements of this subdivision. The Secretary of State may consult with the Department of Technology as needed to fulfill the secretary's duties under this paragraph.

(B) After the system developed pursuant to this subdivision is certified, the system described in subdivision (a) shall no longer accept reports and filings, unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State and the Commission. The system described in subdivision (a) shall continue to allow public access to past disclosures unless the Secretary of State migrates that data into the system described in this subdivision. To facilitate data conversion during migration, the Secretary of State may make minor technical modifications or corrections to the migrated data.

(c) On or before December 31, 2017, and on or before every April 15, July 15, October 15, and January 15 thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the fiscal committees of the Legislature a quarterly report on the progress of the Cal-Access Project. Specifically, the Secretary of State shall certify whether the secretary (1) anticipates making or has made any changes to the project's scope, schedule, or budget and (2) considers any problems to be a risk to the project's completion according to the approved project schedule and budget. This reporting requirement shall end upon the completion or termination of the Cal-Access Project.

(Amended by Stats. 2019, Ch. 315, Sec. 9. (AB 946) Effective January 1, 2020.)

84602.1. (a) The Secretary of State shall, on or before June 30, 2007, fully implement this chapter as specified in Section 84602, including completing online lobbying registration forms so that all forms can be filed online as specified in Section 84602.

(b) On or before February 1, 2007, the Secretary of State shall report to the Legislature on all of the following:

(1) The implementation and development of the online and electronic filing and disclosure requirements of this chapter, with specific emphasis on the status of the development of a means or method described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 84602.

(2) Whether and to what extent any means or method has been deployed that allows filers to submit required filings free of charge, with an emphasis on the types of filers who are not yet able to complete all required online or electronic filings free of charge, what aspects of the filings are missing that prevent those filers from being able to complete all required online or electronic filings free of charge, the costs to those filers, and, if applicable, why a means or method has not yet been deployed and when one is likely to be deployed.

(3) What resources are necessary to complete efforts to allow filers to submit required filings free of charge, when completion is expected, and an explanation of why the original full allocation of requested funding did not provide the statutorily required free filing system.

(c) Additional reports to the Legislature pursuant to subdivision (b) shall be due on July 1, and December 1, of each year, until a means or method has been deployed that allows all filers who are required to file reports online or electronically to file those reports free of charge.

(Added by Stats. 2006, Ch. 69, Sec. 19. Effective July 12, 2006.)

84602.3. The Secretary of State shall conspicuously post on the Secretary of State's internet website hyperlinks to the internet website of any local government agency that contains publicly-disclosed campaign finance information. The Secretary of State shall update these hyperlinks no later than December 31 of each year.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 50, Sec. 171. (AB 378) Effective January 1, 2022.)

84602.5. The Secretary of State shall disclose online pursuant to this chapter an index of the identification numbers, as assigned pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 84101, of every person, entity, or committee that is obligated to make a disclosure pursuant to Chapter 4. This index shall be updated monthly except for the six-week period preceding any statewide regular or special election, during which period the index shall be updated weekly.

(Added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 208, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2000.)

84603. The Secretary of State, once all state-mandated development, procurement, and oversight requirements have been met, shall make public their availability to accept reports online or electronically. Any filer may then commence voluntarily filing online or electronically any required report or statement that is otherwise required to be filed with the Secretary of State pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100) or Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100) of this title.

(Amended by Stats. 1999, Ch. 433, Sec. 3. Effective September 16, 1999.)

84605. (a) The following persons shall file online or electronically with the Secretary of State:

(1) Any candidate, including superior court, appellate court, and Supreme Court candidates and officeholders, committee, or other persons who are required, pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), to file statements, reports, or other documents in connection with a state elective office or state measure, provided that the total cumulative reportable amount of contributions received, expenditures made, loans made, or loans received is twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or more. In determining the cumulative reportable amount, all controlled committees, as defined by Section 82016, shall be included. For a committee subject to this title prior to January 1, 2000, the beginning date for calculating cumulative totals is January 1, 2000. For a committee that is first subject to this title on or after January 1, 2000, the beginning date for calculating cumulative totals is the

date the committee is first subject to this title. A committee, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 82013, shall file online or electronically if it makes contributions of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or more in a calendar year.

