

Respondent Name
Joshua Sutton
Complainant Name
Conner Edwards
Complaint Description
<p><u>Conner Edwards</u> reported via the portal (Fri, 3 Nov 2023 at 12:46 PM)</p> <p>Description of Complaint</p> <p>This candidate failed to timely file a Candidate Registration (C-1 report) within two weeks of becoming a candidate in election year 2023. At a bare minimum, (because this candidate did not indicate that they would be utilizing the mini-reporting option), they would be required to file the 21 and 7 day pre-election C4, regardless of the threshold of activity on their campaign. The above-mentioned respondent failed to meet this deadline.</p> <p>By any objective measure, it is unacceptable that the PDC would take no action to help bring this filer into compliance now that ballots are out to the voters. The PDC has an obligation to provide transparency to the voters by enforcing filing requirements. The agency's failure to actively monitor the filings of candidates and enforce filing requirements damages both the public and the candidates themselves.</p> <p>I have tried many different times to get the PDC to take action on this type of issue with no tangible results whatsoever. At one point, I believe the agency discussed the possibility of internally flagging non-filers in the PDC's system and proactively reaching out to them to bring them into compliance, but it appears this is not happening.</p> <p>Having exhausted all of my other options to pursue reform, the only remaining option available to me to compel the agency to take action here is to file PDC complaints against these noncompliant filers in an effort to force the agency to take action.</p> <p>By highlighting the agency's failure to meaningfully enforce current reporting deadlines, my hope is that the agency will look to improve its own enforcement procedures and help candidates and treasurers comply with the law.</p> <p>Notice to Respondents:</p> <p>I apologize to you for any inconvenience caused by this complaint; it is not my intention.</p> <p>No campaign treasurer or campaign/committee is perfect. Trying to comply with the myriad of requirements and deadlines the PDC enforces can be extremely difficult, even for those who have been doing this for years. The agency could adopt any number of strategies to help filers "get it right" when it comes to deadlines and other requirements. Some of these strategies might include: a) automated electronic filing reminders to a filer when they have missed a deadline, b) mandatory attendance in a PDC training course before a person is allowed to serve as treasurer, c) giving filers 48 hours to file 21- & 7-day pre-election reports as opposed to the 24 hours candidates currently get, and d) improvements to the ORCA online campaign finance filing system to improve useability.</p> <p>In my opinion, the agency has failed to provide many filers with the knowledge and tools that they need to file reports on time and be compliant.</p> <p>If you are confused by the filing requirements that the agency enforces or are experiencing technical difficulties and/or usability issues with the ORCA system, please be sure to indicate this in your response to the PDC: your comments will provide valuable feedback for the agency.</p>
What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?
Because this candidate has not timely filed their required reports, members of the public are unable to view up to date financial information, significantly reducing transparency available to voters.

The PDC has an obligation to provide transparency to the voters by enforcing filing requirements. The agency's failure to actively monitor the filings of candidates and enforce filing requirements damages both the public and the candidates themselves.

It is imperative that PDC staff reach out to this candidate immediately to bring them into compliance before the 2023 general election is concluded.

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found

PDC Website. This candidate has previously been fined by the PDC: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov/rules-enforcement/enforcement/enforcement-cases/138680>

List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them

See respondent contact info on PDC website.

Certification (Complainant)

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.