IT TAKES TWO

RPAC AND YOU

RPAC Fundraising & Procedures Reference Guide
Florida Realtors®
REALTORS®-PAC and U

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For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.realtors-pac.org
REALTORS®-PAC Mission Statement

The purpose of the REALTORS®-PAC is to assist the legislative and political efforts of the Florida Association of REALTORS®. To promote and strive for the improvement of government by encouraging and stimulating REALTORS® and others to take a more active and effective part in governmental affairs. To encourage REALTORS® and others to understand the nature and actions of their government and to support candidates for election to public office at the local, state, and national levels who share the views of REALTORS® on issues important to the real estate industry.

The Four Underlying Principals of RPAC

I. To promote and strive for the improvement of government by encouraging and stimulating REALTORS® and others to take a more active and effective part in government affairs.

II. To encourage REALTORS® and others to understand the nature and action of their government

III. To support Candidates for election to Public office at the local, state and national levels who share the views of REALTORS® on issues important to the real estate industry.

IV. To legally and ethically do any and all things necessary for the attainment of the purposes stated above.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
**Glossary of Terms**

RPAC - The REALTORS® Political Action Committee was created in 1970. It is a non-profit, bipartisan standing committee of the Florida Association of REALTORS®. RPAC is not a branch or subsidiary of any national or other political committee. This committee is registered and operates as a committee of continuous existence per the provisions of Section 106.04, Florida Statutes.

The Goal of RPAC is to establish the real estate industry as a concerned, involved and motivated political constituency. RPAC raises funds voluntarily from members of the Florida Association of REALTORS® for use in campaigns, issues, and political education at all levels of government consistent with federal and state election laws.

RPAC II - The REALTORS® Political Activity Committee (RPAC II) was created in 1986. It is a non-profit, bipartisan standing committee of the Florida Association of REALTORS®. RPAC II is not a branch or subsidiary of any national or other political committee. This committee is registered and operates as a committee of continuous existence per the provisions of Section 106.04. Florida Statutes.

This committee is in place to supplement and augment the activities of RPAC. Its procedures and Trustees are identical to RPAC. Contributions to RPAC II are legally the same as RPAC.

RPAC Trustee - An RPAC Trustee is appointed for each FAR district by the President of the Florida Association of REALTORS®. Trustees are appointed for the purpose of carrying out the business of RPAC including but not limited to establishing the operating procedures of RPAC, approving local funding requests, assisting local Boards/Associations in fundraising and contributing to candidates in the best interest of the real estate industry. All Trustees must have an active real estate license under Chapter 475, Florida Statutes, and be a member of the Florida Association of REALTORS® in good standing. Trustees are appointed for three-year terms, and may not serve more than six consecutive calendar years. RPAC Trustees perform identical duties for RPAC and RPAC II.

Personal Dollars - Personal (hard) dollars are contributions made with an individual’s personal funds including cash, personal credit cards, money orders and personal checks. Under federal election law, only personal dollar contributions can be used to fund legislative candidates running for office.

Corporate Dollars - Corporate (soft) dollars are contributions made by corporate check. Corporate dollars can be used for issues campaigns, opportunity races, media buys and are deposited into a separate account at the National level to ensure they are not used by political candidates.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
Frequently Asked Questions

REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC)

The REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) is the nation's largest, most successful and most bipartisan political action committee. Your voluntary investment is used to improve your bottom line in several ways: Through issues mobilization, political advocacy, and by directly supporting candidates at the local, state, and federal levels of government who champion the ideals and principles of REALTORS®. RPAC is your best investment in real estate!

What is a PAC?

PACs have been around since 1944 when the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) formed the first one to raise money for the re-election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. A Political Action Committee (PAC) is a popular term for a political committee organized by like-minded people, like REALTORS®, for the purpose of raising and spending money to elect and defeat candidates. The PAC's money must come from voluntary contributions from members rather than the member's dues treasury. PAC’s represent business, labor or ideological interests. PACs can give to a candidate committee per election (primary, general, run-off or special). They can also give up to any national party committee and annually to any other PAC. PACs may also receive contributions from any one individual.

In short, PACs merely represent a legal way for individuals to unite and ensure their voices are heard at all levels of government.

The REALTORS®- PAC

In addition to representing 135,000 REALTOR® members statewide, and more one million members nationwide, RPAC is also a monetary fund comprised of voluntary contributions from members. By members pulling together and contributing, RPAC is able to be a single unified voice for real estate in all levels of government.

Of every dollar you contribute, 30 cents goes to the National RPAC for grassroots activities and supporting candidates running for office on the federal level. The remaining 70 cents stays in Florida and is divided between the state and local associations to support state and local candidates and issues.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
What's in it for you?

RPAC is the muscle behind NAR, FAR and your local Board/Association. RPAC represents over 1,000,000 politically active REALTORS® national wide and more than 135,000 in Florida that members of Congress want as their friends. Up to 4,000 bills are introduced each session in the state legislature. Elections decide who will be voting on these 3,000 bills. RPAC helps elect the people who write the laws you and your business must live with. RPAC provides you with the opportunity to have a collective impact on the election of officials who will shape legislation that affects your livelihood and the way real estate professionals do business. Through extensive research and ongoing monitoring, RPAC keeps you informed, involved, and influential in the legislative decisions that are important to you and your business.

Recent legislative and regulatory successes include:

I. The continued preservation of the mortgage interest deduction.
II. Tax relief benefiting the real estate industry.
III. Improving federal mortgage programs, allowing more families to join the ranks of homeownership.
IV. Eliminating burdensome regulations inhibiting environmental quality and healthy real estate markets.
V. The continued preservation of the mortgage interest deduction;
VI. Tax relief benefiting the real estate industry;
VII. Improving federal mortgage programs, allowing more families to join the ranks of homeownership;
VIII. Successfully keeping “mega-banks” from entering the real estate business.

On a state and local level, RPAC has helped to:

I. Protect commercial commissions through the foreclosure process;
II. Prohibit cities and counties from charging individual real estate agents a business license fee;
III. Fought and won a battle against a 100% increase in real estate transfer tax

Does RPAC Buy Votes?

No! But it does give us access. Candidates and public officials are honorable people whose votes are not for sale. But, by helping elect public policy decision-makers, RPAC assures REALTORS® the opportunity to present our views and be heard. RPAC fully complies with all state and federal election laws.

How will my contribution be used?

100% of your contribution is used to elect pro-REALTOR® candidates. 30% of your contribution is forwarded to the National RPAC to fund key U.S. House and Senate races; 70% remains in your state and is used for local and state elections.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
What party is RPAC affiliated with?

RPAC is neither a Republican nor a Democratic organization. Your contribution to RPAC is a vote for a pro-REALTOR® Congress, regardless of political party.

Who establishes and implements RPAC policy?

Leading the National RPAC organization are the National RPAC Trustees. The Trustees establish and implement RPAC policy in accordance with the RPAC bylaws and NAR policy as established by the NAR Board of Directors. The Trustees consist of REALTOR® volunteers from around the nation who are appointed by NAR leadership.

I. RPAC believes that the people who raise RPAC dollars should have the greatest say in how those dollars are allocated. That’s why all candidate contribution decisions begin on the local level with REALTORS® interviewing candidates and making their contributions based upon that information.

II. It is REALTORS®, not lobbyists, who have the most say in how RPAC’s money is spent. Contribution decisions are made by the RPAC Trustees; a nine-member REALTOR® committee nominated by the FAR Nominating Committee and elected by the FAR membership to serve one-year terms.

III. The main objective of the RPAC Trustees is to help elect candidates who support REALTOR® issues. The decisions made by the RPAC Trustees rest on a candidate’s position on key real estate issues, the REALTOR® relationship with a candidate in the home district, committee assignments and leadership position.

How does RPAC establish fundraising goals and what is a “Fair Share” goal?

The dollar goal of the National RPAC, set by the National Trustees, is $15.00 per year per NAR member. At least $3.00 of that goes to the National RPAC. This goal is called "fair share." To ensure that all states contribute their fair share to the RPAC effort, a state’s annual goal is determined by the number of members in that state based on the November 30 membership report. The National RPAC accounting year runs from January 1 to December 31.

