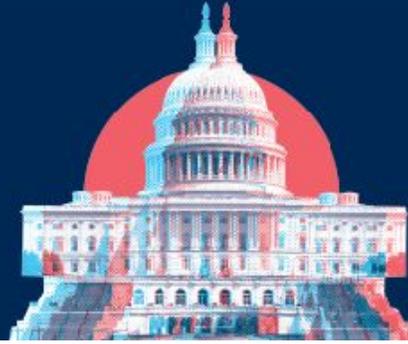


SwingLeft

# It starts with the House.



## Guidelines for District Fundraising

Thanks for fundraising with Swing Left! Winning the House in 2018 is the only sure way to stop Trump until he's on the ballot again, and we only stand a chance if all of us pitch in. Business as usual won't cut it. That means we've all got to make phone calls, knock on doors, and even raise money -- we can't leave it up to anyone else.

This guide will walk you through the essential elements of planning and hosting a fundraiser for District Funds. We're trying to make political fundraising easy for everyone, but there are some important rules you'll have to keep in mind when collecting contributions, and that's a big part of the guidelines below.

We have a lot of work to do, so thanks again for being a part of this movement. If we work hard, together we can take back the House in 2018. Get started by following the steps below and then check out our guidelines!

- Step 1. Get your personal link at [swingleft.org/fundraise](http://swingleft.org/fundraise)
- Step 2. Set a goal for how much to raise at your event
- Step 3. Spread the word about your fundraiser

### Contents

What exactly are District Funds?.....	1-2
How do I collect District Fund Contributions?.....	2
Online.....	2
By Check.....	2
Ticketed Fundraiser.....	2
Where should I host my event?.....	2-3
At your house.....	3
At a bar or public space.....	3
On the Internet.....	3-4
What are some useful links?.....	4

## What exactly are District Funds?

District Funds are a new tool built by Swing Left that empowers you to take action to win back the House in 2018. Specifically, they're pots of money that we raise now for Democrats in Swing Districts to use later. Whether they're incumbents or first-time candidates, Democrats running for Congress in competitive races have a lot of work to do between now and the 2018 election. Districts Funds put money aside today to give Swing District Democrats a boost the day they become the official nominee. This model is new for the 2018 midterm elections, and it holds the potential to be a game changer in swinging individual seats and the House at large.

To get started, choose the Swing District you want to support and then start fundraising. Don't know your closest Swing District? [Go here to find out!](#)

## How do I collect District Fund contributions?

If you're hosting a fundraiser for your District Fund, how will attendees make their donations? Contributions to Swing Left's District Funds can be made in one of three ways:

### Online (laptop, tablet, or phone)

Whether you're hosting a fundraiser at your home, a restaurant, or some other place, the easiest way for people to donate to District Funds is online. Once you [create your personalized link](#), you have a couple easy options for collecting donations:

- **Laptop or Tablet.** Online donations can be collected fairly easily by passing around a computer or tablet during your fundraiser. You can also set up a communal laptop or tablet in one place. Remember to pull up your personal fundraising link so that you can track your progress!
- **Smartphones.** At an appropriate time during your fundraiser, you can tell everyone to take out their phones and go to your customized Tracking URL to submit their contributions.

### By Check

You can collect District Funds donations by check as well. The check should be made out to Swing Left with a memo line stating "District Funds, District State, X District" which must specify the specific district for earmarking purposes.

For every check, a donor must complete the [Contribution Form \(for Checks\)](#), so make sure you print copies of this sheet ahead of your fundraiser. After the fundraiser, collect all checks and contribution forms and send both to the address at the bottom of the contribution form within 10 days.

If you're collecting checks, keep in mind that Swing Left may only accept contributions from individuals using their own funds. All contributors must be U.S. citizens or green card holders.

### Ticketed Fundraiser

To host a "Ticketed Fundraiser," you can set up an event on Facebook, EventBrite, Paperless Post, or any event management site you are comfortable with. Then, publicize your event with your network and let them know, if they want to join your fundraiser, they should donate directly to your customized Tracking URL.

Once they donate, they will receive a confirmation receipt. Ask them to send you a receipt confirmation of the contribution and you can send them an invitation to your fundraiser!