(2) Any general purpose committees, as defined in Section 82027.5, including the general purpose committees of political parties, and small contributor committees, as defined in Section 85203, that cumulatively receive contributions or make expenditures totaling twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or more to support or oppose candidates for any elective state office or state measure. For a committee subject to this title prior to January 1, 2000, the beginning date for calculating cumulative totals is January 1, 2000. For a committee that first is subject to this title on or after January 1, 2000, the beginning date for calculating cumulative totals is the date the committee is first subject to this title.

(3) Any slate mailer organization with cumulative reportable payments received or made for the purposes of producing slate mailers of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or more. For a slate mailer organization subject to this title prior to January 1, 2000, the beginning date for calculating cumulative totals is January 1, 2000. For a slate mailer organization that first is subject to this title on or after January 1, 2000, the beginning date for calculating cumulative totals is the date the organization is first subject to this title.

(4) Any lobbyist, lobbying firm, lobbyist employer, or other persons required, pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100), to file statements, reports, or other documents, provided that the total amount of any category of reportable payments, expenses, contributions, gifts, or other items is two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) or more in a calendar quarter.

(b) The Secretary of State shall also disclose on the Internet any late contribution or late independent expenditure report, as defined by Sections 84203 and 84204, respectively, not covered by paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subdivision (a) or any other provision of law.

(c) Committees and other persons that are not required to file online or electronically by this section may do so voluntarily.

(d) Once a person or entity is required to file online or electronically, subject to subdivision (a) or (c), the person or entity shall be required to file all subsequent reports online or electronically.

(e) It shall be presumed that online or electronic filers file under penalty of perjury.

(f) Persons filing online or electronically shall also continue to file required disclosure statements and reports in paper format. The paper copy shall continue to be the official filing for audit and other legal purposes until the Secretary of State, pursuant to Section 84606, determines the system is operating securely and effectively.

(g) The Secretary of State shall maintain at all times a secured, official version of all original online and electronically filed statements and reports required by this chapter. Upon determination by the Secretary of State, pursuant to Section 84606, that the system is operating securely and effectively, this online or electronic version shall be the official version for audit and other legal purposes.

(h) Except for statements related to a local elective office or a local ballot measure filed by a candidate for local elective office who is also a candidate for elective state office, a copy of a statement, report, or other document filed by online or electronic means with the Secretary of State shall not be filed with a local filing officer.

(Amended by Stats. 2010, Ch. 18, Sec. 6. (AB 1181) Effective January 1, 2011. Superseded on operative date of amendment by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662.)

84605. (a) The following persons shall file online or electronically with the Secretary of State:

(1) Any candidate, including superior court, appellate court, and Supreme Court candidates and officeholders, committee, or other persons who are required, pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100) and Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 85100), to file statements, reports, or other documents in connection with a state elective office or state measure.

(2) Any state general purpose committees, as defined in Section 82027.5, including the general purpose committees of political parties, as defined in Section 85205, and small contributor committees, as defined in Section 85203.

(3) Any slate mailer organization that produces one or more slate mailers supporting or opposing candidates or measures voted on in a state election or in more than one county.

(4) Any lobbyist, lobbying firm, lobbyist employer, or other persons required, pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100), to file statements, reports, or other documents.

(5) Any elected local government officer or candidate for elective local government office filing with the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 84226.

(b) The Secretary of State shall also disclose on the internet any late contribution or late independent expenditure report, as defined by Sections 84203 and 84204, respectively, not covered by paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subdivision (a) or any other provision of law.

(c) It shall be presumed that online or electronic filers file under penalty of perjury.