The local fair share goal is determined by the number of members on record as of November 30th of the previous year. Fifteen dollars per member is assessed as the “fair share” for each local association to raise.

What is the FAR RPAC fundraising goal 2009 and of my local association?

FAR’s 2009 fundraising goal and the goals of each local Board/Association can be found at www.realtors-pac.org under 2009 RPAC Goals.
Who may be solicited for RPAC contributions?

According to federal election law, RPAC can solicit only individual members – i.e. non-corporate members of NAR and their families. The term "members" means all individuals who currently satisfy the requirements of membership in any one of the local, state and/or the National Association and regularly pay dues.

Executive, administrative and management personnel of the local, state and/or national associations are also considered under the NAR constitution to be members of the association and are solicitable even though they may not pay association dues.

Are contributions to RPAC tax deductible?

No. Contributions used for political purposes are not tax deductible on your federal income taxes.

Does the National RPAC contribute to state or local candidates?

Under the cooperative agreements in effect between the National RPAC and the state associations' PACs, the responsibility for making contributions to federal candidates is assigned to the national RPAC, while state associations' PACs decide which state and local candidates to support.

Can I earmark money to a party or particular candidate?

No. Under federal election law, the earmarking of contributions is illegal.

What processes do the National and State Trustees use when determining contribution to candidates?

The National Trustees' policy is to act only on requests sent from state associations and signed off on by state trustees. Once the national trustees receive these requests, they have four options: Amend, Approve, Deny or Defer. The State Trustees use the same policy.

Recommendations from State RPAC Trustees or Local Boards/Associations
Congressional voting records and analyses of incumbent members of Congress
Campaign intelligence reports provided by the NAR political and legislative staff

Will the National RPAC Trustees contribute to both candidates in a race?

No. The National RPAC Trustees' policy is to only contribute to one candidate in any given election.
How much money stays with the state association and how much goes to the National RPAC?

The National RPAC maintains voluntary cooperative agreements with the state association's Political Action Committees. States retain 70% of the money they collect for the support of state and local candidates and send 30% to the national RPAC for use in supporting federal candidates. Until your state PAC reaches its RPAC goal 30% is sent to National RPAC to support federal candidates and is charged against your limits under 2 U.S.C. 441a; after the state PAC reaches its RPAC goal it may elect to retain your entire contribution for use in supporting state and local candidates.

How do I make a donation?

Online
I. Use your credit card to make a secure online donation at realtors.org
II. A receipt will be emailed to you
III. Click to make an online donation

By Mail
I. Make your personal check payable to either RPAC or RPEC
II. Send to:
   Florida Association of REALTORS®
   ATTN: RPAC
   P.O. Box 725025
   Orlando, FL 32872-5025

What contributor information do I need to include with checks?

Both federal and state election law require documentation of all contributors. We need the following information on each contributor:
I. Name
II. Address
III. NRDS #
IV. Occupation
V. Telephone #

A simple way to satisfy this requirement is to make sure each contributor fills out the RPAC investment form. -- CLICK HERE FOR FORM -- link to PDF version of form to download?

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
### Setting the Goal

A local Board’s/Association’s “fair share” goal is figured from a formula of **only** $15 per member, for every active member based on a membership count as of **November 30th** of the previous year. For example: If a Board has 1,000 active members as of November 30th, its fair share goal is $15,000 the following year.

A Board/Association that has experienced a decrease in membership of 20 percent or more may petition the state RPAC Committee (via their District RPAC Trustee) to request a reduction in their RPAC goal. The petition must be filed with the District Trustee no later than April 30th.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
Ask Before You Act

There are many complex and direct laws, rules and guidelines governing Political Action Committees in the United States and Florida. These laws are very specific and any violations of them can result in stiff penalties.

If, and when, you have new ideas or questions regarding what can and cannot be done on behalf of the REALTORS®-PAC, always ask first. If such incidents arise please call the FAR-Office of Public Policy in Tallahassee at (850) 224-1400 or send an email to any of your RPAC Staff.

John Rothell – Director of Political Operations – JohnR@far.org

Jack Greacen – Political Representative – JackG@far.org

Amy Glover – Political Activities Coordinator – AmyG@far.org

Simple questions today will fend off tremendous legal issues tomorrow.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
**Fundraising Ideas and Techniques**

Though many different RPAC Chairmen and women have their own special ways of raising their RPAC goal, there are essentially four steps for achieving success. Try to follow these four steps and tailor them to the unique and diverse needs of your area.

1. Developing a Plan
2. Dues Billing
3. Personal Collections and Targeting
4. Fundraising Events

**Developing a Plan**

Members of your Board/Association will always be the key to reaching your goals. When preparing a fundraising plan it is best to sit with your Board of Directors, Government Affairs Committee, and/or your Fundraising Committee. Talk about your goal, the methods that will help you reach it, and create a timeline so that your efforts are spread out across the year.

It’s important to remember that the methods of fundraising that work for one group may not work for your own. Every fundraising plan should be tailored directly to your particular needs and, while examples of how to conduct almost every fundraiser are available from the RPAC Staff it’s important to know that the most successful fundraisers have often been held annually for many years.

Once your plan has been created get members of your Board/Association committed to helping. A few members helping on each phase of the plan can greatly increase the effectiveness of the plan.

**Dues Billing**

(Offers the easiest mass campaign for fund raising)

Members of the Boards/Associations are accustomed to receiving a dues invoice that includes allocations for other entities such as FAR and NAR. Dues billing is the easiest place to incorporate a voluntary contribution. If you would like to include RPAC brochures in your dues mailing, make sure you order a sufficient supply in advance. The dues billing function is handled by your Board/Association office.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
*** Disclaimers ***

The following should be put on all dues billing statements:

“Contributions to RPAC are voluntary and will be used for political purposes and support of state, local, and federal candidates and political parties and in issue initiatives. Making a contribution is not a condition of membership in the association and a member may refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Seventy percent of each contribution is used by RPAC-Florida and RPIC-Florida to support state and local candidates and state and local issues. Consult your local board/association for the exact percentage going toward each. The balance is sent to National RPAC and is charged against your contribution limits prescribed by 2 U.S.C. 441a. Contributions are not deductible for Federal income tax purposes.”

The following should be put on all fund-raising materials:

“Contributions to RPAC are voluntary and used for political purposes. A portion will be split between State and National RPAC. Contributions are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.”

Personal Collections and Targeting

After the dues billing has been completed, it is time to begin personal appeals for contributions. Use your local RPAC committee and target your contacts to key groups.

The first rule of any political campaign is to achieve constant, repetitive communication with those most likely to help your cause. While it is true that we want all members contributing to RPAC, it is important to target and focus your efforts on those most likely to make a contribution.

Face-to-face, one-on-one solicitation is, by far, the most effective technique in any fundraising effort! As the name implies, this technique requires one member sitting down face-to-face with another member to ask for an RPAC contribution. If you have effectively targeted the right people to solicit for contributions, face to face solicitation will be very easy.

I. You must have contributed to RPAC yourself
II. You must state the case for RPAC effectively
III. You must ask for a specific amount
IV. You must close the sale
Four Key Targets of Face to Face Solicitation

I. Local Leadership – The members of your Board of Directors as well as all of your local committee chairmen should lead by example and contribute to RPAC. Solicit the help of your Board President and get your Leadership to be 100% committed to RPAC early in the year.

II. Past contributors – You may contact FAR to receive a list of RPAC contributors from your local board/association. Many times, people who have contributed in the past will wait until they are asked for an RPAC contribution to give you a check. Do not let something as simple as “nobody asked me” be the reason someone doesn’t contribute.

III. Brokers – The brokers in your board/association are obviously the people you can most rely on to set the tone for your board’s activities. Contact all brokers, large and small, to contribute to RPAC and encourage their sales associates to do the same.

IV. Top Producers – People who are having success in the real estate industry are logically those who are most benefiting from the pro-business climate that RPAC works to create. Many times the Top Producers in your area are too busy selling real estate to pay attention to what’s going on at the board/association. Contact the Top Producers and educate them on the many benefits of RPAC and you’ll be surprised how happy they are to help the cause.

