

PROPOSED

COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Legislative Session 2025, Legislative Day No. 15

Bill No. 71-25

Introduced by Ms. Hummer

By the County Council, July 21, 2025

Introduced and first read on July 21, 2025
Public Hearing set for September 15, 2025
Bill Expires on October 24, 2025

By Order: Kaley Schultze, Administrative Officer

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning: Public Campaign Financing – Disbursement of Public
2 Contribution – Funding for Public Campaign Financing Fund

3
4 FOR the purpose of determining the deadline to file a notice of intent to participate in the
5 public campaign financing fund; aligning the ratio of amount and number of
6 contributions among County Executive and Council candidates; determining the
7 threshold for the Controller to certify sufficient fund balance; providing for a second
8 review of fund balance by the Controller during the election cycle; requiring the County
9 Executive to appropriate sufficient funds pursuant to the Charter; providing for
10 minimum appropriations beginning in Fiscal Year 2028; providing for staffing for the
11 Commission; requiring the designation of a public liaison for the public campaign
12 financing system; requiring an audit of the public campaign financing system after a
13 general election; and generally relating to public campaign financing.

14
15 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments: §§ 1-12-103(a); 1-12-104(a); 1-12-106(d)
16 under new tagline “Review of fund balance.”; and 1-12-111
17 Anne Arundel County Code (2005, as amended)

18
19 BY adding: §1-12-113
20 Anne Arundel County Code (2005, as amended)

21
22 SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the County Council of Anne Arundel County, Maryland,*
23 That the Anne Arundel County Code (2005, as amended) read as follows:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate new matter added to existing law.
[[Brackets]] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
Captions and taglines in bold in this bill are catchwords and are not law.
Asterisks *** indicate existing Code provisions in a list or chart that remain unchanged.

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

TITLE 12. PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING

1-12-103. Contributions.

(a) **Prerequisites.** Before raising any contribution governed by this title, an applicant candidate shall:

(1) File notice of intent with the Board on or before [[April 15 of the year of the election]] THE DEADLINE TO FILE A CERTIFICATE OF CANDIDACY AS DETERMINED BY §5-303(A)(1) OF THE ELECTION LAW ARTICLE OF STATE CODE on a form prescribed by the Board; and

(2) Establish a publicly funded campaign account for the purpose of receiving eligible contributions and spending funds in accordance with this title.

1-12-104. Requirements for certification.

(a) **Qualification.** To qualify as a certified candidate:

(1) An applicant candidate for County Executive shall collect from County residents at least:

(i) 500 qualifying contributions; and

(ii) an aggregate total of \$40,000 FOR THE 2026 ELECTION CYCLE OR \$50,000 FOR EVERY ELECTION CYCLE THEREAFTER; and

(2) An applicant candidate for Councilmember shall collect from County residents at least:

(i) 75 qualifying contributions; and

(ii) an aggregate total of \$7,500.

1-12-106. Disbursements of public contribution.

(d) **Review of Fund balance.** (1) On or before July 1 of the year preceding a primary election, the Controller shall determine if the amount in the Fund is sufficient to meet the maximum public contributions THE GREATER OF THE AMOUNT REASONABLY EXPECTED TO BE REQUIRED DURING THE NEXT ELECTION CYCLE BASED ON INTEREST EXPRESSED BY CANDIDATES OR TO FUND AT LEAST ONE CERTIFIED CANDIDATE FOR COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND FOUR CERTIFIED CANDIDATES FOR COUNTY COUNCIL. THE CONTROLLER SHALL SUBMIT THE DETERMINATION TO THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, THE COUNTY COUNCIL, THE COMMISSION, AND THE BOARD.

(2) WITHIN 15 DAYS OF THE DEADLINE TO FILE A CERTIFICATE OF CANDIDACY UNDER §5-303(A)(1) OF THE ELECTION LAW ARTICLE OF STATE CODE, THE CONTROLLER SHALL DETERMINE IF THE AMOUNT IN THE FUND IS SUFFICIENT TO FUND THE NUMBER OF

1 CERTIFIED CANDIDATES AS DEFINED IN THIS TITLE. THE CONTROLLER SHALL SUBMIT THE
2 DETERMINATION TO THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, THE COUNTY COUNCIL, THE COMMISSION,
3 AND THE BOARD.
4

5 (3) If UPON REVIEW UNDER (1) OR (2), the Controller determines that the total
6 amount available for disbursement in the Fund is insufficient to meet the allocations
7 required by this section, the Controller shall reduce each public contribution to a certified
8 candidate based on the ratio of the amount in the Fund to the maximum public contributions
9 reasonably expected to be required. IF FUNDING IS SUPPLEMENTED THE CONTROLLER
10 SHALL RESTORE EACH PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION TO A CERTIFIED CANDIDATE THAT WAS
11 PREVIOUSLY REDUCED.
12

