



**State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908

(360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112

Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdca.wa.gov

June 22, 2022

KESTER AARON
PO BOX 888
TONASKET, WA 98855

Also delivered electronically to redbaan@gmail.com

Subject: C-1 and F-1 Brief Enforcement Hearing Notice; PDC Case Number 109532

Dear KESTER AARON:

Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) records indicate that you are a candidate for public office in 2022, and we have not received a *Candidate Registration* (C-1 report) disclosing your campaign information for the 2022 election cycle or your *Personal Financial Affairs Statement* (F-1 report) disclosing personal financial information for the twelve months preceding your candidacy.

RCW 42.17A.205 and RCW 42.17A.700 require candidates to file a C-1 report and an F-1 report within two weeks of declaring their candidacy, which were to have been filed no later than June 3, 2022.

In accordance with RCW 42.17A.110 and RCW 42.17A.755, a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding (Brief Enforcement Hearing) has been scheduled to determine if you violated RCW 42.17A.205 and RCW 42.17A.700 by failing to file the required C-1 report and F-1 reports for the 2022 election cycle. Under the Brief Enforcement Hearing rules, the Presiding Officer has the authority to assess a civil penalty in accordance with WAC 390-37-143, a penalty schedule adopted by the Commission (see enclosed copy).

HEARING INFORMATION

Date and time: **Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.**
Place: Remotely from Olympia
Live Audio and Online Transmission
Presiding Officer: Fred Jarrett, Chair, Public Disclosure Commission
Authority: RCW 42.17A and WAC 390

HOW TO AVOID THE HEARING

To avoid the Brief Enforcement Hearing, please take all the following steps:

1. File your C-1 report electronically by no later than **Monday, July 11, 2022;**

AND

2. File your F-1 report electronically by no later than **Monday, July 11, 2022;**

Online instructions for filing the reports are enclosed.

AND

3. Mail the following items to the PDC so they are postmarked on or before **July 11, 2022:**

- A signed *Statement of Understanding* (blank form enclosed); and
- A check or money order in the amount of \$200 (\$100 for each late-filed report), made payable to "Washington State Treasurer"

Please mail the signed *Statement of Understanding* and \$200 payment to the following address:

**Public Disclosure Commission
PO Box 40908
Olympia, WA 98504-0908**

(Any *Statement of Understanding* with a postmark later than July 11, 2022 will not be accepted and your case will proceed to hearing.)

PARTICIPATING IN THE HEARING VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

The Brief Enforcement Hearing will be audio and video recorded. The Presiding Officer and PDC Staff will attend in-person or remotely via Microsoft Teams videoconferencing platform.

- **PLEASE READ the entire instructions below *prior* to the day of the hearing if you plan to participate via MS Teams.**

Please note that you may be prompted to download the MS Teams app or use a supported browser (Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome) for best performance.

Anyone wishing to participate in the hearing remotely must follow the instructions below and join the meeting on a computer or mobile app **promptly at 1:45 p.m. on July 21, 2022.** Please remain in the meeting until the Presiding Officer calls your name and case number. After your case has been heard, you may leave or stay in the meeting.

Please note that you must stay muted at all times except while your case is being heard.

Join on your computer or mobile app:

<https://tinyurl.com/wyc2rcwm>

If you are unable to use Teams or experience technical difficulties, please call the PDC's main number 1-360-753-1111 to obtain information regarding alternate participation by telephone. you.

If you choose to participate in the hearing remotely, please be aware that you may be waiting in the queue for a unknown period of time while cases are being heard and you may have a limited amount of time to speak. If a lengthier response time is needed, please consider submitting written participation materials prior to the hearing (see below).

INTERPRETER

If a party or witness to this proceeding speaks limited English or is hearing-impaired, and needs an interpreter, a qualified interpreter will be appointed at no cost to you. Please inform us at least five business days before the hearing or no later than **July 14, 2022** if you require an interpreter for this proceeding and/or translation of its written materials in a language other than English. Please contact us by email at pdcc@pdc.wa.gov or call us at (360) 753-1111 or 1-877-601-2828 to request an interpreter.

SUBMITTING WRITTEN MATERIALS

In advance of the Brief Enforcement Hearing, you may provide a written response describing the facts of your case for consideration by the Presiding Officer, including any circumstances or mitigating factors you would like considered. Please submit your written response so it is received by the PDC no later than **July 14, 2022**.

SUBMITTING THE REPORTS

You are strongly encouraged to complete and submit the required reports online prior to the Brief Enforcement Hearing so they are received by the PDC no later than **July 14, 2022**. The reports must be submitted electronically and online instructions are enclosed.

