

## **Election Crimes and Civil Penalties in Minnesota**

This publication lists the crimes and civil penalties for violating the state's election laws. The list includes violations of the law by a voter, candidate, or election official in the conduct of a campaign or an election.

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Minnesota law regulates the way state and local elections are administered and conducted, including voting, campaigning, and the financing of campaigns. In general, laws related to election administration and voting are contained in [Minnesota Statutes, chapters 200 to 209](#); the conduct of campaigns is regulated in [chapter 211B](#); and [chapter 10A](#) and [211A](#) govern state and local campaign finance issues. Some topics are further regulated through administrative rules. Violation of the law can result in civil and criminal penalties. This information brief lists those penalties.

The tables in this publication are organized into three topics:

- election administration and voting procedures (page 4)
- fair campaign practices (page 12)
- campaign finance and public disclosure (page 16)

Each lists the applicable statutory citation, general topic, type of penalty, whether a statutory standard of intent is specified, the party that may be subject to the penalty, and either the full text of the statute or a brief summary of its contents. The statutory references are current through the 2011 first special legislative session.

Only provisions that include a specific, unique penalty are included in this publication. However, other action prohibited by law may still carry a criminal penalty under [Minnesota Statutes, section 645.241](#), which specifies a misdemeanor penalty for all provisions of law that prohibit activity but do not otherwise specify a penalty. This default misdemeanor penalty does not apply to violations of [chapter 10A](#), related to campaign finance and public disclosure. Unless otherwise specified in a section of statute, a violation of [chapter 10A](#) is not a crime.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Minn. Stat. § 10A.34](#), subd. 3.

This publication does not include penalties that may exist for violation of federal election or campaign finance laws.

## Standards for Criminal Sentencing

The sentence that results from a conviction for a crime may vary depending on the severity of the offense, the criminal history of the offender, and other factors that a court may consider in imposing a sentence.<sup>2</sup> In general, however, Minnesota law provides the following standards for imposition of a criminal sentence following a conviction<sup>3</sup>:

Category	Maximum Fine	Period of Imprisonment
Petty Misdemeanor	\$300	Not permitted
Misdemeanor	\$1,000	No more than 90 days
Gross Misdemeanor	\$3,000	No more than one year
Felony	\$10,000*	More than one year, but no longer than five years*

\*These amounts are the default penalties for a felony offense, as specified in section 609.03. A greater fine or longer term of imprisonment may be provided in statute. There are no election-related offenses for which a penalty greater than five years' imprisonment is provided. One section of statute, section 211B.15 (regulating corporate activity in campaigns), does provide for a fine greater than \$10,000.

As with any criminal penalty, a conviction for an election-related crime may only occur if the violation is proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

A person convicted of a criminal offense may be subject to a fine, imprisonment, or both. The court may choose to stay (suspend) the imposition or execution of the sentence and instead require the convicted person to meet certain other conditions, such as placement on a term of probation or assignment to community service.

Depending on the nature and severity of the offense, the convicted person may also be ordered to pay restitution to any person or entity that suffers damage, including a government entity that incurs a loss as a direct result of a crime.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on these factors, see “Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines and Commentary,” adopted by the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission, accessed on July 7, 2011, <http://www.msgc.state.mn.us/guidelines/guide10.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> [Minn. Stat. §§ 609.02; 609.03](#).

<sup>4</sup> [Minn. Stat. § 609.10](#), subd. 2.

## Civil Penalties

In addition to criminal penalties, the tables included in this publication list instances where a violation of the law permits the imposition of a civil penalty. A civil penalty is a fine levied up to a specified maximum amount authorized in the statute. In some cases, both a criminal penalty and civil penalty are available for the same violation. In order for a civil penalty to be imposed, authorization for the penalty must be provided to a unit of government through law.

Chapter 10A authorizes the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board to impose a civil penalty for a variety of types of violations of that chapter. A more general authorization to impose a civil penalty is provided to the Office of Administrative Hearings, related to complaints of violations of [chapter 211A](#) (local campaign finance regulations) and [chapter 211B](#) (fair campaign practices).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) has adopted a rubric for use in determining the amount of a civil penalty to be imposed, based on the willfulness of the action and the gravity of the violation. The full rubric can be found on the OAH website, accessed on July 7, 2011, <http://mn.gov/oah/administrative-law/filing/fair-campaign/process/index.jsp>.

Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
<b>Election Administration and Voting Procedures</b>					
201.014, subd. 3	Eligibility to vote	Felony	Knowingly	Any individual	“Any individual who votes who knowingly is not eligible to vote is guilty of a felony.”
201.016, subd. 1a, para. (c)	Voting in wrong precinct	Petty misdemeanor	Not specified	Voter	Penalty applies on first offense after receiving notice of violation for voting in the wrong precinct; affirmative defense if voter relied on inaccurate information provided by a municipality, county, or the state
201.016, subd. 1a, para. (d)	Voting in wrong precinct	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Voter	Penalty applies if voter has previously been found guilty of the petty misdemeanor for voting in wrong precinct; affirmative defense if voter relied on inaccurate information provided by a municipality, county, or the state
201.054, subd. 2	Voter registration fraud	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual	“No individual shall intentionally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) cause or attempt to cause the individual’s name to be registered in any precinct if the individual is not eligible to vote;</li> <li>(b) cause or attempt to cause the individual’s name to be registered for the purpose of voting in more than one precinct;</li> <li>(c) misrepresent the individual’s identity when attempting to register to vote; or</li> <li>(d) aid, abet, counsel, or procure any other individual to violate this subdivision.”</li> </ul>

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201.054, subd. 3	Voter registration applications; compensation	Petty misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual	<p>“(a) No individual may be compensated for the solicitation, collection, or acceptance of voter registration applications from voters for submission to the secretary of state, a county auditor, or other local election official in a manner in which payment is calculated by multiplying (1) either a set or variable payment rate, by (2) the number of voter registration applications solicited, collected, or accepted.</p> <p>(b) No individual may be deprived of compensation or have compensation automatically reduced exclusively for failure to solicit, collect, or accept a minimum number of voter registration applications, and no individual may receive additional compensation for reaching or exceeding a minimum number of voter registration applications.”</p>
201.061, subd. 5	Voting by unregistered voter	Felony	Not specified	Election judge	An election judge may not receive a vote from a person not properly registered to vote
201.27, subd. 1	Falsifying or tampering with voter registration records	Felony	Intentionally	Election officials	<p>“No officer, deputy, clerk, or other employee shall intentionally:</p> <p>(1) fail to perform or enforce any of the provisions of this chapter except subdivision 2;</p> <p>(2) remove a registration application or record from its proper place in the registration files in a manner or for a purpose not authorized by law;</p> <p>(3) destroy or make an unauthorized change to a record required to be kept by this chapter; or</p> <p>(4) add a name or names to the voter registration files, records, or applications, except as authorized by law.”</p>

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201.27, subd. 2	Failure to report knowledge of falsification or tampering with voter registration records	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Local election officials	A local election official or a subordinate with knowledge or a reason to believe a violation of the laws governing voter registration has occurred must report that information to a designated official. County auditors and municipal and school district clerks must report the information to the county attorney and provide a copy of the report to the secretary of state.
201.27, subd. 3	Voter registration	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual	“An individual who intentionally violates any provision of this chapter [voter registration] is guilty of a felony, unless a different penalty is specifically provided by law.”
201.275	Prosecution of voter registration violations	Misdemeanor; forfeiture of office	Refusal or intentional failure	County attorney	The county attorney must investigate affidavits alleging a violation of voter registration laws and “shall” prosecute if probable cause exists; penalty applies upon refusal or intentional failure to perform these duties
202A.135	Attendance at party convention	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Employer	An employer must permit employee to be absent from work to serve as party officer or attend party convention
203B.03	Absentee voting	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual	“No individual shall intentionally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) make or sign any false certificate required by this chapter [absentee voting];</li> <li>(b) make any false or untrue statement in any application for absentee ballots;</li> <li>(c) apply for absentee ballots more than once in any election with the intent to cast an illegal ballot;</li> <li>(d) exhibit a ballot marked by that individual to any other</li> </ul>

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					individual; (e) do any act in violation of the provisions of this chapter for the purpose of casting an illegal vote in any precinct or for the purpose of aiding another to cast an illegal vote; (f) use information from absentee ballot materials or records for purposes unrelated to elections, political activities, or law enforcement; (g) provide assistance to an absentee voter except in the manner provided by <a href="#">section 204C.15</a> , subdivision 1; (h) solicit the vote of an absentee voter while in the immediate presence of the voter during the time the individual knows the absentee voter is voting; or (i) alter an absentee ballot application after it has been signed by the voter, except by an election official for administrative purposes.”
<a href="#">203B.08</a>	Tampering or delayed return of absentee ballot	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Designated agent of absentee voter	“Any person designated as an agent who tampers with either the return envelope or the voted ballots or does not immediately mail or deliver the return envelope to the county auditor or municipal clerk is guilty of a misdemeanor.”
<a href="#">204B.26</a>	Service as an election judge in violation of statutory qualifications and requirements	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Election judge	Election judges must comply with election judge qualifications, training requirements, appointment process, oath requirement, etc.