13 (4) IF THE CONTROLLER DETERMINES AT ANY POINT AFTER JULY 1 OF THE YEAR
14 PRECEDING A GENERAL ELECTION THAT THE TOTAL AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR
15 DISBURSEMENT IN THE FUND IS INSUFFICIENT TO MEET THE MAXIMUM PUBLIC
16 CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED FOR ALL CANDIDATES CERTIFIED IN THE CURRENT ELECTION
17 CYCLE, THE CONTROLLER SHALL NOTIFY THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, THE COUNTY
18 COUNCIL AND THE BOARD WITHIN 3 DAYS OF THE DETERMINATION. THE CONTROLLER
19 MAY INCLUDE IN THE NOTIFICATION AN ESTIMATED AMOUNT NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE
20 ELECTION CYCLE BASED ON THE NUMBER OF CERTIFIED CANDIDATES, THE
21 DISBURSEMENTS COMPLETED UP TO THE TIME OF THE NOTIFICATION, AND THE AMOUNT
22 OF TIME REMAINING IN THE ELECTION CYCLE AND THE DISBURSEMENT PERIOD. EXCEPT
23 UNDER THE LIMITATIONS OF §1-12-111, THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE SHALL SUBMIT A
24 REQUEST TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL TO SUPPLEMENT THE FUND BY A TRANSFER OR
25 SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 711 OR 712 OF THE COUNTY
26 CHARTER WITHIN 5 DAYS.
27

28 **1-12-111. Funding for the Public Campaign Financing Fund.**

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30 (a) **Annual funding.** Except as provided in subsection (b)[[.]];
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32 (1) in each fiscal year, the County Executive shall include in the annual budget and
33 appropriation ordinance the amount calculated by the Public Campaign Financing System
34 Commission as necessary to fully fund the public campaign financing system for the fiscal
35 year.
36

37 (2) BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2028 AND FOR EVERY FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER,
38 THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE SHALL INCLUDE THE GREATER OF \$300,000 OR THE AMOUNT
39 CALCULATED BY THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING SYSTEM COMMISSION IN THE
40 ANNUAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE.
41

42 (b) **Exception.** The County Executive is not required to include the amount calculated
43 by the Public Campaign Financing System Commission as necessary to fully fund the
44 public campaign financing system for the fiscal year in the annual budget and appropriation
45 ordinance if:
46

47 (1) in the current fiscal year, funds have been or are being transferred from the
48 Revenue Reserve Fund to the General Fund pursuant to § 4-11-106 of this Code; or
49

50 (2) not later than 120 days prior to the end of the fiscal year, the County Executive
51 certifies to the County Council that the County's fiscal condition makes it imprudent to
52 include the full amount calculated by the Public Campaign Financing System Commission

as necessary to fully fund the public campaign financing system for the fiscal year, and the County Council approves the certification by a vote of not less than five members.

(c) **Public Campaign Financing Fund.** Funds to finance the public campaign financing system included in the annual budget and appropriation ordinance shall be included in and disbursed from the Public Campaign Financing Fund.

(d) **Staffing.** THE BUDGET OFFICER SHALL PROVIDE THE COMMISSION WITH INFORMATION REGARDING ECONOMIC TRENDS AND THE COUNTY'S FISCAL PLANS IN RELATION TO THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING SYSTEM. The County Executive [[may]] SHALL provide staff support for the Commission AND DESIGNATE A PUBLIC LIAISON TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE SYSTEM TO CANDIDATES AND THE PUBLIC.

(E) **Additional Appropriations.** PURSUANT TO §1-12-106(D), THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE SHALL SUPPLEMENT THE FUND BY A TRANSFER OR SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 711 OR 712 OF THE COUNTY CHARTER.

1-12-113. Audit.

(A) **In general.** BEGINNING 60 DAYS AFTER THE BOARD CERTIFIES THE RESULTS OF THE GENERAL ELECTION, THE COUNTY AUDITOR SHALL CONDUCT AN AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITY OF THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING SYSTEM, INCLUDING PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGN ACCOUNTS, TO ENSURE PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGN ACCOUNTS RAISED AND SPENT FUNDS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THIS TITLE.

(B) Scope.

(1) THE AUDIT SHALL APPLY TO THE CAMPAIGN ACCOUNTS OF ALL CANDIDATES WHO:

(I) FILED AN INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING SYSTEM; AND

(II) FILED FOR CERTIFICATION TO BECOME QUALIFIED CERTIFIED CANDIDATES.

(2) THE AUDIT SHALL INCLUDE A REVIEW OF:

(I) ELIGIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS;

(II) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS;

(III) CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES;

(IV) DISTRIBUTIONS OF PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS;

(V) THE CERTIFIED CANDIDATES BOARD CERTIFICATION REPORT; AND

(VI) CANDIDATE APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION THAT WERE NOT APPROVED BY THE BOARD.

(3) THE AUDIT SHALL VERIFY THAT PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES RETURNED:

(I) ANY UNSPENT FUNDS FROM THE PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGN ACCOUNT TO THE CONTROLLER FOR DEPOSIT INTO THE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH §1-12-107(D);

(II) ANY FUNDS MISTAKENLY DISBURSED FROM THE PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGN ACCOUNT TO THE CONTROLLER FOR DEPOSIT INTO THE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH §1-12-106(J); AND

(III) ANY UNSPENT FUNDS FROM THE PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGN UPON THE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ELECTION TO THE CONTROLLER FOR DEPOSIT INTO THE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH §1-12-108(B).

(C) Records and responses. CANDIDATES SHALL COMPLY WITH ALL REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION FROM THE AUDITOR DURING THE AUDIT PROCESS.

(D) Findings. THE RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF THE AUDIT SHALL BE SENT TO THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, THE COUNTY COUNCIL, THE COMMISSION AND THE BOARD AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE AUDIT. CANDIDATES MAY RESPOND TO OR CONTEST AUDIT FINDINGS WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE AUDIT.

SECTION 2. *And be it further enacted,* That this Ordinance shall take effect 45 days from the date it becomes law.