If you have any questions about the hearing process prior to the hearing date, please contact PDC Staff by email at pdcc@pdc.wa.gov – and be sure to reference your case number in the subject line of the email.

Sincerely,

PDC Staff
Compliance and Enforcement Division



Enclosures

- C-1 Report Instructions
- F-1 Report Instructions
- Statement of Understanding
- Brief Enforcement Hearings FAQ
- PDC Penalty Schedule

How to Register Your Candidacy with the PDC

Candidates for most state and local offices in Washington are required to register with the Public Disclosure Commission. Registration is done electronically* through the PDC's website.

To begin, you must have a Secure Access Washington (SAW) account. SAW allows you to securely file data with many Washington state agencies. If you already have a SAW account, use that one for your PDC filing — you don't have to make a new account for us.

If you don't have a SAW account, it's a quick and easy process to get one. You can create a SAW account [on this web page](#). We have a video that shows you how [here](#).

Once you've created a SAW account, visit <https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov> and click on the "Manage Campaigns" button to access the campaign registration system.

The PDC's campaign registration system will lead you through the steps required to register your candidacy. The first step is to choose "Register a new candidate or committee" on the first screen of the registration system. From there, the system will ask a series of questions designed to collect the required information about your candidacy. [This video](#) shows you how it works.

The registration system helps filers get it right by calling their attention to missing information and not allowing registrations to be submitted until that information is provided. Filling in a required field with n/a, "none" or some other filler language will likely result in the PDC returning your registration to you.

Filers often ask whether they must report the name of a bank if they don't expect to raise money and don't have a campaign account. The answer is yes. [State law](#) requires candidates to report the name and address of their depositories. If you do not have a bank account for your campaign, report the name of the bank where you would likely open an account if your campaign later decides to have one. If at some point you do open a bank account, and it's at a different institution than what you originally reported, you can amend your registration to reflect that change.

Once you submit your candidacy information to the PDC, we will verify that you have supplied the required information and process your registration. You will receive an email once that process is complete.

*State law requires use of electronic filing when a system is available. Filers can request a hardship exemption to electronic filing based on lack of technological ability. Hardship exemption requests can be emailed to pdc@pdc.wa.gov

Source URL: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/candidates-committees/registration-reporting-basics>

Who Must File – Candidates who seek:

- state office (legislative or statewide executive);
- a state supreme court or state court of appeals position;
- local office in jurisdictions having 5,000 or more registered voters as of the last general election or in jurisdictions covering an entire county; or
- local office in jurisdictions of any size if the candidate receives or expects to receive \$5,000 or more in contributions

When to File – Within 2 weeks of becoming a candidate. A person becomes a candidate for PDC purposes when he or she **first** does any of the following:

- receives contributions, makes expenditures, or reserves space or facilities with intent to promote his or her candidacy;
- purchases commercial advertising space or broadcast time to promote his or her candidacy;
- authorizes another person to take one of these above actions on his or her behalf;
- announces publicly that he or she is seeking office; or
- files a declaration of candidacy with the appropriate elections official

Where to File – Online at <https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/campaigns/committees> Reports are considered filed as of the date they are electronically filed with the PDC. Candidates for city offices are advised to contact their City Clerk to learn if local filing is required by local ordinance. Keep a copy for the campaign's records.

When to Amend – Within 10 days of a material change to information provided on previously filed C-1.

“Officer” of a Candidate’s Committee – Officer of a candidate’s committee includes the following persons:

- any person designated as an officer on the C-1 registration statement; and
- any person who alone or in conjunction with other persons makes, directs, or authorizes contribution, expenditure, strategic or policy decisions on behalf of the committee
[[WAC 390-05-245](#)]

Overview of registration requirements & reporting options for candidates and their committees:
<https://www.pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/candidates-committees/registration-reporting-basics>

How to file your Personal Financial Affairs Statement with the PDC

<https://www.pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/personal-financial-affairs-disclosure/how-use-f-1-filing-system-step-step>

Electronic filing of financial affairs disclosure (F-1) statements is designed to simplify filing and to help filers know what to report.

See our video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=avzfNldYuv8 for a brief overview of the system and its features. You can also watch our training videos for step-by-step instruction:

For new filers www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBdcj0XxEFM

For returning filers www.youtube.com/watch?v=KG8dJgOJzIw

Appointed and elected officials required to submit Personal Financial Affairs (F-1) disclosures will use the online system to submit their statements.

Here is how to get access to the system:

1. Set up a SAW account

To get started, you'll need a Secure Access Washington (SAW) account, if you don't already have one. <https://secureaccess.wa.gov/myAccess/saw/select.do> This PDC video offers a guide to establishing a SAW account:

Establishing a SAW account www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdaoxXeEfNQ

In setting up a new SAW account, you might want to use an email that you have established already with the PDC. That will be the easiest way to get linked to your F-1 information.