(d) The Secretary of State shall maintain at all times a secured, official version of all original online and electronically filed statements and reports required by this chapter, which shall be the official version for audit and other legal purposes.

(e) Except for statements related to a local elective office or a local ballot measure filed by a candidate for local elective office who is also a candidate for elective state office, and for filings subject to Section 84226, a copy of a statement, report, or other document filed by online or electronic means with the Secretary of State shall not be filed with a local filing officer.

(Amended (as amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 25) by Stats. 2022, Ch. 500, Sec. 2. (AB 2528) Effective January 1, 2023. Conditionally operative as prescribed by its own provisions.)

84606. The Secretary of State shall determine and publicly disclose when the online and electronic disclosure systems are operating effectively. In making this determination, the Secretary of State shall consult with the commission, the Department of Information Technology, and any other appropriate public or private entity. The online or electronic disclosure system shall not become operative until the Department of Information Technology approves the system. Upon this determination, filers required by this chapter to file online or electronically will no longer be required to file a paper copy or with local filing officers. Furthermore, the date that a filer transmits an online or electronic report shall be the date the filed report is received by the Secretary of State.

(Amended by Stats. 1999, Ch. 433, Sec. 6. Effective September 16, 1999. Superseded on operative date of amendment by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662.)

84606. The date that a filer transmits an online or electronic report shall be the date the filed report is received by the Secretary of State.

(Amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 26. (SB 1239) Effective January 1, 2019. Conditionally operative on date prescribed by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 44.)

84607. Pursuant to Section 8314, no employee or official of a state or local government agency shall utilize, for political or campaign purposes, public facilities or resources to retrieve or maintain any of the data produced by the requirements of this chapter.

(Added by Stats. 1997, Ch. 866, Sec. 1. Effective October 11, 1997.)

84612. If the Secretary of State rejects a filing made under this chapter, the Secretary of State shall immediately notify the filer, by electronic mail, of the reason or reasons for rejection using plain, straightforward language, avoiding technical terms as much as possible, and using a coherent and easily readable style. The notice shall be written or displayed so that the meaning will be easily understood by those persons directly affected by it.

(Added by Stats. 2001, Ch. 79, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2002. Superseded on operative date of amendment by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662.)

84612. If the Secretary of State rejects a filing made under this chapter, the Secretary of State shall immediately notify the filer, by email, of the reason or reasons for rejection using plain, straightforward language, avoiding technical terms as much as possible, and using a coherent and easily readable style. The notice shall be written or displayed so that the meaning will be easily understood by those persons directly affected by it. The Cal-Access Replacement System may contain required fields in which information must be entered in order to submit a report or statement, as determined by the Secretary of State and the Commission.

(Amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 27. (SB 1239) Effective January 1, 2019. Conditionally operative on date prescribed by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 44.)

84613. (a) The Political Disclosure, Accountability, Transparency, and Access Fund is hereby established in the State Treasury. Moneys collected pursuant to Section 84101.5 and one-half of the moneys collected pursuant to Section 86102 shall be deposited in the Political Disclosure, Accountability, Transparency, and Access Fund.

(b) (1) Moneys deposited in the Political Disclosure, Accountability, Transparency, and Access Fund are subject to appropriation by the Legislature and shall be expended for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of the online or electronic disclosure program implemented by the Secretary of State pursuant to this chapter.

(2) In addition to paragraph (1), the Secretary of State may also use moneys deposited in the Political Disclosure, Accountability, Transparency, and Access Fund for purposes of implementing the act that added this section.

(c) Any expenditure of moneys from the Political Disclosure, Accountability, Transparency, and Access Fund for the purposes described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) is subject to the project approval and oversight process established by the California Technology Agency pursuant to Section 11546.

(Added by Stats. 2012, Ch. 506, Sec. 2. (SB 1001) Effective January 1, 2013.)

