

Sanctions

Sanctions available for offences occurred before 1 December 2010

Fines

Under Section 147 of the [Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 \(PPERA\)](#), we can apply penalties to those we regulate if they fail to submit their statutory returns on time. **Statutory returns** are:

- quarterly donations return
- quarterly transaction (loans) return
- weekly donations return (during a general election)
- weekly transaction (loans) return (during a general election)
- statement of accounts
- campaign expenditure (controlled expenditure for third parties, referendum expenses for permitted participants)

The penalty is determined by the length of time between the end of the period when the return was required to be submitted to us, and the day on which the requirements are complied with.

Political parties

The penalties for parties are as follows:

- not more than three months: £500
- More than 3 months but less than 6 months: £1,000
- More than 6 months but less than 12 months: £2,000
- more than 12 months: £5,000
- a further £5,000 for each subsequent period of 12 months during which the requirements are not complied with.

Accounting units

Accounting units are also liable to civil penalties. The only requirement for accounting units is to submit their statement of accounts and only if their total income or gross expenditure is above £25,000. There are no other reporting responsibilities for accounting units.

The amount of the penalty for accounting units is:

- not more than three months: £100
- more than 3 months but less than 6 months: £250
- more than 6 months but less than 12 months: £500
- more than 12 months: £1,000
- a further £1000 for each subsequent period of 12 months during which the requirements are not complied with.

Third parties and permitted participants

Third parties and permitted participants are only required to submit controlled expenditure/referendum expenses during elections and referendums. They are liable to civil penalties if they fail to submit these returns on time.

Civil penalties incurred by third parties and permitted participants are set at the same levels as those incurred by political parties, starting at £500 and increasing over time

Click here to find out more about the [legislation on political finance](#).

For guidance and forms, [please visit our Guidance section](#).

Forfeitures

Regulated organisations and individuals can only accept donations and loans above £500 from permissible donors.

We can, under Section 58 of PPERA, seek forfeiture of an amount equivalent to the donation where a regulated organisation or individual has accepted a donation from either an unidentifiable source or a source that was not permissible, and has not returned it within 30 days of receipt.

Click here to see the legislation on [permissible donors](#).

Court proceedings

When a political party or any other regulated entity refuses to pay a fine or to forfeit voluntarily the money of a donation/loan, we may decide to pursue the action through the courts.