2. Go to the new system

Once you have a SAW account, log into it, and go to the F-1 filing system by either using the "Add a Service" tool in the SAW system or by going using this link:

Financial Affairs online reporting system <https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/>
Please note that the system is not compatible with Internet Explorer.

If you don't see your name in the upper right-hand corner of the application, you can request access by clicking on "New filer." Enter the email you last used to file a F-1 with the PDC. You should receive an email with a one-time security code that you will need to use to access your reports.

If the email address you've used previously for PDC filings is one you no longer can access, contact the PDC Customer Service staff at pdc@pdc.wa.gov to report the new email address that you'll use for PDC reporting. Then, return to the application and request access.

3. Start filing

Once you've established access, you will see the landing page of the new filing application. You can click the button labeled "Prior" to see your past F-1 statements. Or, if you're ready to begin filing, click the "Start" button. If you have previously filed a F-1 report in this system, you should be able to import your information.

4. Find help

Questions about what to report? The application itself includes pop-up windows (marked with a ? icon) and a FAQ (see the Help? link in the upper right-hand corner) that leads you to instructions on our website. Our full F-1 reporting manual also is available at www.pdc.wa.gov/registration-reporting/personal-financial-affairs-disclosure/completing-f-1

If you don't see the answer to your question, contact us at pdc@pdc.wa.gov

*State law requires use of electronic filing when a system is available. Filers can request a hardship exemption to electronic filing based on lack of technological ability. Hardship exemption requests can be emailed to pdc@pdc.wa.gov

Public Disclosure Commission Statement of Understanding
KESTER AARON: PDC Case 109532

I hereby acknowledge that I, _____, did not
(Printed Name of Respondent)
timely file the required *Candidate Registration* (C-1 report) and *Personal Financial Affairs Statement* (F-1 report) with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) as required for a candidate seeking elected office in 2022. The C-1 and F-1 reports were due to be filed within two weeks of my becoming a candidate in the 2022 election or no later than June 3, 2022, thereby violating RCW 42.17A.205 and RCW 42.17A.700.

I want to avoid the time and expense resulting from a Brief Adjudicative Hearing (Brief Enforcement Hearing) before the Presiding Officer. Therefore, I am filing both the C-1 and F-1 reports, completing the *Statement of Understanding*, and enclosing a check or money order in the amount of \$200 (\$100 for each late-filed report), in lieu of a July 21, 2022 Brief Enforcement Hearing being held.

I understand that this will resolve all issues with the PDC regarding my failure to timely file the C-1 and F-1 reports, provided that my missing reports are completed online, and a check or money order for \$200 and this signed *Statement of Understanding* are mailed to the PDC and postmarked on or before **July 11, 2022**.

I further understand that Commission staff will not be scheduling a Brief Enforcement Hearing before the Presiding Officer regarding my obligation to timely file the C-1 and F-1 reports that were due within two weeks of becoming a candidate.

Signature of Respondent/Candidate

Date Signed

Be sure to certify and submit your C-1 and F-1 reports online, make your check or money order payable to "Washington State Treasurer" and **mail** this *Statement of Understanding* and your \$200 payment to the following address:

Public Disclosure Commission
PO Box 40908
Olympia, WA 98504-0908

BRIEF ENFORCEMENT HEARINGS – INFORMATION FOR FILERS

You have received a letter or email from the PDC scheduling a Brief Enforcement Hearing before a PDC Commissioner. Here are the answers to some Frequently Asked Questions about these brief hearings. This FAQ is informational only and should not be considered legal advice.

What is a Brief Enforcement Hearing?

The PDC is responsible for enforcing the State's campaign finance laws. We may schedule what is called a Brief Enforcement Hearing (also known as a "Brief Adjudicative Proceeding" under the Administrative Procedure Act) to address compliance with campaign finance reporting requirements when evidence shows the following types of alleged violations may have occurred:

- Failure to file or timely file required reports of financial affairs, campaign contributions and/or expenditures, independent expenditures, or funds spent on lobbying;
- Improper use of public facilities or resources in election campaigns when the value of public funds expended or facilities used was minimal; and
- Infractions of political advertising laws regarding sponsor identification or political party identification.

Brief Enforcement Hearings may be scheduled on other matters as well, if the basic facts are agreed to or are not being contested, and it is anticipated that the likely penalty imposed (if a violation is found) will be \$1,000 or less. The Commission has adopted a penalty schedule for Brief Enforcement Hearings which can be found in the Washington Administrative Code [WAC 390-37-143](#).