## What are some fundraising don'ts?

1. **Please don't** accept cash contributions for District Funds. We can't process these.

2. **Please don't** allow anyone to give a check or contribution made on someone else's behalf. Swing Left may only accept District Fund contributions from individuals using their own funds.
3. **Please don't** accept contributions from foreign citizens. All contributors must be U.S. citizens or green card holders.

## Where should I host my event?

Political fundraisers don't have to be big, glitzy affairs. When you're thinking about where to host your event, focus on what will be fun and convenient for you and your friends.

### At your house

Hosting your fundraiser at home is a great option. Prepare and arrange your space like you would any gathering you've held at your home in the past. Ensure your wifi is working and charge your laptop, computer, or tablet if you are going to have your guests submit their contributions online through your device.

If you buy or make snacks and beverages, be sure to stick to contribution guidelines. Here are the details: there is a \$1,000 home hospitality exception for an individual per election and per candidate. Accordingly, a Swing Left volunteer in a given district can host an event and spend \$1,000 per election on food, beverages, and invitations without that being considered an in-kind contribution (if it's a couple hosting, then the limit is \$2,000).

If the volunteer expends anything above that on a home event for a given congressional district, any amount above \$1,000 will be considered an in-kind contribution attributable to the as-yet unknown candidate that the volunteer will have to disclose to the candidate once that candidate is known. Keep in mind that the contribution limit per election and per candidate is \$2700.

### At a bar or other public place

If you host the event in a bar or public space, please make sure the vendor is not giving your event any special treatment that it would not give to any nonprofit organization. Unfortunately, Swing Left's Federal PAC (this is the legal entity for district funds) may not accept contributions from bars or restaurants, including special deals that wouldn't be available to other nonprofits.

**Pro tip:** Make sure the space has good wifi or cellular service so contributing online is easy!

### On the Internet

Fundraisers traditionally happen IRL, but here at Swing Left we're not above skirting tradition. Fundraising online is more convenient and can be a great addition to hosting events in person. Make use of all the networks at your disposal to reach your friends and family where they spend their time: Facebook, email, Twitter, Instagram and whatever else the kids are using these days. Here are some things to keep in mind when you ask for #DistrictFunds donations online:

- **Tell them why you're fundraising:** let your friends and family know why taking back the House in 2018 matters to you, or why you're focused on a specific Swing District, and encourage them to join the Swing Left movement by contributing toward your fundraising goal.
- **Get creative:** Make a video or share photos that will catch people's attention. Challenge your friends to out-raise you for Swing Left by tagging them on your posts. If you're really hardcore, pledge to get a tattoo when you hit your goal! Bring your friends and family along on your Swing Left adventure.
- **Remember to include your personal link:** Including your custom link ensures you'll be able to see how many contributions have come in from your friends and family, and will tell you how you stack up against other grassroots fundraisers in District Funds across the country. Send out a message every time you move up in the rankings to show progress and encourage others to join in!
- **Don't be embarrassed to ask for donations—or afraid to ask more than once:** Being a successful

fundraiser is about asking people for money. That's not always a comfortable proposition, so keep a few things in mind: (1) You're doing this for a cause that's important enough to you to ask your friends and family for help. Being sincere about that is something most people can respect and understand; (2) Not everyone will say yes, but you won't know for sure until you ask. The key is persistence! If they don't say no, make sure you ask again later on. (3) And if they do say no, make sure they know there are other ways to pitch in, from making phone calls to knocking on doors.

**Pro tip:** Don't be disappointed if your tweet or FB post doesn't go viral, but tag #SwingLeft (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) so we can help.

## What are some useful links?

- [Sign-in sheet](#): Print out a copy for guests to share their contact information at your event
- [Check contribution form](#): Have a stack of copies on-hand in case people make their donations via check
- [Swing District Strategy & Actions two-pager](#): In case anyone wants to know what Swing Left is!
- [District Resources](#): Share info about your swing district like a "Know Before You Go" District Primer

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For any questions or concerns about your fundraiser, reach out to Clay Dumas at [clay@swingleft.org](mailto:clay@swingleft.org)