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204B.42	Sample ballots	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Local election officials	Sample ballots may not be printed on the same color paper as the official ballot, except when published in a newspaper
204B.43	Tampering with ballots or unauthorized distribution	Felony	Knowingly	Ballot printer	“Every person authorized or employed to print official ballots who knowingly gives or delivers those ballots to, or knowingly permits them to be taken by, any person other than the official under whose direction they are being printed, or who knowingly prints any ballot or causes or permits any ballot to be printed in a form other than that prescribed by law, or with any other names on it, or with the names of candidates or the titles of offices arranged or the names of candidates spelled in any way other than that authorized and directed by that official, is guilty of a felony.”
204C.04	Time off to vote	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Employer	Employees must be permitted time off to vote on election day; county attorney “shall” prosecute violations
204C.06, subd. 3	Damage or removal of election materials from polling place	Gross misdemeanor	Intentionally	Any individual	“No individual shall intentionally: (a) tear down, mutilate, deface, or otherwise damage during the hours of voting any voter instruction poster placed inside or outside of a polling place by an election judge or other election official; or (b) remove from the polling place before the time for voting ends any ballots prepared for use at the election or any supplies or conveniences placed in voting booths for use by the voters, except as authorized by law.”



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204C.06, subd. 4	Damage or removal of election materials from polling place	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual	“No individual shall intentionally: (a) remove from a polling place any election file or election register, except as authorized by law; (b) damage, deface, or mutilate any ballot, election file, or election register or any item of information contained on it, except as authorized by law; or (c) add anything to a ballot, election file, or election register, except as authorized by law.”
204C.06, subd. 7	Alcohol in polling place	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual	“During the time an election is being held it is a misdemeanor to bring intoxicating liquor or 3.2 percent malt liquor into a polling place, to drink intoxicating liquor or 3.2 percent malt liquor in a polling place, or to be intoxicated in a polling place.”
204C.07, subd. 5	Compilation of voter challenge lists on the basis of undeliverable mail	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Challengers and political parties	“Challengers and the political parties that appointed them must not compile lists of voters to challenge on the basis of mail sent by a political party that was returned as undeliverable or if receipt by the intended recipient was not acknowledged in the case of registered mail. This subdivision applies to any local, state, or national affiliate of a political party that has appointed challengers, as well as any subcontractors, vendors, or other individuals acting as agents on behalf of a political party.”
204C.08, subd. 1c	Display of flag in polling place	Compensation withheld	Intentionally	Election judges	The election judges in a polling place are required to display the American flag at the entrance to the polling place during voting hours. The election judges are prohibited from receiving compensation for any time during which they intentionally fail to display the flag as required.

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204C.12	Voter challenges	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Election judge	Election judges must perform duties related to voter eligibility challenges
204C.13	Voter challenges	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Election judge	Election judges must perform duties related to voter eligibility challenges
204C.14	Unlawful voting (voter fraud)	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual	<p>“No individual shall intentionally:</p> <p>(a) misrepresent the individual’s identity in applying for a ballot, depositing a ballot in a ballot box or attempting to vote by means of a voting machine or electronic voting system;</p> <p>(b) vote more than once at the same election;</p> <p>(c) put a ballot in a ballot box for any illegal purpose;</p> <p>(d) give more than one ballot of the same kind and color to an election judge to be placed in a ballot box;</p> <p>(e) aid, abet, counsel, or procure another to go into any precinct for the purpose of voting in that precinct, knowing that the other individual is not eligible to vote in that precinct; or</p> <p>(f) aid, abet, counsel, or procure another to do any act in violation of this section.”</p>
204C.16	Improperly marking a voter’s ballot or disclosing the voter’s votes	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Election judge or other individual	<p>“An election judge or other individual who marks the ballot of any voter, except as authorized by law and as directed by the voter, or who informs anyone other than the voter how the ballot was marked, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.”</p>

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204C.18, subd. 2	Identifying marks on ballot	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Voter, election judge, or other individual	“No voter, election judge, or other individual shall place at any time a mark as a means of identification upon any ballot handed to or cast by a voter or upon spoiled or discarded ballots, except the initials authorized by section 204C.09.”
204C.19, subd. 1	Touching or interfering with ballots during count	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual	“During the count no one except the election judges shall handle the ballots. Any other individual who touches or interferes with ballots during the counting or any election judge who permits such touching or interference is guilty of a misdemeanor.”
204C.29	Damaging election returns or preventing delivery	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual, including those appointed to make or receive delivery of election returns	“No individual who is appointed to carry a report, certificate, or certified copy of election returns shall intentionally mutilate, tear, deface, or obliterate any portion of it or do any act to prevent its delivery. No individual shall take or accept from a messenger any report, certificate, or certified copy of election returns with intent to prevent its delivery, or having taken or accepted it, shall mutilate, tear, deface, obliterate, or destroy any portion of it.”
204C.035, subd. 1	Deception regarding the time, place, or manner of an election or qualifications for voting	Gross misdemeanor	Knowingly, plus intent	Any person	“No person shall knowingly deceive another person regarding the time, place, or manner of conducting an election or the qualifications for or restrictions on voter eligibility for an election, with the intent to prevent the individual from voting in the election.”