The best way to contact any of these groups is to send a letter to them first and then follow up with a phone call or a personal visit. Once you have written them a letter it is essential to contact these people in person. Apply the same skills that you use in managing business contacts while working with potential RPAC contributors. One simple letter by itself will not raise money
RPAC SOLICITATION

HOW DO YOU ASK FOR MONEY

**Step #1:** *Get on the same wavelength; establish a quick, comfortable rapport.* The first few words of any solicitation can make or break the experience. Start with an upbeat hello and introduce yourself if you haven’t met the person previously. Explain why you are there on the behalf of RPAC and give them an idea on what your goals for the meeting are.

**Step #2:** *Give the prospective donor an “insiders” look at what’s going on with RPAC.* Potential donors are investors in small business – RPAC. As representatives of RPAC you should have information about REALTOR issues, successes, campaigns and candidates in your area. A few comments about RPAC’s background will be helpful in showing RPAC as a successful tool for a REALTORS business. Be sure to keep a list of RPAC’s latest successes that a potential donor may not have known.

**Step #3:** *Ask for specific amounts of money.* This is where hard work pays off. Before any request for a donation you should know who you’re talking to. Are they a broker? A sales associate? Are they involved with the Association? Are they a donor already? If so, how much? Have they recently had a closing? Knowing any or all of these will give you a better idea on how much you should be asking for. When asking for more than $100 be direct about your reason for requesting that amount. By doing your homework you will be prepared and able to respond appropriately to a potential donors questions and giving your more credit with the donor.

**Step #4:** *Explain why RPAC needs their support.* Contributors want to know where their money is/will-be going. Talk about future candidates, campaigns, issues, anything that the REALTORS will be supporting or opposing. Talk about how their involvement will affect these things and more importantly how it could affect their business going forward.

**Step #5:** *Instill a sense of immediacy or follow up a pledge immediately.* Once you have gotten a commitment for a contribution, thank the contributor and reiterate where that money will be going in the future. Then get the check. Ask for a date you can return to pick up the check if timing is an issue. Ask the contributor to attend your next board meeting if they would prefer to make their contributing public. Follow up all solicitations with a short thank you letter within 24 hours.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
WHAT IF THEY CAN’T AFFORD TO CONTRIBUTE

Ask for a smaller contribution. Ask the contributor to consider monthly installments. (Bi-Monthly RPAC Billing forms are available on the RPAC webpage)

Ask potential contributors to help raise money, ask for help getting a contribution from a friend or colleague. Ask for the names of three people who might be interested in contributing to RPAC. If all else fails, ask for advice or if you can call in the future. Would they like to stay informed on what RPAC is doing? It is important for both you and your prospective contributor that this experience be a win-win.

RESPONSES TO OBJECTIONS

OBJECTION: I don’t believe in giving to political candidates.

I’m sure you have insurance on your car, home and business office. The result of bad legislation passed by the Florida Legislature or the U.S. Congress can be more financially catastrophic than the loss of your home, office or car by fire, theft or storm. The best insurance for your profession is to help, through RPAC, to elect officials who share our philosophy and will guard against such loss.

OBJECTION: I already contribute to candidates.

Good! You should donate to the candidate of your choice, but you should also contribute through RPAC. A contribution to a candidate from RPAC represents our entire profession and our views of legislation that directly affect our business. The sizable contribution that RPAC is able to give will often make the difference between victory and defeat for a pro-real estate candidate.

OBJECTION: I don’t like the so-and-so that received RPAC funds.

No one approves of every contribution made. The RPAC Trustees, however, have the voting records of incumbents and have information from other sources, such as candidate interviews, to aid in the decision-making process. They make mistakes, certainly, but through RPAC, they have given REALTORS® tremendous political clout. They are working for our best interest.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
**OBJECTION: I’d prefer to see RPAC funds used to battle state and local issues.**

When RPAC funds are collected and processed, a percentage of the “local funds” can be dedicated to be used for issues only. If necessary, all local funds can be used this way at the discretion of the local association, however it is advisable for some funds to remain available for local elections as well. Electing an official who is sensitive to our issues can help avoid costly “issues battles” over damaging legislation.

**OBJECTION: How will my donation be used?**

Up to 70 percent of your RPAC dollar is reserved for use right here in Florida and can impact local elections and be used for education and issues. Your donation to RPAC will be spread across the board to help pro-real estate candidates from the city council to Washington D.C.

**OBJECTION: I can’t afford to contribute.**

The economy is a result of government actions and we really can’t afford NOT to get involved this year. Your contribution is used directly to elect representatives who will be responsive to the economic problems of our industry. In this way we can change the economic situation we all find ourselves in today.

**OBJECTION: PACs are dirty politics.**

Not at all. Contributing to a political action committee is a constitutionally protected right enjoyed by every American. RPAC allows Realtors everywhere to freely organize and it ensures issues concerning the real estate industry are openly and fairly discussed. In fact, political action committees are highly regulated and have contributions limits for elections. Many times a contribution from RPAC is a very small amount in a candidate’s total campaign fund.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
Feel, Felt, Found

Try to use the “feel, felt, found” approach when talking with people who initially do not want to contribute to RPAC. Any objection to contributing can be dealt with using this approach.

**Example:** I don’t believe in giving to political candidates.

**Your response:** I know how you feel. I felt the same way at first. But then I found that my lack of participation in the political process was not in my best interest. After all, not only is my right, but it is my duty as a free American to participate in our governmental process.

**Example:** I don’t like the candidates that RPAC supports.

**Your response:** I know how you feel. I felt the same way at first. But then I found that RPAC supports candidates from all political parties and all walks of life. We screen candidates on real estate issues and try to make decisions with the best interest of the real estate industry in mind. Sometimes you may not agree with all of our choices, but it is important to remember that these decisions are not personal, and based on the interview process.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
**Fundraising Events**

Notice the emphasis on the word **FUN** in FUNDRAISING! This is key! Make it fun and they will come. People usually don't mind giving money if they feel they are receiving a return on their investment. Whether it is a tangible benefit or a perceived one, it is very important.

There are a variety of fundraising events you can plan. The RPAC Chairman's job is to work with the committee to decide what event will work best for the area and for the membership. Regional and theme events make fund raising fun. Listed below are a few suggestions:

I. Golf Tournaments  
II. Tennis Tournaments  
III. Softball Tournaments  
IV. Murder Mystery Parties  
V. Balls, Galas, Dances  
VI. Auctions (silent and/or live)  
VII. Barbecues, Fish Fry's, Dinners  
VIII. Champagne and Diamonds Evenings  
IX. Non-Event Events  
X. RPAC Karaoke Nights  
XI. Celebrity Bartending

*Planning an event requires at least 2 months lead-time. Be sure to develop a realistic budget, which includes estimates of expenses and income. Instituting an “annual” event is efficient, fun and usually very productive.*

Some Boards/Associations within a District will combine their efforts in hosting an event. This instills healthy competition as well as camaraderie among members. If the event is fun and social, the attendees will enjoy themselves and are more likely to attend future events.

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Types of Events

Regardless of the type of event you will be hosting an active committee will be vital to its success. Be sure to recruit an experienced and enthusiastic committee. Delegating responsibility and ensuring accountability will be key to achieving success for your first event or your 31st.

RPAC Auction Checklist

I. Select a date, time and location for your event. Check for conflicts with board events, community events, location problems, etc. Create a list of invited guests. Look at getting large brokers, major donors, local officials, etc… to attend your event. Their presence will go a long way in keeping your event exciting and successful.

II. Solicit support from your leadership. Once the Board of Directors is committed, the rest of the association will be too!

