

Political donations by individuals

There is often a lot of confusion about what is allowed and what is not allowed when it comes to a political donation. Though there are additional registration requirements for corporate donors, here is a quick summary for the individual donor.

What if I am only donating to Kate?

An individual can make donations of up to €1,000 to Kate within any one calendar year. Donors are required to aggregate all donations in the same calendar year. Anonymous and cash donations over €100 are prohibited. If the total of donations in a calendar year exceeds €600, some details about the donor will have to be disclosed by Kate.

For example: if an individual makes three donations - one on July 1st 2015 for €500, another on February 1st 2016 for €400, and a final one on March 1st 2016 for €300 - what would happen? Firstly, none of these donations could be made in cash or anonymously as they are all above €100. Secondly, because the 2016 total exceeds the €600 cap, Kate would need to disclose some basic details about the donor to the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO) that year. Note that despite the donations totalling more than €1,000 during *the campaign*, the cap was not exceeded in any one *calendar year* and so this scenario is permitted.

What if I donate to the Party as well, or to another Fine Gael politician?

There are additional caps to be aware of when donating to multiple candidates. Donors are required to aggregate all donations in the same calendar year which are made both to Fine Gael and to individuals within the party. This aggregated total cannot exceed €2,500. A disclosure to SIPO must be made by the donor if the total exceeds €1,500.

For example: If a donor (in the same calendar year) gives two donations of €500 to election candidates and a further €600 to the Fine Gael party, the disclosure limit is exceeded and he or she must make a return to SIPO.

Summary table

	Donations to Kate	Donations to Fine Gael*
No record needed - anonymous and cash donations allowed	€0.01 - €100.00	€0.01 - €100.00
Donor must be known to Kate/Fine Gael, and donation cannot be made in cash	€100.01 - €600.00	€100.01 - €1,500.00
Donor's basic details must be disclosed to SIPO by Kate (or by donor themselves in column 2)	€600.01 - €1,000.00	€1,500.01 - €2,500.00

**party and candidates aggregated*