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204C.41	Neglect of duty; fraud; corruption; misbehavior in conducting election	Felony	Intentionally	Election officer or other official mandated by law	“An election officer or other individual required by law to safely keep and produce ballots on election day or to perform any other act, who intentionally fails or refuses to perform the act required, or who is required by law to abstain from any act, and intentionally does the act, or who in either of these cases is guilty of fraud, corruption, partiality or misbehavior in conducting or aiding in the conduct of an election, or in counting or making returns of votes, or who wrongfully refuses to make or deliver a certificate of election, or who falsely or corruptly performs any required act, for which a punishment has not been otherwise expressly provided for by law, is guilty of a felony.”
206.66, subd. 1	Damaging or “injuring” a voting machine or electronic voting system	Felony	Intentionally	Any individual	“An individual who intentionally injures or attempts to injure or render ineffectual any component of an electronic voting system, or who violates any of the provisions of sections 206.55 to 206.90, is guilty of a felony.”
206.66, subd. 2	Electronic voting systems; violation of rules	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual	“An individual who violates any rules adopted by the secretary of state or by the governing body of a municipality where an electronic voting system is used, or who violates any of the provisions of sections 206.55 to 206.90, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.”
<b>Fair Campaign Practices</b>					
211B.04	Campaign material disclaimers	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	Campaign material prepared or disseminated by a person must include a disclaimer specifying the source of the material; certain exceptions apply

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211B.06, subd. 1	False campaign material	Gross misdemeanor	Intentionally	Any person	“A person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor who intentionally participates in the preparation, dissemination, or broadcast of paid political advertising or campaign material with respect to the personal or political character or acts of a candidate, or with respect to the effect of a ballot question, that is designed or tends to elect, injure, promote, or defeat a candidate for nomination or election to a public office or to promote or defeat a ballot question, that is false, and that the person knows is false or communicates to others with reckless disregard of whether it is false.”
211B.06, subd. 1	False campaign material; letters to the editor	Misdemeanor	Intentionally	Any person	“A person is guilty of a misdemeanor who intentionally participates in the drafting of a letter to the editor with respect to the personal or political character or acts of a candidate, or with respect to the effect of a ballot question, that is designed or tends to elect, injure, promote, or defeat any candidate for nomination or election to a public office or to promote or defeat a ballot question, that is false, and that the person knows is false or communicates to others with reckless disregard of whether it is false.”
211B.07	Undue influence on voters	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	“A person may not directly or indirectly use or threaten force, coercion, violence, restraint, damage, harm, loss, including loss of employment or economic reprisal, undue influence, or temporal or spiritual injury against an individual to compel the individual to vote for or against a candidate or ballot question. Abduction, duress, or fraud may not be used to obstruct or prevent the free exercise of the right to vote of a voter at a primary or election, or compel a voter to vote at a primary or election.”

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211B.11, subd. 1	Campaigning near or within a polling place	Petty misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	“A person may not display campaign material, post signs, ask, solicit, or in any manner try to induce or persuade a voter within a polling place or within 100 feet of the building in which a polling place is situated, or anywhere on the public property on which a polling place is situated, on primary or election day to vote for or refrain from voting for a candidate or ballot question. A person may not provide political badges, political buttons, or other political insignia to be worn at or about the polling place on the day of a primary or election. A political badge, political button, or other political insignia may not be worn at or about the polling place on primary or election day. This section applies to areas established by the county auditor or municipal clerk for absentee voting as provided in <a href="#">chapter 203B</a> .”
211B.11, subd. 3	Campaigning while transporting a voter to polling place	Petty misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	“A person transporting a voter to or from the polling place may not ask, solicit, or in any manner try to induce or persuade a voter on primary or election day to vote or refrain from voting for a candidate or ballot question.”
211B.13, subd. 1	Bribery, treating, and solicitation	Felony	Willfully	Any person	“A person who willfully, directly or indirectly, advances, pays, gives, promises, or lends any money, food, liquor, clothing, entertainment, or other thing of monetary value, or who offers, promises, or endeavors to obtain any money, position, appointment, employment, or other valuable consideration, to or for a person, in order to induce a voter to refrain from voting, or to vote in a particular way, at an election, is guilty of a felony.” Some exceptions apply

