

The Formal Restitution Request: A Guide for Political Donors

How to Get a Refund on Your Campaign Contribution

Can you get a refund for your campaign contribution? The short answer is maybe. Campaign contributions are generally not intended to be refunded, but refunds may be possible in some circumstances. Because there is no universal hub or resource for refund information across local, state, and federal levels, requesting a refund will require some personal effort and research.

Requirements and processes vary considerably, and refunds are not guaranteed. While fundraising platforms generally only honor refunds for technical errors—such as accidental duplicate donations or incorrect amounts—they often cannot issue refunds for a change in political stance or personal opinion.

Quick Start Guide: Taking Action on Your Request

1. **Understand the Realities:** Refunds are typically reserved for technical errors rather than changes in opinion. Submitting a request for a "change of heart," however, can serve as a powerful personal statement of accountability, even if a financial return is difficult to secure.
 2. **Gather Necessary Documentation:** Use the worksheet provided below to organize your data. Campaigns often require specific contribution details and proof of transaction, such as receipts or bank statements.
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This document is a standalone tool. For those interested in additional tools and the sociological and strategic context of accountability in modern politics, Dr. DaShanne Stokes is hosting an educational webinar series: **Logistics for Fighting Back**. For more information, please scan the QR code at right or visit dashannestokes.com/speaking-series.html



3. **Locate the Correct Contact:** Research the specific organization or candidate. You can find contact information for your elected officials at:

General Official Search: [USA.gov/elected-officials](https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials)

U.S. Senate: [Senate.gov contact page](https://www.senate.gov/contact)

U.S. House: [House.gov representative finder](https://www.house.gov/representative-finder)

4. **Act Within the Time Limit:** Refunds for errors must often be requested within a specific window of time, which varies by state and organization.
5. **Customize and Send:** Use the template provided at the end of this document to draft your formal request.

Preparation Worksheet

Use this tool to collect the details needed before sending your request.

Three Tips Before Starting:

1. **Do Your Homework:** Research the specific campaign's refund policy first; some have strict forms that take precedence.
2. **Locate Your Target:** Ensure you are sending the request to the correct office and address.
3. **Keep a Paper Trail:** Always attach a copy of your original receipt or bank statement.

Contribution Details:

Reason for Request (e.g., Error, Legal Limit, Change of Heart): _____

Name of Candidate: _____

Method of Payment (e.g., Credit Card, Check): _____

Date and Time of Donation: _____

Contribution Amount: \$ _____

Donor Information:

Full Name: _____

Residence Address: _____

Voter Registration Number: _____

The Formal Restitution Request: Template

Notice: This template is for educational purposes and does not constitute legal or financial advice.

To: [Name of Candidate or Campaign Committee] **Attn:** Treasurer / Campaign Finance Department
Date: [Current Date]

RE: FORMAL REQUEST FOR CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION RESTITUTION

To the [Candidate Name] Campaign,

I am writing to formally request a refund of the campaign contribution(s) I previously made.

Contribution Details:

Donor Name: [Your Full Name]

Date and Time of Donation: [Date/Time]

Contribution Amount: \$[Amount]

Method of Payment/Source: [e.g., Credit Card via Website URL]

Reason for Restitution Request (Select one):

- ☐ **Breach of Trust:** I am seeking a refund because of a fundamental shift in the candidate's platform regarding [Issue]. While I understand refunds are not guaranteed for changes in opinion, I am submitting this to document my formal withdrawal of financial support and request moral restitution.
- ☐ **Administrative/Technical Error:** This donation was made in error (e.g., accidental duplicate, incorrect amount).
- ☐ **Legal Compliance:** This contribution exceeds the legal limit for this election cycle.

Donor Verification:

Voter Registration Number: [Number]

Residential Address: [Street, City, State, Zip]

Contact Information: [Phone and Email]

Please provide a written response regarding the status of this refund and any specific local procedures I must follow to complete this process.

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

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