III. Contact local authorities. Check on regulations, sales taxes, etc.

IV. Write a complete auction plan that includes the following items:
   i. Seed money – Check with your local board or FAR.
   ii. Admission price – Do you charge for paddles? Do you not charge to encourage bidding? It’s up to you.
   iii. Food – Lots of hors d’oeuvres are much better than a sit down dinner that takes time.
   iv. Beverages – An open bar is a must! Look to your affiliates to sponsor a bar. Don’t forget to get a temporary liquor permit.
   v. Timing – Allow time for reviewing the merchandise and happy hour. Be mindful of the time so as not to lose your big bidders because the night is too long!
   vi. Auctioneers – Hopefully, you can find one in your association who is an RPAC supporter.
   vii. Silent vs. Live – Put the small ticket items in a silent auction. Leave the big-ticket items for the fun of the live auction.

V. Get auction items from affiliates, builders, restaurants, golf courses, shops, etc. Use the power of your committee. Delegate responsibility to each committee member for bringing in “X” number of items. If some contribute cash, collect it and use it to buy auction items. Solicit other boards to swap prizes for use later. *Publicize the great items you have for auction. Word of mouth is a powerful tool.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
i. Get bid paddles and get them sponsored! Let guests pick their “lucky numbers” and keep track of them.

VI. The day of the event all committee members should be on hand to help with set-up and clean-up. Other responsibilities should be handed out to ensure a seamless event which will impress all attendees.

i. Registration and Payment:

I. Get the name address and phone number of all guests when they pick up a bid paddle. 2. Have an envelope for each bidder. 3. Tag each item as it is sold with the winning bid number and price. 4. Have “winning bid” slips ready to go into the bidders envelope that indicates lot number and winning bid. 5. When a bidder is ready to leave, have them turn in their paddle and reconcile with them items purchased and total cost. 6. Decide ahead of time if you will accept credit cards.

ii. Live and Silent Auctions

I. Live auctions take up the last half of any good auction. A good auction and spotters will be important in helping get attendees bidding. **Don’t hold the best items until last.** Any good auctioneer knows that a good item going for a high price early on will set the tone for the rest of the auction. Also limit the number of items in your live auction. While 10 items is too little 75 is too many.

II. Silent auctions should be split into time groups. Give groups a variety of high and low cost items and stick to the time table. Announce when each group will be closing so people will be aware. As tables close post the winners so people can be aware of what they are spending. Someone who didn’t win Gator/Seminole jersey may buy the signed football available in the live auction.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
RPAC Bowling Checklist

I. Select a date and a bowling center. Avoid conflicts with other events and find a bowling establishment that wants to work with REALTORS®!

II. Advertise Early. Get the word out to encourage early excitement. Get offices to challenge each other, look at getting major donors to sponsor teams, and ask large brokers to help out.

III. How much to Charge?
   a. Figure out how much you want to raise. Costs vary depending on how willing the alley is to work with you. Once you have the price the alley will charge use your fundraising goal to measure how much extra you’ll need to charge to reach your goal. Is this a realistic goal?

IV. Reservations - Make sure payment reserves the lane for a team. Don’t hand out contribution envelopes until a team pays.

V. Get everything Sponsored! Have someone sponsor the bowling center, the prizes, a lunch at the lanes, door prizes, t-shirts. If it costs money, have it sponsored!

VI. Team Captains – Make one person the captain and have them be responsible for passing out envelopes, organizing their team, distributing rule sheets, etc.

VII. Work the “add on” moneymakers – Encourage teams to “bet” against each other for RPAC. Have a 50/50 contest for the most strikes in a row or highest game or whatever. Raffle items and door prizes also make nice additions to your event.

VIII. Music – Hire a DJ and get it sponsored. Or use the bowling center’s “cosmic bowling” light and music show. The more festive the atmosphere, the better your event will be.

IX. Check Presentation – Make sure you invite some statewide leadership to your event. Do a “mock check” presentation at the end of the event to the leadership. This will let everyone involved know just how well you did, and see that the statewide people acknowledge the effort!
Golf Tournament Checklist

I. Select a date with no conflicts with local events or board meetings.

II. Select a desirable golf course. This is crucial. Find a course that is somewhat exclusive, because your members will want to play on a good golf course. Some courses will be willing to cut a good deal, since they will be exposing their facility/community to almost 150 REALTORS®

III. Recruit an enthusiastic committee to share duties. The more well trained, excited volunteers you have, the more successful your event will be.

IV. Get sponsors early. The more the better. Be creative with your sponsorship opportunities. Get hole sponsors, door prize sponsors, trophy sponsors, drink cart sponsors, etc. In other words, if it costs money, have someone sponsor it! Be sure to promise sponsors only what you can produce.

V. Create a flyer and other PR vehicles to generate excitement about the event. Include sponsors names on the flyers as soon as you can.

VI. Solicit players. Contact all Broker’s offices and Affiliate members. Plan to fill the course (usually 128 or 144 players). Remember that golfers are willing to pay for a well-run tournament with lunch; so don’t be shy when you set your price.

VII. Add on games and contests. Check with your golf pro. There are many ways to add fun and money to the tournament. Sell mulligans, have separate entry fees for the long drive and closest to the pin contests, have a putting or chipping contest, play “golf poker”, etc. There’s always a way to collect a few more dollars for RPAC!

VIII. Day of event – Allow enough time during the morning for set up, sign placement, breakfast, etc. Check with your tournament pro to find if you need extra golf carts, transportation for sponsors on the course, etc. Afterwards, keep good records of contributions the day of the event. Send thank you letters to all of your sponsors, and invite them to participate in next year’s event. It’s always a good idea to ask your sponsors and players what you could have done better.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
RPAC COOKBOOKS

I. As a committee develop a timeline for creating and promoting the cookbook. Be sure to know how you’re going to produce your book before you start receiving recipes. Try and apply a theme to the cookbook to help generate enthusiasm in the process.

II. Split responsibility for recipes throughout committee focusing on appetizers, entrees and desserts.

III. All entries should come in an electronic form for ease of production.

IV. Include inside your cookbook advertising space that can be sold to affiliate groups.

V. Once the book has been created you may either try and get contributors out right or host an event to bring them in.

VI. The cookbook event should have all entries present with their dishes prepared for sampling.

VII. A fee should be charged at the door for which entry and a cookbook will be given.

VIII. All entrees should be judge and awards given to the best of.

IX. Items that may be useful for during the event silent and live auctions, drawings, door prizes, and Chinese auctions.

RPAC Phone – A – Thon

I. Recruit Volunteers. You will need callers, drivers, tally people and organizers.

II. Pick a date that works for everyone. Choose a time free of conflicts with sales meetings, civic events, etc.

III. Prepare well. Organization is the key. Prepare scripts ahead of time. Prepare a list of responses to objections. Organize your drivers on efficient trip patterns. Bring some food in. Have a centralized calling space.

IV. Retention calls. Make sure that a part of your day is reserved for those frequent-contributors who have not yet given this year.

V. Plan for “next time” answers. Don’t be afraid to use pledges if they don’t want to contribute today. Find out when and where they will contribute, and contact them at that time.

VI. Thank you, you are a big part of a phone-a-thon. Make sure that you thank all of your volunteers, as well as the contributors.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
**RPAC BROKER CHALLENGE:** *Can you meet the challenge of being a 100% office?*

Each year the REALTORS® Political Action Committee issues the challenge to all members: will you contribute your “fair share” of $15 to protect your business? Supporting legislation, which protects private property rights, and candidates who will represent the interests of REALTORS® continue to be major factors in the success of the real estate industry. Your participation is vital. Consider a contribution to RPAC as an annual political insurance premium. Since 1992, over $4,000 has been saved per year per member due to the successful efforts of RPAC.

**THE CHALLENGE:** Will your office be 100%? All it takes is for each person in your office to make a $15 contribution.

**THE TIME PERIOD:** Although RPAC contributions will be accepted until Dec. 12, this Challenge will begin on: _____________ and end on: __________.

**THE CATEGORIES:**

100% Participation – Most Dollars raised

Residential sales offices

i. Small: 1-24 associates

ii. Medium: 25-49 associates

iii. Large: 50 + associates

Commercial sales offices

i. Small: 1-9 associates

ii. Medium: 10-24 associates

iii. Large: 25 + associates

**THE WINNERS:** Special recognition will be given to all successful offices by the Florida Association of REALTORS®. A certificate of appreciation will be presented by a representative of FAR and awards will be presented for most dollars raised.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
WHO TO CALL FOR HELP

RPAC Chairman ___________________________ Phone # ___________________________.