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211B.15, subs. 6 and 7	Corporate political contributions	Felony Fine: up to \$40,000	Not specified	Corporate officer, manager, stockholder, member, agent, employee, attorney, or other representative	Violation of laws regulating corporate political contributions and expenditures (as codified in <a href="#">chapter 211B</a> ) subject a person acting on behalf of the corporation to a fine of up to \$20,000 and imprisonment for up to five years; the corporation itself may also be subject to a fine of up to \$40,000 and may forfeit its right to do business in the state
211B.15, subd. 13	Corporate political contributions	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual	“An individual who aids, abets, or advises a violation of this section [related to restrictions on corporate political activity] is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.”
211B.19	Fair campaign practices	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	This section states that all violations of <a href="#">chapter 211B</a> [fair campaign practices] for which no penalty is otherwise specified are misdemeanors. In most cases, fair campaign practice violations must complete an administrative process prior to criminal prosecution.
211B.20	Campaign access to multiple-unit dwellings	Petty misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	A candidate and accompanying volunteers must be granted access to certain multiple-unit dwellings for purposes of campaigning. Some exceptions apply.
211B.35, subd. 2	Fair campaign practices	Civil penalty: up to \$5,000	Not specified	Any person	This section of statute permits a panel of administrative law judges, charged with hearing complaints related to the fair campaign practices act ( <a href="#">chapter 211B</a> ) to impose a civil penalty, up to \$5,000, for any violation of <a href="#">chapter 211B</a>

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<b>Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure</b>					
10A.02, subd. 11, para. (c)	Information related to Campaign Finance Board investigations	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any member, employee, or agent of the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board	“Until the board makes a public finding concerning probable cause or enters a conciliation agreement...a member, employee, or agent of the board must not disclose to an individual information obtained by that member, employee, or agent concerning a complaint or investigation except as required to carry out the investigation or take action in the matter...”
10A.025, subd. 2	False statements in a campaign report	Gross misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$3,000	Knowingly	Any individual	“An individual who signs and certifies to be true a report or statement knowing it contains false information or who knowingly omits required information is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and subject to a civil penalty imposed by the [campaign finance and public disclosure] board of up to \$3,000.”
10A.025, subd. 3	Recordkeeping requirements	Misdemeanor	Knowingly	Any person	A person required to file a report or statement must maintain certain records on the matters required to be disclosed and make them available for inspection by the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, or its designee, for a period of four years from the date of filing of the report or statement or of changes or corrections to the report or statement



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10A.025, subd. 4	Changes or corrections to a campaign report or other filing	Gross misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$3,000 for willful failure to file Civil penalty: up to \$1,000 for failure to file after notice has been provided by the board	Willfully	Any person	<p>“Material changes in information previously submitted and corrections to a report or statement must be reported in writing to the board within ten days following the date of the event prompting the change or the date upon which the person filing became aware of the inaccuracy. The change or correction must identify the form and the paragraph containing the information to be changed or corrected.”</p> <p>This section of statute also provides standards for failure to file a required report on time. The board is required to send a notice, by certified mail, to a person who fails to file a required report. A second notice must be sent if the report is not filed within 14 days of the date the first notice was sent. The board may impose the \$1,000 civil penalty if the report is not filed within seven days of the date the second notice was sent.</p>
10A.03, subd. 3	Lobbyist registration	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any lobbyist	This section of statute provides standards related to registration by lobbyists. If a lobbyist fails to file a registration form by the required deadline, the board first must send an initial notice to the lobbyist, and may charge a late fee on a specified timeline. If the lobbyist still fails to file a registration form, the board must send a second notice. The board may impose the civil penalty if the lobbyist fails to file a registration form within seven days of the date the board sends the second notice.
10A.04, subd. 5	Lobbyist reporting	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any lobbyist or principal	This section of statute provides standards for lobbyists and principals to file reports on their lobbying activity. The board is required to send a notice, by certified mail, to a lobbyist or principal who fails to file a required report within ten days of the deadline for filing. The board may impose the civil penalty if the report is not filed or late fee is not paid within seven days of the date the notice was sent.

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10A.06	Lobbyists; contingent fees	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Any person	“No person may act as or employ a lobbyist for compensation that is dependent upon the result or outcome of any legislative or administrative action, or the official action a metropolitan government unit.”
10A.08	Client representation by public official	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any public official	<p>This section of statute provides standards for disclosure by a public official who represents a client for a fee before certain entities that have administrative rulemaking authority.</p> <p>The board is required to send a notice, by certified mail, to a public official who fails to file a required disclosure within ten days of the deadline for filing. The board may impose the civil penalty if the disclosure report is not filed within seven days of the date the notice was sent.</p>
10A.09, subd. 7	Statements of economic interest	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any individual required to file a statement	<p>This section of statute provides standards for certain public officials (a defined term in chapter 10A) and local officials to file a statement of economic interest with the board. The board is required to send a notice, by certified mail, to an individual who fails to file a required statement within ten days of the deadline for filing. The board may impose the civil penalty if the report is not filed or late fee is not paid within seven days of the date the notice was sent.</p>
10A.11, subd. 7	Organization of committees and party units; commingling of funds	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Knowingly	Any person	<p>This section of statute provides standards for the organization of political committees, principal campaign committees, and party units. Among other requirements, these committees and units must have a chair and a treasurer. This section also prohibits the committee or party unit from commingling funds with the personal funds of officers, members, or associates.</p>

