



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
RUTH JOHNSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

**DATE:** December 7, 2011  
**TO:** Committees on File with the Bureau of Elections  
**FROM:** Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections  
**SUBJECT:** Updated Version of MERTS

**An updated version of MERTS with added features is now available for committees to submit Campaign Statements. A description of the software enhancements is provided in this memo.**

**This version must be downloaded either when prompted in your current release of MERTS or by following the download instructions provided with this memo. All committees using MERTS must download the new version of the software to avoid filing issues. Downloading the newer version of the software will not cause any loss of data in existing files. However, it is recommended that a [back-up](#) copy of the committee file (.DCF) be created and saved prior to downloading the newer version.**

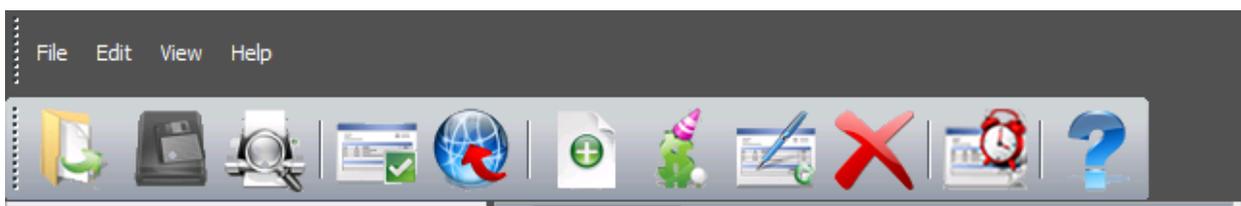
**If you are not currently using the software to file campaign statements, you are encouraged to review the information and download the software to file campaign statements electronically on a voluntary basis.**

An updated version of the MERTS software is now available at the [www.mertsplus.com](http://www.mertsplus.com) web site for Candidate Committees, Political and Independent Committees (PACs), Ballot Question Committees and Political Party Committees.

The new version of MERTS affords enhanced usability over the previous version of MERTS. A new look and feel and other new features are described below:

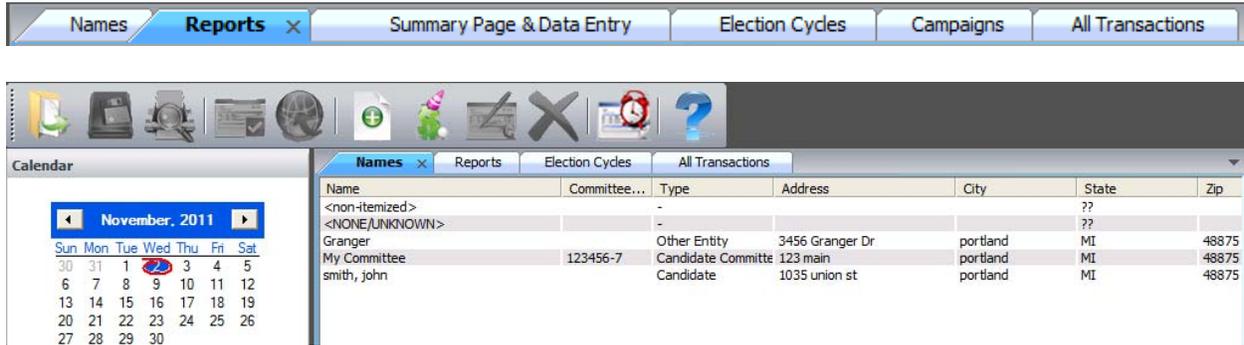
### **Updated Icon Strip**

A new tool bar provides a quick click access to Open File, Save File, MI Print, Validate, Upload, New Item, Add a Fundraiser, Modify Item, Delete Item, Link to the e-IDR Web Site and Help.



**Tabs Replace Window**

The open “windows” functionality has been replaced with easier to use Tabs. Tabs provide an easier way to view, open and navigate from one Tab to another while working in the software. In addition, tabs will automatically open for often used functions. For example, when you select a report in the Reports Tab, the Data Entry Screen and Summary Page Tab will automatically open.

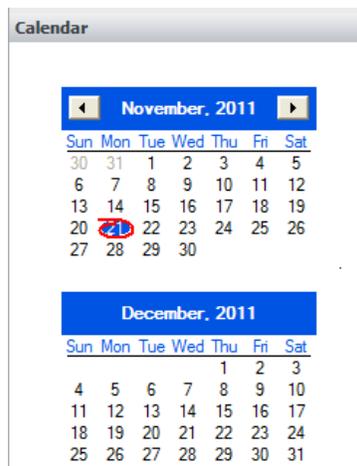


Tabs allow for a split core panel so that multiple tabs can be viewed at one time.



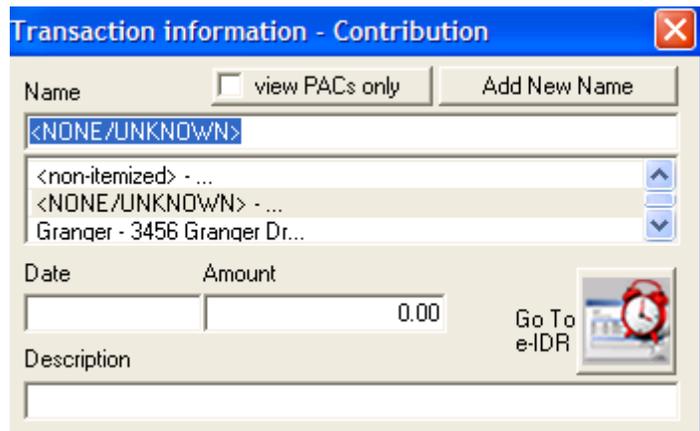
**Addition of Calendar:**

A calendar navigation pane has been added and will highlight the current date. The calendar can be hidden by dragging it to the left. Additional functionality is planned for the calendar including providing a link to the CFR Calendar to highlight important dates.