Political Representative _________________________ Phone # ___________________________.

**MEET THE RPAC BROKER CHALLENGE!**

**YOU CAN BE 100% IN 2009!**

The Non-Event Event

The “non-event” fund-raising idea is one of simplicity and humor. It is one of the easiest methods to raise contributions for RPAC, eliminating the time and effort involved in planning an event.

The “non-event” idea merely involves the direct mailing of a letter to all local REALTOR® members in order to solicit donations for RPAC. The content of the letter, however, should be attention getting. For example:

> Dear REALTOR® Rick,

> The Faulkner County Board of REALTORS® cordially does NOT invite you to attend its upcoming RPAC event. Instead, however, this letter officially serves as our RPAC event of the year.

> This year we will not be putting on the typical “pounds for progress” dinner and dance. We’ll be direct and ask for your “pounds” in the British sense (all of which will be transferred into American dollars).

> Etc., etc., etc...

> Sincerely,

> Broker Bob

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
Things to remember to have a successful Non-Event Event

I. The costs you incur consist of letterhead, envelopes, postage and mailing labels.
II. You are urged to enclose a postage paid return envelope along with your letter.
III. It is also recommended that this idea be followed up with a telephone blitz. If you opt to use the “non-event” letter first, be sure to revise your telephone script.
IV. Have a beginning (preparation) date and an end (goal reached/last call made) date as if this were an actual event.

Random Special Event Planning Tips

I. Always be prepared to let contributors know exactly how much of what they pay is going to RPAC and how much goes toward expenses.
II. Have you checked the calendar to be sure you are not in conflict with other events?
III. You might be able to get free rooms thrown in if the catering department of a hotel is not willing to give you a break on the price of food. Some hotels provide free rooms for celebrities in exchange for photos of the stars at the hotel!
IV. Don’t forget to budget for gratuities.
V. Save money by having someone do the layout/typesetting on a home or office computer for your posters, etc.
VI. If at all possible, DO NOT give out free tickets.
VII. Don’t forget to “sell” advertising in your program, flier, etc.
VIII. Add “income boosters” to every planned event, whether a bake sale, supplies, tickets to future events, etc.
IX. Be sure to plan far enough ahead to give FAR Leadership, and possibly local officials, time to put it on their busy schedule.
X. Always, always, always get everything in writing.
XI. It may be easier to get a lower price from vendors if you are planning more than one event per year or could tie into other events.
XII. Be specific in what you will give the underwriting company or sponsor in exchange for support: Tickets? Banner? Name in program? Put it in writing.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
XIII. If you are in charge, make sure all vendors know that you are the only person authorized to make financial commitments for the event.

XIV. Make sure your signage is visible. Table signs disappear when crowds appear.

XV. A good time to enlist committee member volunteers for your next event is at the “wrap party” for your current event.

XVI. Evaluate the success of your event on several levels. Financial results are good, but there are many other ways to determine if your time and efforts were well spent.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
**Processing Contributions & Following the Rules**

When money is received by a Board/Association it must be recorded and accounted for as required by the election laws of Florida in the following manner:

*All checks must be made out to RPAC*, (Not the Board/Association or any other party). Funds must be broken down into Corporate and Non-Corporate funds. Non-Corporate Funds or Hard Dollars: Money from a REALTOR® Member. Corporate Funds or Soft Dollars: Money from any incorporated business, Board/Association or individual non-member.

The following information is required by Florida Election Law for all RPAC contributions: *(including money raised through an “event”)*

I. License number of contributor
II. Name
III. Address
IV. Business Name
V. Whether the contribution is corporate or non corporate
VI. Occupation of contributor (if contribution is over $100)
VII. Amount of contribution
VIII. Whether the contribution is cash or a check (Cashiers checks and cash for amounts over $100 are prohibited by law)

Federal election law requires contributions to be deposited in the RPAC-Florida account at FAR in Orlando as follows:

*$50 and over - within 10 days*

*under $50 - within 30 days.*

*If funds are remitted after the deadline they cannot be sent to National RPAC and may be returned to the local Board/Association.* In this case, NO ONE receives benefit from the RPAC contribution.

The political fund-raising season is year round. However, the *deadline* for funds to be received by FAR Orlando is on, or before, *December 11th.*

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
RPAC Distribution

The following charts show examples of how RPAC money is distributed before the local association reaches its goal for the year:

Example: A contribution of $1000.00 is made before reaching goal

NAR – RPAC Receives - $300.00 = 30%

FAR – RPAC Receives - $450.00 = 45%

Local RPAC Receives - $250.00 = 25%

$1000.00 = 100%
The following charts show examples of how RPAC money is distributed after the local association reaches its goal for the year:

Example: A contribution of $1000.00 is made after reaching goal

NAR – RPAC Receives - $300.00 = 30%
FAR – RPAC Receives - $200.00 = 20%
Local RPAC Receives - $500.00 = 50%

$1000.00 =100%

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
RPAC Fundraising and the Law

The RPAC fundraising activities discussed in this manual raise important legal considerations. This section briefly outlines important guidelines to follow in order to collect RPAC funds in the most legal and ethical way possible.

Who can be solicited? (the solicitable class)

Federal election law limits the class of individuals who can be solicited to association members (including affiliate members), and the executive and administrative personnel of NAR, state and local associations, and the families of any of them. Individuals not in this “restricted class” regardless of their relationship with the association can not be solicited for RPAC in any way or at any time.

Contribution Notices

Political action committees such as RPAC are prohibited from obtaining contributions based on threats of physical force, employment discrimination, financial reprisal, or by allocating to the PAC a portion of dues, fees or other monies required as a condition of membership in the sponsoring organization. As prescribed earlier in this manual, federal election law requires that all written RPAC solicitation materials include a disclosure outlining the terms of an RPAC contribution.

Prohibited Contributions

Federal election law and National RPAC Trustee policy prohibits certain contributions. These contributions are:

I. Contributions made in the name of another
II. Cash contributions over $100
III. Anonymous contributions regardless of amount
IV. Contributions from members providing goods or services under contract to the federal government
V. Contributions from foreign nationals

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
Illegal Lotteries and Raffles

Florida law prohibits certain types of raffles, sweepstakes and lotteries for all fundraising purposes (political, charitable or others). There are three elements to an illegal lottery in Florida. A contest becomes legal when any one of these elements is removed. They are:

I. Chance – A random winner is designated with no determining skill or talent dictating the outcome.
II. Consideration – A fee paid to enter the contest.
III. Prize – A reward of value.

The easiest way to eliminate one of these elements is to provide free entries into the contest. For example if you were conducting a contest for a television set and wanted to sell entries for a drawing, you could make this contest legal by providing the opportunity for free entries. This “No Purchase Necessary” clause must be adequately noticed ahead of time. In other words, you could not announce at your general membership meeting that those not in attendance can simply include their business card in the drawing.

Another way of making your contest legal is to make a display of skill or talent a requirement for entry. For example, Realtors® at a general membership meeting could apply their skill and expertise to a very simplistic version of a CMA, and identify a price range of a particular house. Successfully completing this task could be a legal requirement for entering the contest.

As currently governed by Florida law, 50/50 raffles are not legal fundraising vehicles.

Ask Before you Act!

Compliance with federal and state laws governing the election process is not difficult, but does have certain technicalities and complexities associated with the process. Adherence to these legal requirements can be accomplished and fundraising efforts, activities and events can be conducted efficiently and successfully by gaining an understanding of the rules and requirements.
**Fundraising Tools**

FAR has available for your use many fundraising tools to help you raise your RPAC goal. These tools are available to all RPAC volunteers at no charge.