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10A.12, subd. 1b	Political funds; independent expenditure activity	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount of a noncompliant independent expenditure, up to \$25,000. The \$25,000 cap does not apply if the violation was intentional	Not specified	Any association, except a political committee	“An association other than a political committee that makes only independent expenditures and disbursements permitted under section 10A.121, subdivision 1, [specifying certain permissible disbursements related to making an independent expenditure] must do so by forming and registering an independent expenditure political fund if the expenditure is in excess of \$100 or by contributing to an existing independent expenditure political committee or political fund.”
10A.12, subd. 6	Political funds	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Knowingly	Any person	This section of statute provides standards for the organization of political funds. This section also prohibits commingling the contents of the fund with other funds or with personal funds of an officer or member of the fund.
10A.121, subd. 2	Independent expenditure political committees and funds	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount of the impermissible contribution or approved expenditure	Not specified	An independent expenditure political committee or fund	“An independent expenditure political committee or independent expenditure political fund is subject to a civil penalty of up to four times the amount of the contribution or approved expenditure if it does the following: (1) makes a contribution to a candidate, party unit, political committee, or political fund other than an independent expenditure political committee or an independent expenditure political fund; or (2) makes an approved expenditure.”

Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
10A.13, subd. 1	Accounts of a committee, fund, or party unit	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Knowingly	Any individual	<p>“The treasurer of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit must keep an account of:</p> <p>(1) the sum of all contributions, except any donation in kind valued at \$20 or less, made to the committee, fund, or party unit;</p> <p>(2) the name and address of each source of a contribution made to the committee, fund, or party unit in excess of \$20, together with the date and amount of each;</p> <p>(3) each expenditure made by the committee, fund, or party unit, together with the date and amount;</p> <p>(4) each approved expenditure made on behalf of the committee, fund, or party unit, together with the date and amount; and</p> <p>(5) the name and address of each political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit to which contributions in excess of \$20 have been made, together with the date and amount.”</p>
10A.14, subd. 4	First registration of a committee, fund, or party unit	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Treasurer	<p>This section of statute provides standards for treasurers of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit to file a first registration with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.</p> <p>The board is required to send a notice, by certified mail, to an individual who fails to file a required report within ten days of the deadline for filing. The board may impose the civil penalty if the report is not filed within seven days of the date the notice was sent.</p>

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10A.15, subd. 4	Contributions	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any individual	A number of administrative requirements related to processing and handling of contributions are provided in this section of statute, including regulation of anonymous contributions over \$20 and contributions that are in excess of the limits provided in another section of statute, and requirements related to sourcing, depositing, and proper attribution of received contributions received by political committees, political funds, principal campaign committees, and party units
10A.16	Earmarked contributions	Gross misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$3,000	Knowingly	Any individual, political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit	Soliciting or accepting “a contribution from any source with the express or implied condition that the contribution or any part of it be directed to particular candidate other than the initial recipient” is prohibited
10A.17, subs. 2 and 5	Expenditures	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any individual or association	“An individual or association may not make an approved expenditure of more than \$20 without receiving written authorization from the treasurer or the principal campaign committee of the candidate who approved the expenditure stating the amount that may be spent and the purpose of the expenditure.”
10A.17, subs. 3a and 5	Personal loans from campaign funds	Gross misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$3,000	Knowingly	A principal campaign committee, political committee, political fund, or party unit	“A principal campaign committee, political committee, political fund, or party unit may not lend money it has raised to anyone for purposes not related to the conduct of a campaign.”

Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
10A.17, subd. 4	Independent expenditures	Gross misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$3,000	Knowingly	An individual, political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit	Independently solicited or accepted contributions and other expenditures that are “independent expenditures” must be publicly disclosed as such. The disclosure is required whether the solicitation or expenditure is made in written, oral, or broadcast form. Standards for the format of the disclosure are provided in the law.
10A.17, subd. 5	Independent expenditures	Gross misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$3,000	Not specified	Any person	“A person who ... falsely claims that an expenditure was an independent expenditure is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and subject to a civil penalty imposed by the [campaign finance and public disclosure] board of up to \$3,000.”
10A.18	Bills, charges, or claims against a committee, fund, or party unit	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any person	“A person who has a bill, charge, or claim against a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit for an expenditure must render in writing to the treasurer of the committee, fund, or party unit the bill, charge, or claim within 60 days after the material or service is provided.”
10A.20, subd. 12	Campaign reports	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any person	<p>This section of statute provides standards for treasurers of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit to file a campaign reports with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.</p> <p>The board is required to send a notice, by certified mail, to an individual who fails to file a required report within ten days of the deadline for filing. The board may impose the civil penalty if the report is not filed within seven days of the date the notice was sent.</p>