84615. A local government agency may require an elected officer, candidate, committee, or other person required to file statements, reports, or other documents required by Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), except an elected officer, candidate, committee, or other person who receives contributions totaling less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), and makes expenditures

totaling less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), in a calendar year, to file those statements, reports, or other documents online or electronically with a local filing officer. A local government agency that requires online or electronic filing pursuant to this section shall comply with all of the following:

- (a) The legislative body for the local government agency shall adopt an ordinance approving the use of online or electronic filing, which shall include a legislative finding that the online or electronic filing system will operate securely and effectively and would not unduly burden filers. The ordinance adopted by the legislative body for the local government agency may, at the discretion of that legislative body, specify that the electronic or online filing requirements apply only to specifically identified types of filings or are triggered only by identified monetary thresholds. In any instance in which the original statement, report, or other document is required to be filed with the Secretary of State and a copy of that statement, report, or other document is required to be filed with the local government agency, the ordinance may permit, but shall not require, that the copy be filed online or electronically.
- (b) The online or electronic filing system shall only accept a filing in the standardized record format that is developed by the Secretary of State pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 84602 and that is compatible with the Secretary of State's system for receiving an online or electronic filing.
- (c) The online or electronic filing system shall ensure the integrity of the data transmitted and shall include safeguards against efforts to tamper with, manipulate, alter, or subvert the data.
- (d) (1) The local filing officer shall issue to a person who files a statement, report, or other document online or electronically an electronic confirmation that notifies the filer that the statement, report, or other document was received. The confirmation shall include the date and the time that the statement, report, or other document was received by the filing officer and the method by which the filer may view and print the data received by the filing officer.

(2) A copy retained by the filer of a statement, report, or other document that was filed online or electronically and the confirmation issued pursuant to paragraph (1) that shows the filer timely filed the statement, report, or other document shall create a rebuttable presumption that the filer timely filed the statement, report, or other document.
- (e) The date of filing for a statement, report, or other document that is filed online or electronically shall be the day that it is received by the local filing officer.
- (f) The local filing officer shall make all the data filed available on the Internet in an easily understood format that provides the greatest public access. The data shall be made available free of charge and as soon as possible after receipt. The data made available on the Internet shall not contain the street name and building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on the electronically filed forms or any bank account number required to be disclosed by the filer. Except as provided in Section 84101, the local filing officer shall make a complete, unredacted copy of any statement, report, or other document filed pursuant to this section, including any street names and building numbers disclosed by the filer, available to any person upon request.
- (g) The online or electronic filing system shall include a procedure for filers to comply with the requirement that they sign statements and reports under penalty of perjury pursuant to Section 81004.
- (h) The local government agency shall enable filers to complete and submit filings free of charge.
- (i) The local filing officer shall maintain, for a period of at least 10 years commencing from the date filed, a secured, official version of each online or electronic statement, report, or other document filed pursuant to this section, which shall serve as the official version of that record for purpose of audits and any other legal purpose. Data that has been maintained for at least 10 years may then be archived in a secure format.
- (j) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any statement, report, or other document filed online or electronically pursuant to this section shall not be required to be filed with the local filing officer in paper format.

(Amended (as added by Stats. 2012, Ch. 126, Sec. 1) by Stats. 2024, Ch. 180, Sec. 3. (SB 1027) Effective January 1, 2025. Superseded on operative date of amendment by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, as further amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 180, Sec. 4.)

84615. A local government agency may require an elected officer, candidate, committee, or other person required to file statements, reports, or other documents required by Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), except an elected officer, candidate, committee, or other person who receives contributions totaling less than two thousand dollars (\$2,000), and makes expenditures totaling less than two thousand dollars (\$2,000) in a calendar year, to file those statements, reports, or other documents online or electronically with a local filing officer. A local government agency that requires online or electronic filing pursuant to this section shall comply with all of the following:

- (a) The legislative body for the local government agency shall adopt an ordinance approving the use of online or electronic filing, which shall include a legislative finding that the online or electronic filing system will operate securely and effectively and would not unduly burden filers. The ordinance adopted by the legislative body for the local government agency may, at the discretion of that legislative body, specify that the electronic or online filing requirements apply only to specifically identified types of filings or are triggered only by identified monetary thresholds. In any instance in which the original statement, report, or other document is required to be filed with the Secretary of State and a copy of that statement, report, or other document is required to be filed with the local government agency, the ordinance may permit, but shall not require, that the copy be filed online or electronically.