I. RPAC brochures  
II. Contribution envelopes  
III. A six minute RPAC video presentation  
IV. Fund raising templates, which include an auction, phone-a-thon, golf and bowling tournaments, broker challenges and letters of solicitation.  
V. RPAC Calendars  
VI. RPAC buttons and ribbons  
VII. RPAC balloons  
VIII. Promotional items such as coffee mugs, key chains, portfolios, tote bags, etc.  
IX. RPAC Auction paddles  
X. Pledge forms  
XI. RPAC banners  
XII. RPAC trade show booth

**Administrative Support**

A full-time Political Coordinator is employed by FAR’s Public Policy Office in Tallahassee. RPAC fundraising is the primary area of responsibility for this person. Assistance is available to all Boards/Associations across the state to provide as much support as possible to make your political fundraising campaign a success.

**Call the Tallahassee Office at 850-224-1400 or you may email:**

Jack Greacen – Political Representative – [JackG@far.org](mailto:JackG@far.org)

Or

Amy Glover – Political Activities Coordinator – [AmyG@far.org](mailto:AmyG@far.org)

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
SAMPLE SOLICITATION LETTER

Dear

Public officials make decisions daily that affect every aspect of your life including your ability to do business and be successful in the real estate industry. All over the U.S., at the state and local level, transfer taxes, taxes on commissions, impact fees, no growth restrictions, down-zoning and even sign ordinances threaten to sharply interfere with an individual’s right to buy, use and transfer private property.

The Florida REALTORS® Political Action Committee is a voluntary, non-profit group whose membership consists of REALTORS®, their associates, affiliates and others interested in real estate. RPAC was formed because the real estate profession needed an organization through which its members could participate effectively in public affairs. RPAC’s role is to provide its members with the means for concerted political action. The money contributed through RPAC is used to provide support for governmental leaders campaigning for election who are favorable to real estate issues.

What has RPAC done for you lately?

- It was the unified voice of Florida REALTORS® that helped defeat a proposed transfer tax that would have added over $700 to the cost of the average home in Florida, a cost that would have priced over 13,000 Floridians out of the market of the American Dream.
- What would 6 percent of your commissions cost you? Had a bill passed to enact a Sales Tax on Services in either 2002, 2003, or 2004, REALTORS® would have been responsible for paying this. You do the math.
- Each member saved $260 due to the defeat of a proposal to treat REALTORS® as employees under the Workers Compensation Act.
- If the Documentary Stamp tax increase had passed, the cost of purchasing homes in Florida would have increased by approximately $103.5 million.

Consider your contribution to RPAC as an annual political insurance premium. You are making the most affordable investment possible to ensure the election of candidates who will vote the way you would, and you’ll be protecting your interests and profession.

Please send in your contribution today or respond generously to the volunteer who calls you during a fundraising campaign. Remember, your freedom to do business depends on your ability to influence the course of legislation!

Sincerely,

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
SAMPLE SOLICITATION LETTER TO PAST CONTRIBUTORS

Dear

Your voice was heard! When you contributed to the REALTORS® Political Action Committee in 2004, you joined thousands of informed, active members who wanted a say in governmental decisions affecting our industry.

During recent Legislative sessions, our voice, represented by RPAC, was successful in the following areas:

- **Passed** Chapter 475 Modernization. For the first time in 76 years a comprehensive change in Chapter 475, the section in Florida’s statutes that regulates how Real Estate Professionals do business was passed. These sweeping changes allow REALTORS® to compete in the marketplace in the new millennium.

- **Defeated** a proposed transfer tax that would have added $756.00 to the cost of the average home in Florida. Had the bill passed, 13,160 Floridians would have been priced out of the market of the American Dream.

- **Defeated** a proposed tax on services that would have cost you 6% tax on your commissions. You do the math!

- **Passed** legislation that limited the windstorm insurance rate increase to 10 percent – a substantial reduction from the 40 percent increase expected by affected homeowners.

The job is not over! Your continued support in the form of contributions to RPAC helps elect candidates who represent your interests as a REALTOR® and everyone’s private property rights. Your support also enables your representatives at FAR to bring your issues to the attention of legislators.

Your past support is greatly appreciated. It is now time to renew your commitment. Supporting RPAC means protecting your rights to do business as a REALTOR®. Please send your $99 RPAC contribution today. In this election year, your support means more than ever.

Sincerely,

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
SAMPLE SPEECH: Lets Talk RPAC

A prominent legislative leader recently said that “people see politics as something that happens far away, run by people that look nothing like them, talk nothing like them, and are talking about issues that have nothing to do with them.”

This is an image that is unfortunately difficult to break, but I can say with confidence that your interest and presence here today, as a member of the Florida Association of REALTORS®, is a step towards making the world of politics smaller and smaller for our Association.

If you were to walk up to any member of our Association and ask them, “What issues truly affect what you do, or what would make your job easier?”, most of them usually have quite a lot to say. You would hear about increased regulations on our trade, how taxes and insurance affect your ability to sell homes, how the housing market pushes our entire economy, and how REALTOR® fight for the “American Dream.”

What is important for you to note is that elected officials at the local and state level have a say in what the direction these issues go. They can go your way or they can go another, but your involvement, your effort, and your voice as a REALTOR® can help steer the path.

There is, however, a certain reality we must confront while discussing these issues. It is easy to TALK about what you want, and what’s wrong with government. And it’s another thing to TAKE ACTION.

The REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) is your first and easiest step towards involvement and ensuring that the REALTOR® voice projects loudly in your community and in Tallahassee. Your contributions go to candidates and issues that make your job easier, advance our trade, and ensure that the Florida Association of REALTORS® has a seat at the table when policy leaders and elected officials sit down to make decisions.

With 150,000 REALTORS® in Florida you represent the largest trade association within the state. With the help of RPAC, you have a powerful voice but that voice depends upon your continued support both financially and as a representative of your association.

Our continued success depends on the support and interest of our members. Are you ready to take your seat at the table?

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit www.floridarealtorspac.org
Contributor Recognition Programs

The state RPAC Committee has established several recognition programs. They are:

**99 Club Member**: This designation is for a contributor who donates $99 within one year. A pin is sent to the local Board/Association office for presentation.

**Capitol Club Member**: This designation is for a contributor who donates $250 within one year. A plaque and pin are sent to the local Board/Association for presentation. For each subsequent year in which a minimum of $250 is donated, the member receives a current year disc to affix to their plaque. This designates a member as **Capitol Club Continued**.

**Gold Sustaining Member**: This designation is for a contributor who donates $99 ten times consecutively within a ten-year period or $1,000 within a ten-year period. A plaque and pin are sent to the Board/Association for presentation.

**Statesman’s Award Member**: This designation is for a contributor who donates $500 within one year. A plaque and pin are sent to the local Board/Association for presentation. For each subsequent year in which a minimum of $250 is donated, the member receives a current year disc to affix to their plaque.

**Sterling R Member**: An individual who contributes $1,000 within a calendar year. The Sterling R member receives a Sterling R plaque and Sterling R pin. The plaque is mailed to the District RPAC Trustee who arranges for the presentation and the pin is mailed directly to the member. A contribution of $1,000 annually sustains a Sterling R membership. **This is an NAR recognition level**.

**Crystal R Member**: An individual who contributes $2,500 within a calendar year. The Crystal R member receives a crystal statuette and a Crystal R pin. The statuette is mailed to the District RPAC Trustee who arranges for the presentation and the pin is mailed directly to the member. A contribution of $1,500.00 annually sustains a Crystal R membership. **This is an NAR recognition level**.

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
**Golden R Member**: An individual who contributes $5,000 within a calendar year. The Golden R member receives a golden statuette and Golden R pin. The statuette is mailed to the District RPAC Trustee who arranges for presentation and the pin is mailed directly to the member. A contribution of $2,000.00 annually sustains a Golden R membership. *This is an NAR recognition level.*

**Hall of Fame Member**: An individual who contributes at least $25,000 throughout their lifetime. The Hall of Fame member receives an engraved plaque to be placed on the rooftop of the NAR D.C. office. *This is an NAR recognition level.*
**Board/Association and Chairman Recognition**

**RPAC Chairman Award:** RPAC Chairmen are recognized for outstanding leadership and tireless commitment in reaching their Board/Association fair share goal. A plaque is sent to the District RPAC Trustee for presentation. Local Boards/Associations that have reached their RPAC goal are recognized each year in January during the FAR Mid-Winter Meeting.