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10A.27, subd. 9	Contributions from one principal campaign committee to another principal campaign committee	Civil penalty: up to four times the size of the improper contribution	Not specified	The principal campaign committee that made the contribution	<p>A principal campaign committee may not make a contribution to another principal campaign committee, unless the committee making the contribution is being dissolved.</p> <p>The committee making the contribution is required to provide, with the contribution, “a written statement of the committee’s intent to dissolve and terminate its registration within 12 months after the contribution was made.” The board may impose the civil penalty if the committee does not dissolve and terminate its registration by that time.</p>
10A.27, subd. 13, para. (b)	Contributions by unregistered associations	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Unregistered association or its officer	<p>This subdivision of statute provides standards related to contributions made by associations not registered with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. Among the requirements, the unregistered association is required to provide certain disclosures along with its contribution to a committee, fund, or party unit.</p> <p>The civil penalty applies if: “the association or its officer:</p> <p>(1) fails to provide a written statement as required by this subdivision; or</p> <p>(2) fails to register after giving the written statement required by this subdivision to more than three committees, funds, or party units in a calendar year.”</p> <p>A civil penalty against a committee, fund, or party unit that accepts a contribution without the required disclosures is provided in section 10A.27, subdivision 13, paragraph (c) (see below).</p>

Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
10A.27, subd. 13, para. (c)	Contributions by unregistered associations	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount of the improper contribution in excess of \$100	Not specified	Treasurer of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit	<p>This subdivision of statute provides standards related to contributions made by associations not registered with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. Among the requirements, the unregistered association is required to provide certain disclosures along with its contribution to a committee, fund, or party unit.</p> <p>The civil penalty provided in this paragraph applies to the committee, fund, or party unit that accepts a contribution from an unregistered association that is not accompanied by the required disclosures.</p> <p>A civil penalty against the unregistered association itself is provided in section 10A.27, subdivision 13, paragraph (b) (see above).</p>
10A.27, subd. 15 and subd. 17, para. (a)	Contributions of membership dues or fees or contribution of funds received into an independent expenditure political committee or fund	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount of the improper contribution, not to exceed \$25,000. The \$25,000 cap does not apply if the violation was intentional.	Not specified (except the civil penalty cap does not apply if the violation was intentional)	An association making a contribution to an independent expenditure political committee or fund	<p>These subdivisions of statute provide standards related to use of membership dues or fees and other contributions made to an independent expenditure political committee or political fund. If a contribution is made to a separate independent expenditure political committee or political fund, certain disclosures of the source of the funds must be provided.</p> <p>The civil penalty applies if the association making the contribution fails to provide the disclosures within the time required in the law. A civil penalty against the independent expenditure political committee or fund that receives the contribution and does not submit the required disclosure in its report to the campaign finance and public disclosure board is provided in section 10A.27, subdivision 17, paragraph (b) (see below).</p>



Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
10A.27, subd. 15 and subd. 17, para. (b)	Contributions of membership dues or fees or contribution of funds received into an independent expenditure political committee or fund	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount of the improper contribution, not to exceed \$25,000. The \$25,000 cap does not apply if the violation was intentional.	Not specified (except the civil penalty cap does not apply if the violation was intentional)	An independent expenditure political committee or fund that is required to file a report with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board	<p>These subdivisions of statute provide standards related to use of membership dues or fees and other contributions made to an independent expenditure political committee or political fund. If a contribution is made to a separate independent expenditure political committee or political fund, certain disclosures of the source of the funds must be provided.</p> <p>The civil penalty applies if the independent expenditure political committee or political fund fails to provide the required disclosure with its formal report to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. A civil penalty against an association that does not provide the independent expenditure political committee or fund with the required disclosures so that the report to the board can be submitted is provided in section 10A.27, subdivision 17, paragraph (a) (see above).</p>
10A.273, subd. 4	Contributions and solicitations during legislative session	Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Not specified	Any candidate, political committee, party unit, political fund, principal campaign committee, or registered lobbyist	<p>This section of statute provides standards related to soliciting or accepting contributions while the legislature is meeting in regular session.</p> <p>Special procedures apply for imposition of a civil penalty under this section.</p>
10A.28, subd. 1	Exceeding expenditure limit	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount by which the expenditure exceeds the statutory limit	Not specified	Any candidate subject to an expenditure limit	The civil penalty applies to “a candidate subject to the expenditure limits in section 10A.25 who permits the candidate’s principal campaign committee to make expenditures or permits approved expenditures to be made on the candidate’s behalf in excess of the limits imposed by section 10A.25, as adjusted by section 10A.255...”

Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
					Special procedures apply for imposition of a civil penalty under this section of statute. See section <a href="#">10A.28</a> , subdivisions 3 and 4.
<a href="#">10A.28</a> , subd. 2	Exceeding contribution limit	Civil penalty: up to four times the amount by which the contribution exceeds the statutory limit	Not specified	A lobbyist, political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, political party unit, or candidate	This section of statute provides for a civil penalty to be imposed against various entities regulated under <a href="#">chapter 10A</a> for making a contribution that exceeds the applicable limit (in the case of a candidate, the civil penalty applies for accepting a contribution that exceeds the applicable limit).  Special procedures apply for imposition of a civil penalty under this section of statute. See section <a href="#">10A.28</a> , subdivisions 3 and 4.
<a href="#">10A.29</a>	Circumvention of campaign finance laws	Gross misdemeanor  Civil penalty: up to \$3,000	Not specified, however an “attempt” to violate the law is sufficient to create liability	Any individual or association	“An individual or association that attempts to circumvent this chapter by redirecting a contribution through, or making a contribution on behalf of, another individual or association is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and subject to a civil penalty of up to \$3,000.”
<a href="#">10A.322</a> , subd. 4	Political contribution refund receipts	Misdemeanor	Willfully	Any candidate who has not signed a spending limit agreement	“A candidate who does not sign [a spending limit] agreement under this section and who willfully issues an official [political contribution] refund receipt form or a facsimile of one to any of the candidate’s contributors is guilty of a misdemeanor.”

Statutory Citation	Topic	Penalty	Statutory Intent Standard?	Party Subject to Penalty	Statutory Text/Summary (where statutory language is concise or self-explanatory, the full text is included; in other cases, a summary description is provided)
10A.35	Commercial use of campaign finance information	Misdemeanor Civil penalty: up to \$1,000	Knowingly (applies to criminal penalty only)	Any individual or association (an association is subject to the civil penalty only)	“Information copied from reports and statements filed with the board, other than reports and statements filed by lobbyists and lobbyist principals, may not be sold or used by an individual or association for a commercial purpose. Purposes related to elections, political activities, or law enforcement are not commercial purposes.”
10A.36	Reprisals related to political activity, including contributions	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual or association	“An individual or association must not engage in economic reprisals or threaten loss of employment or physical coercion against an individual or association because of that individual’s or association’s political contributions or political activity. This subdivision does not apply to compensation for employment or loss of employment if the political affiliation or viewpoint of the employee is a bona fide occupational qualification of the employment.”
211A.05, subd. 1	Local offices and U.S. House and Senate	Misdemeanor	Intentionally	A candidate	“A candidate who fails to file a [campaign finance] report required by section 211A.02 or a certification [that all required reports have been filed] ... is guilty of a misdemeanor.”
211A.05, subd. 1	Committees to promote or defeat a local ballot question	Misdemeanor	Intentionally	Treasurer of a committee to promote or defeat a local ballot question	“The treasurer of a committee formed to promote or defeat a ballot question who fails to file a [campaign finance] report required by section 211A.02 or a certification [that all required reports have been filed] ... is guilty of a misdemeanor.”
211A.05, subd. 1	Issuance of certificate of election; local candidates	Misdemeanor	Not specified	Elections officer	“An officer who issues a certificate of election to a candidate who has not certified that all ... [required campaign finance reports] have been filed is guilty of a misdemeanor.”

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211A.06	Campaign finance accounting; local offices and U.S. House and Senate	Misdemeanor	Not specified	A committee treasurer or other individual	<p>“A treasurer or other individual who receives money for a committee is guilty of a misdemeanor if the individual:</p> <p>(1) fails to keep a correct account as required by law;</p> <p>(2) mutilates, defaces, or destroys an account record; or</p> <p>(3) in the case of a committee, refuses upon request to provide financial information to a candidate; and</p> <p>(4) does any of these things with the intent to conceal receipts or disbursements, the purpose of receipts or disbursements, or the existence or amount of an unpaid debt or the identity of the person to whom it is owed.”</p>
211B.15, subd. 13	Corporate political contributions; aiding and abetting	Gross misdemeanor	Not specified	Any individual	<p>“An individual who aids, abets, or advises a violation of this section [corporate political contribution laws] is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.”</p>
211B.35, subd. 2	Local campaign finance	Civil penalty: up to \$5,000	Not specified	Any person	<p>This section of statute permits a panel of administrative law judges, charged with hearing complaints related to local campaign finance law (<a href="#">chapter 211A</a>) to impose a civil penalty, up to \$5,000, for any violation of <a href="#">chapter 211A</a></p>

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