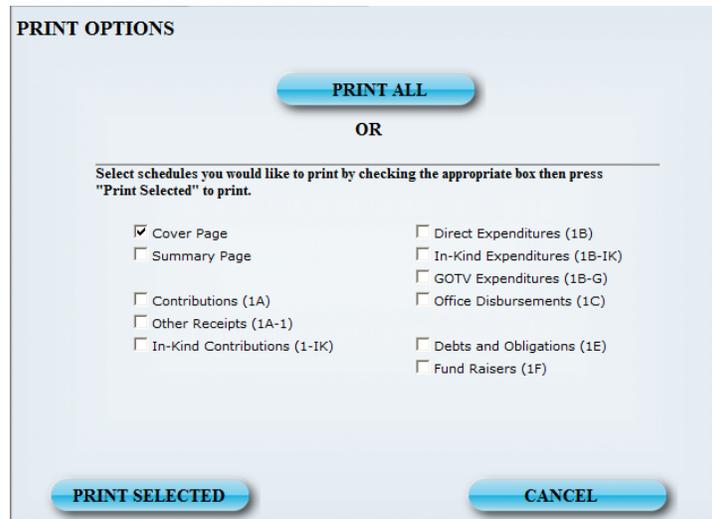
### Addition of e-IDR Link

A link has been added from the software to the [e-IDR Internet Application](#). The e-IDR (Immediate Disclosure Reporting) Application allows committees to electronically file Late Contribution Reports, Special Election Independent Reports and other reports that must be filed as a supplement to a Campaign Statement. The e-IDR icon placed in the Icon strip and in the contribution transaction screen links directly to the Internet application while in the software. Simply click on the Icon and a new browser window will open to e-IDR. Enter in your late contribution reports, etc. When done, close the window to return to software. **Please note however, after entering the late contribution report or other report in e-IDR, the transaction must also be entered into the MERTS software.**



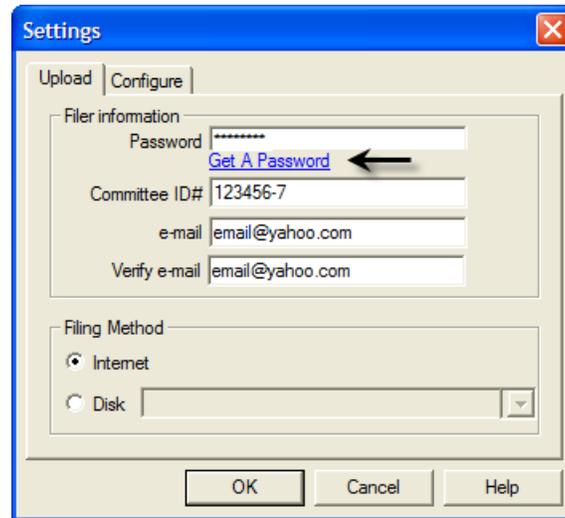
### Report Viewing and Printing

The updated version of MERTS enhances the flexibility and clarifies the print capabilities of the software.



## **Access to the Password Application via MERTS**

Accessing the upload password application is easier with the link provided in the Upload Screen. Simply select the link and follow the prompts to get a new password.



## **Additional Enhancements**

**Online Training:** The [online training](#) and [user guides](#) have been updated. In addition to information on the MERTS software, you will find information on the committee's obligations under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act. A series of videos are planned for release in the coming months that will provide detail information on using the software, uploading and importing/exporting functions of the software.

**Elimination of Quiz:** The MERTS Training quiz has been eliminated. Committees can download the software by entering in the needed information at any time; just follow the prompts. There is no need to call or email for the download information, just go to [www.mertsplus.com](http://www.mertsplus.com).

**Elimination of Candidate Excess Error:** The candidate software will no longer issue an error for the candidate contributions.

**Wizard Warning:** A warning box has been added to the Wizard to assist filers while using the software. The warning is intended to clarify that a committee should only go through the Wizard once for each committee.

**Look for Automatic Updates:** Changes made to the software platform will allow the Bureau to issue updates on a more regular basis. Additional enhancements are planned. If you have a suggestion to improve the software contact us at [Disclosure@Michigan.gov](mailto:Disclosure@Michigan.gov).

### **Obtaining the Software**

Please refer to the enclosed loading instructions to obtain the appropriate updated software for your committee. All committees using MERTS must download the new version of the software to avoid filing issues. Downloading the newer version will not cause any loss of data in existing files. However, it is recommended that a back-up copy of the committee file (.DCF) be created and saved prior to downloading the newer version.

### **Questions Concerning the Use of MERTS**

MERTS Technical Support may be contacted for questions concerning the procedures for downloading and using the software:

MERTS Technical Support  
Telephone: (703) 749-4642  
E-mail: [mertstechsupport@egov.com](mailto:mertstechsupport@egov.com)  
MERTS Web site: [www.mertsplus.com](http://www.mertsplus.com)

### **Questions Concerning the Campaign Finance Act**

Please feel free to contact the Michigan Department of State's Bureau of Elections for assistance or questions concerning the Michigan Campaign Finance Act:

Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
Telephone: (517) 373-2540  
E-mail: [disclosure@michigan.gov](mailto:disclosure@michigan.gov)  
Web site: [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos)  
Follow us on Twitter @MichCFR

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