**RPAC Chairman of the Year “Jo M. Wright Memorial” Award:** Recognition for outstanding leadership as RPAC Chairman of the Year is given during the RPAC Jamboree. A plaque is presented to an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and success in raising RPAC funds and awareness. Towards the end of each fundraising year, current RPAC Trustees will be asked to nominate chairmen from their district to receive this award.

**RPAC Lifetime Achievement Award:** As “RPAC Chairman of the Year” recognizes the individual who has exemplified tireless leadership in a given year, the Lifetime Achievement Award is given to the individual who has a track record of meeting or exceeding their goals and raising RPAC awareness. This is given to the member whose performance may not stand out in a given year, but in the long run proves to be the basis for RPAC’s longevity and strength. This award may not necessarily be given out each year.

**Gold Star Award:** A plaque is awarded to the Board/Association the first year goal is met or exceeded. A nameplate to be affixed to the plaque will be engraved with the local RPAC Chairman’s name and presented for each subsequent year the goal is met.

**First to Reach Goal Award:** A plaque is presented to the Board/Association for being the first to achieve its fair share goal during the year. This award is presented at the RPAC Jamboree.

*The following awards are also presented at the RPAC Jamboree in each board category small, medium, large, and mega:*

I. **Board/Association 1st to reach goal**
II. **Board/Association with the Highest Percentage of Goal**
III. **Board/Association with Highest Percentage of Goal by District**  
   (This award is presented to RPAC Trustee of the district)
IV. **Board/Association with the Highest Total Cash**

For more information on the REALTORS®-PAC please visit [www.floridarealtorspac.org](http://www.floridarealtorspac.org)
Friends of RPAC

The Florida Association of Realtors RPAC Trustees have created a program designed to recognize the many members, affiliates, and friends of the Realtors Political Action Committee who make it possible to hold successful fundraisers around the state. The Friends of RPAC program is designed to acknowledge financial commitment at four different levels:

I. Ruby ($250)
II. Sapphire ($500)
III. Diamond ($1,000)
IV. Platinum ($2,500 and above)

In some instances affiliates or members donate auction items, contribute weekend vacation packages, or underwrite golf tournaments without seeing their generosity directly translate into a contribution to RPAC. Remember, corporate contributions often pay for the expenses of a fundraising event, rather than being an RPAC contribution. “Friends of RPAC” will help rectify this problem by properly recognizing RPAC supporters. FAR will rely on the local boards to submit proof of a financial contribution for the fundraising event. Plaques designating the level of achievement will then be ordered and sent to the local board for an appropriate recognition ceremony. For more information on the Friends of RPAC program call FAR at (850) 224-1400 or email Amy Glover, Political Activities Coordinator, amyg@far.org.
RPAC Uses

Candidate Screening

During an election year, the Political or Governmental Affairs Committee of your local Board/Association should conduct candidate screenings. This program is carried out when there are two or more viable candidates running for the same office, whether on the local or state level.

After panel members are selected and trained, they conduct the interviews, asking questions relevant to private property rights and the real estate industry. Sample questions for legislative and statewide candidates are available from FAR. The candidates are then scored on a numerical basis. Training sessions are provided by FAR upon request. Contact the FAR Office of Public Policy at 850/224-1400.

Before becoming final, selections of the screening panel must be approved by the directors of your Board/Association. Once the board of directors approves the panel’s recommendations, the candidate should be notified in writing that they are being recommended or supported for election/re-election. Names of the recommended candidates should then be published in the Board’s/Association’s newsletter announcing the recommendation to its membership.

Once approved by the local board of directors, the Board’s/Association’s recommendation for funding should be sent to the District RPAC Trustee from your Board/Association President. The District RPAC Trustee, in turn, presents your request for funding of state and federal candidates before the state RPAC Committee during a ‘funding session’. Funding sessions are held several times throughout the election cycle. City and county candidate requests require only the signature of the Board/Association President and approval of the District RPAC Trustee.

The state RPAC Committee determines which candidates are qualified for financial support by examining the following areas: a) the candidate’s real estate and business philosophy; b) past action taken on issues; c) the degree of experience and electability. In the case of an incumbent, voting history and committee seniority are also considered.

Remember: Local Board/Association recommendations are only one of several sources of information used by the state RPAC Committee in deciding which candidates at the state
level will be funded. Local recommendations should in no way be considered a guarantee for funding at the state level.

Candidate Funding

Federal Candidates
The state RPAC Committee considers requests for support of federal candidates from all applicable Boards/Associations. The state committee in turn makes recommendations to the National RPAC Committee members. National RPAC will not consider direct requests from a local Board/Association on a federal candidate; requests must come through your state RPAC Committee.

A check for a federal candidate is mailed from National RPAC directly to FAR’s Tallahassee office. Tallahassee then distributes the check to the appropriate Federal District Coordinator (FDC), Federal Senate Coordinator (FSC) or RPAC Trustee. This individual is responsible for coordinating delivery, making certain that all Boards/Associations in the candidate's area are invited to participate in the presentation.

The state RPAC Committee considers each state and national race. Using the appropriate forms, every Board/Association should screen and make recommendations for candidate funding before each primary and if necessary, before each general election. Contact the FAR Governmental Affairs office in Tallahassee for guidance on screening congressional races. Without this formal input from the local Boards/Associations, a vital piece of information is missing from the Committees' decision-making process.

State Candidates
Local Boards/Associations should use the "Local Recommendations for State and Federal Candidates" form when recommending state and national candidates. This form should be completed, approved by the Board of Directors, signed by the Board/Association President and sent to your District RPAC Trustee before the deadline. An RPAC calendar listing deadlines is provided to each Board/Association at the beginning of an election year. Also send a copy of the local recommendation form to the FAR Governmental Affairs office in Tallahassee.

Checks for state office candidates are issued following the state RPAC Committee's funding session and are given to the appropriate Trustee. The Trustee then contacts the appropriate

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Board/Association and arranges a time for presentation of the check with the local Board/Association officials. The Key Contacts for incumbent legislators receiving RPAC checks should be involved in the check presentations.

Local Candidates

When requesting funding for a candidate for local office, complete the "Contribution Request for Local Elections" form and send it to your District RPAC Trustee. After approval, the form is sent to FAR in Orlando. The request is normally granted as long as funds are available in the Board’s/Association’s local account and the request is within the legal limit.

Boards/Associations that have local candidates in common are encouraged to cooperate on candidate screening and funding requests since the legal limit is $500 per election (first primary, second primary and general election), from each committee: RPAC I and RPAC II. In other words, you may request up to $500 from RPAC I and $500 from RPAC II for local candidates.

All requests for local funds must be made through your district RPAC Trustee.

Checks for local candidates are sent from the Orlando FAR office to the Board/Association indicated on the request form. Local fund requests must be made to the District RPAC Trustee who approves requests and sends it to FAR in Orlando at (407) 438-1411, at least 10 days before the Board/Association expects the check. Local leadership is then responsible for delivering the checks to local candidates.

All checks must be made out to the Candidate's Campaign Fund. Florida election law requires that checks must be received by the Candidate and deposited 5 days prior to the election. Generally, the close of business on the Thursday before a Tuesday election is the last day candidates can accept contributions.

Advance Funding

RPAC Florida meets prior to the beginning of the legislative session each election year to decide on the contribution of funds to those current candidates who have a strong record of supporting REALTORS®. Advance funding of candidates who have pre-qualified for public office is necessary to show early support for friends of FAR. The conditions that determine if an incumbent is eligible for advance funding are as follows: The candidate must be legislative

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leadership, an announced candidate for leadership, a key committee chairman or vice chairman in the Florida Legislature, or a sponsor or past sponsor of FAR proposed legislation or amendments. Boards/Associations are notified of the candidates being considered and are given fourteen (14) days to make written recommendations to RPAC Florida. RPAC Florida then considers Board/Association input before making the final advance funding decisions.

*It is vitally important that Boards/Associations respond to the request for input on advanced funding. Without a response, your voice simply will NOT BE HEARD.*

**Notification**

The state RPAC committee notifies local Boards/Associations as soon as possible of all funding decisions on the state and federal level. This not only helps keep everyone fully informed, but it also lets local REALTORS® know which candidates RPAC is recommending. Local Board/Association members are encouraged to help the campaign efforts of those candidates.