(b) The online or electronic filing system shall accept a filing in the standardized record format that was developed by the Secretary of State pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 84602, or the local government agency may transition to the Cal-Access Replacement System format, and then the system shall accept a filing in the new standardized record format developed by the Secretary of State pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 84602, and that is compatible with the Secretary of State's system for receiving an online or electronic filing.

(c) The online or electronic filing system shall ensure the integrity of the data transmitted and shall include safeguards against efforts to tamper with, manipulate, alter, or subvert the data.

(d) (1) The local filing officer shall issue to a person who files a statement, report, or other document online or electronically an electronic confirmation that notifies the filer that the statement, report, or other document was received. The confirmation shall include the date and the time that the statement, report, or other document was received by the filing officer and the method by which the filer may view and print the data received by the filing officer.

(2) A copy retained by the filer of a statement, report, or other document that was filed online or electronically and the confirmation issued pursuant to paragraph (1) that shows the filer timely filed the statement, report, or other document shall create a rebuttable presumption that the filer timely filed the statement, report, or other document.

(e) The date of filing for a statement, report, or other document that is filed online or electronically shall be the day that it is received by the local filing officer.

(f) The local filing officer shall make all the data filed available on the Internet in an easily understood format that provides the greatest public access. The data shall be made available free of charge and as soon as possible after receipt. The data made available on the Internet shall not contain the street name and building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on the electronically filed forms or any bank account number required to be disclosed by the filer. Except as provided in Section 84101, the local filing officer shall make a complete, unredacted copy of any statement, report, or other document filed pursuant to this section, including any street names and building numbers disclosed by the filer, available to any person upon request.

(g) The online or electronic filing system shall include a procedure for filers to comply with the requirement that they sign statements and reports under penalty of perjury pursuant to Section 81004.

(h) The local government agency shall enable filers to complete and submit filings free of charge.

(i) The local filing officer shall maintain, for a period of at least 10 years commencing from the date filed, a secured, official version of each online or electronic statement, report, or other document filed pursuant to this section, which shall serve as the official version of that record for purpose of audits and any other legal purpose. Data that has been maintained for at least 10 years may then be archived in a secure format.

(j) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any statement, report, or other document filed online or electronically pursuant to this section shall not be required to be filed with the local filing officer in paper format.

(Amended (as amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 28) by Stats. 2024, Ch. 180, Sec. 4. (SB 1027) Effective January 1, 2025. Conditionally operative on date prescribed by Stats. 2018, Ch. 662, Sec. 44, and by Stats. 2024, Ch. 180, Sec. 6.)

84616. (a) Within 72 hours of each applicable filing deadline, a local government agency shall post on its internet website a copy of any statement, report, or other document required by Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100) that is filed with that agency in paper format, or by email or fax. If the statement, report, or document is filed late by the filer, the local government agency shall post the copy within 72 hours of receipt of the statement, report, or document. If the final day of the 72-hour period is a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the period is extended to the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. Before posting, the local filing officer shall redact the street name and building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on any statement, report, or document, or any bank account number required to be disclosed by the filer. Providing a link on the agency's internet website to the statement, report, or other document satisfies this subdivision.

(b) A statement, report, or other document posted pursuant to this section shall be made available for four years from the date of the election associated with the filing.

(c) If a local government agency receives a filing that was required to be filed with a different agency or person, and the filing was not required to be filed with the receiving agency, the local government agency is not required to post the filing pursuant to subdivision (a) and shall notify the filer of the error.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 97, Sec. 4. (AB 2001) Effective January 1, 2025.)