**Distributing Contributions to Candidates**

The method of distributing a contribution check to a candidate varies, depending on whether it is for a national, state or local race. At all three levels, however, it is vital to deliver the check to the candidate as quickly as possible. State and local candidates must deposit the check five days prior to an election. If delivery must be delayed for a presentation ceremony, tell the candidate when they may expect the check and its amount.

Maximize the contribution by letting them plan for its use as early as possible. A presentation ceremony can be held using a *dummy* check while the real one is already working for the candidate. Use this opportunity to take pictures with your candidates and your Board leadership. Do everything you can to make sure the candidate knows that REALTOR® support means much more than an RPAC check. The following individuals should be invited to participate in the check presentation ceremony: Key Contact, RPAC Chairman, Board/Association leadership and Government Affairs Committee Chairman.

After presenting a check to a state or national candidate, please complete the "*Contribution Presentation Analysis*" form and send it to the Tallahassee Governmental Affairs office to verify the presentation.
Local RPAC Funds for Education/Training

Boards/Associations may use local RPAC funds for certain education/training purposes permitted under the state election laws. **However, use of these funds for education or training purposes reduces the amount available for local candidates.** The following guidelines and procedures have been established:

**Education**

Types of education include:

I. Board/Association Candidate Screening Sessions.

II. Non-partisan campaign and political training for members conducted by a Board/Association.

III. Voter registration drives among the members of a Board/Association.

IV. Meet the candidate events, political forums or meetings/receptions sponsored by a local Board/Association for the purpose of building rapport with elected officials. **Florida election law requires that all candidates be invited to an event or forum so that the expenditure is not deemed to be a contribution to any one candidate or group of candidates.** “All candidates” means all candidates appearing on the ballot or running for a particular office in a particular city/county. **No lobbying may take place at these events.**

V. Election activities that are only focused on the internal notification (inside the association, not the public) of RPAC supported candidates.

It has been determined that expenses for attending “Legislative Day” are not permitted to be paid out of RPAC funds under the election laws since that is considered a lobbying activity.

**Training**

Expenses for local RPAC Chair training include only travel and accommodations in accordance with FAR guidelines. No meals or incidentals are included.

If a hotel is designated as a training site, only the amount of the room rate for that hotel or less is reimbursable as a housing expense.

Training must be non-partisan.

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Training for local RPAC chairs is defined as either the special state, regional, or district FAR sponsored training session and does not include regularly scheduled FAR meetings or conventions, NAR meetings or training sessions.

**Fund Raising**

“Seed” money may be provided for fund-raising purposes in the form of matching funds (Board/Association funds matched by funds from the Board’s/Association’s local candidate funds). The amount is limited to $1,000.00. In the event a Board/Association has no funds for purposes of matching, a small “seed” money grant from RPAC-Florida will be considered. An appropriate up front expenditure for any fund-raising endeavor is 25 percent of the amount expected to be raised.

**Procedure**

*No expenses will be reimbursed if prior approval was not obtained.*

The application form, (see exhibit I), should be filled out by the Board/Association requesting such funds. The application must:

I. Be sent to the District Trustee for approval with a copy to the FAR

II. Governmental Affairs Office to insure compliance with Florida Election Laws and the established guidelines for use of local funds.

III. Outline the purpose and use of the funds in the form of a plan of action and budget.

IV. Be signed by the District RPAC Trustee and the Board/Association President.

(Boards/Associations should determine if additional approval within their organization is required.)

V. Include a copy of any planned advertising.

Checks may be made payable to the local Board/Association or to a vendor.

Funds must be spent within 60 days of receipt and a final report detailing how the funds were spent must be submitted to the FAR Governmental Affairs Office within 15 days following the conclusion of the project, event or training session.

If you have questions, contact the FAR Office of Public Policy at 850-224-1400.

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RPAC FUNDS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING EXAMPLES

Gainesville-Alachua County Board - $2,500.00 for a Meet and Greet the Candidates function.

Orlando Regional Realtor Assn. - $1,500.00 for Orange County Republican Executive Committee fundraiser.

Pinellas Suncoast Assn. - $2,500.00 for annual event for members to meet local, state and federal elected officials.

R. A. of the Palm Beaches - $350.00 for Palm Beach County Get Out the Vote drive.

Pensacola Assn. - $458.08 for appreciation brunch for local and county elected officials.

Sanibel & Captiva Islands Assn. - $5,000.00 – for political/governmental education to be provided to all members.

Naples Area Board - $500.00 – for “Politics in the Park” luncheon.

R.A. of the Palm Beaches - $1,650.00 – for annual black tie gala for county elected officials.

Chipola Area Board - $300.00 – for Lincoln Day dinner.

Cape Coral Assn. - $1,000.00 – for Legislative appreciation reception with local elected officials.

Greater Tampa Assn. of Realtors - $900.00 – for District Legislative breakfast.

R.A. of the Palm Beaches - $5,000.00 – for Palm Beach County Days.

Jupiter-Tequesta-Hobe Sound Assn. - $25.00 – for membership to BACPAC, a local chamber business and community political action committee.

R.A. of Greater Miami & the Beaches - $1,000.00 – seed money for RPAC auction.

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Issues Funding

Issues Mobilization

Decisions and regulations affecting the Florida real estate industry and its REALTORS® are made daily at the local and state levels. Many of these directly impact how you'll conduct business today and in the future, so it's essential that REALTORS® be informed and involved.

Local issue mobilization campaigns are needed to bring REALTOR® viewpoints and perspectives to the general public and its leaders in order to positively influence public opinion and public policy.

Identifying, planning and implementing these crucial local campaigns is the role of the local Issues Each year the state RPAC Committee determines the percentage of funds raised through RPAC that will be designated for issues. These funds are taken from RPAC and deposited into a separate bank account for the REALTORS® Political Issues Committee (RPIC). Up to 25 percent of RPAC's previous year’s income can be spent for state and local issues according to Florida election law.

For local issues, a portion of those funds from RPAC is divided among all local Boards/Associations based on their RPAC contributions the previous year. This amount is listed separately on the RPAC report. Local Issues funds continue to accrue each calendar year for issues use. Florida law prevents the transfer of funds from local issues back to the local candidate fund once they have been transferred to issues.

If you feel a local issue has statewide implications, you may request additional state issues funding. The FAR President and Legislative Leadership Team reviews statewide funding requests. The President, however, makes the final decision.

Requesting Funds

Local Issues Mobilization or Government Affairs committees identify local issues, design action plans and budgets, and obtain approval from the Board’s/Association’s Board of Directors for the funding request.

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The "RPIC Funding Request Form", filled out in its entirety, is then submitted to the FAR Issues Mobilization Task Force through the Tallahassee office for further consideration and action. In addition to the form, all advertisements pertaining to the issue should be submitted with the request. For ballot issues, checks must be written directly to the vendor or a political committee, not to a Board/Association.

Once funding is approved and the money received, a follow-up report must be submitted to the FAR Issues Mobilization Task Force within 30 days of receiving funding and a final report should be filed after the issue is resolved. Local Boards/Associations are not eligible for additional funds until the final report is received.

LOCAL ISSUE CAMPAIGN EXAMPLES

Realtor Assn. of Greater Fort Myers & the Beach - $3,000.00 paid to Go Play Cape PAC for the City of Cape Coral to form a PAC to oppose new taxes and spending.

Cape Coral Assn. of Realtors - $3,000.00 paid to Go Play Cape PAC for the City of Cape Coral to form a PAC to oppose new taxes and spending.

Northeast Florida Assn. - $5,000.00 paid to Citizens for Quality Clay County Schools for a referendum to support a local half-cent sales tax increase to benefit Clay County schools.

Gainesville-Alachua County Assn. of Realtors - $2,500.00 paid to Repair our Wetlands to support preservation of wetlands within the boundaries of the City of Gainesville.

Greater Lake County Assn. - $1,500.00 paid to Trust for Public Land to support a land acquisition program for Lake County.