A Presiding Officer, who is a PDC Commissioner, will conduct the hearing. PDC Staff will present the case to the Presiding Officer, and you will have an opportunity to explain the circumstances related to the alleged violations. You may do this in person, by telephone, or in writing by email or letter.

Who are the parties involved?

The PDC Staff initiates and investigates possible violations, and brings cases forward to the Commission or its Presiding Officer. The person who is alleged to be out of compliance with the law is referred to as the "Respondent."

What can I do to avoid the hearing?

If you received a hearing notice, you still have the opportunity to come into compliance by filing the missing report(s), paying the stated penalty, and completing a Statement of Understanding stipulating to the violation(s). If you would like to take this approach, please contact PDC Compliance and Enforcement staff at pdcc@pdc.wa.gov

What do I do to prepare for the hearing?

The brief hearings are informal in nature. You are not required to have an attorney for this hearing. Hearings take place in the PDC meeting room where Commission meetings are held. You need to let the staff know at least five business days before the hearing whether you will be participating in-person or by phone, or prefer not to participate.

If you are having other people (witnesses) testify on your behalf, they must be available at the hearing, and staff needs to be informed of the number of witnesses and time needed for their testimony when you notify the staff of your participation. The scheduled hearing starting time is the start time for several matters that will be heard by the Presiding Officer, and your case may not be the first one heard. So you will need to remain available to participate until your case is called.

Waiving your right to participate. If you have submitted nothing in writing prior to the hearing, have made no other arrangements, and you do not appear in person, by phone, or through your legal counsel at the hearing, it will be presumed that you have decided to waive your right to participate at the hearing.

What happens at the hearing?

The Presiding Officer will introduce the participants and explain the procedure for the hearing. The hearing will be audio-taped.

The Presiding Officer will swear-in PDC Staff for them to present information regarding the alleged violation of law. You will then have an opportunity to testify, which is your opportunity to present information. All testimony by staff, Respondents, and witnesses is given under oath, but you are seated at a regular meeting table with a microphone, not in a courtroom. The Presiding Officer may ask you some questions about the information you, PDC Staff, or witnesses have presented. If you have decided to participate in writing instead of in person or by phone, your written information will be considered by the Presiding Officer as part of the hearing materials.

If at any time the Presiding Officer believes the alleged violations are serious enough to merit penalties greater than \$1,000, the Presiding Officer will adjourn the hearing and direct that the matter be scheduled for a hearing before the full Commission at a later time.

How is the decision made?

After considering all the information presented at the hearing, the Presiding Officer will make a decision about the allegation(s) and any appropriate penalty amount. The decision is typically announced orally at the hearing.

The Presiding Officer will use the penalty schedule referred to above that has been adopted by the Commission in rule to determine the appropriate penalty for certain types of violations, taking into account aggravating and mitigating factors. The penalty schedule is below.

What happens after my hearing?

A written decision, called an Initial Order, laying out the Presiding Officer's ruling, including the findings and the penalty, will be sent to you. The PDC tries to get orders issued within 10 days if possible, and not later than 30 days. If a monetary penalty is imposed in the Initial Order, the penalty must be paid to the **Washington State Treasurer**, and mailed to the address listed in the Order cover letter within the time frame stated in the Order.

Along with your Initial Order, you will also receive information about your appeal rights, including how to request review or reconsideration by the full Commission if you disagree with the Initial Order. Follow these procedures carefully if you wish to appeal. If there is no appeal before the PDC, the Initial Order becomes a Final Order, and further appeals must be made in Superior Court.

What are the rules that apply to the procedures of my hearing?

The PDC's laws and rules are available on the PDC's website at www.pdc.wa.gov. The laws are in the Revised Code of Washington ([RCW Chapter 42.17A](#)). The rules are in the Washington Administrative Code ([WAC Title 390](#)). Brief Adjudicative Proceedings are described at [WAC 390-37-140](#) through [390-37-150](#) and in the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) at [RCW 34.05.482-494](#).

Penalty Schedule [[WAC 390-37-143](#)]:

The Presiding Officer may assess a penalty up to one thousand dollars upon finding a violation of chapter [42.17A](#) RCW or Title 390 WAC.

(1) Base penalty amounts:

Violation	1st Occasion	2nd Occasion	3rd Occasion
Failure to timely file an accurate and complete statement of financial affairs (F-1):			
Filed report after hearing notice, but before enforcement hearing. Provided written explanation or appeared at hearing to explain mitigating circumstances. Did not enter into statement of understanding.	\$0 - \$150	\$150 - \$300	\$300 - \$600
Filed report after hearing notice, but before enforcement hearing. Did not enter into statement of understanding.	\$150	\$300	\$600
Failed to file report by date of enforcement hearing.	\$250	\$500	\$1,000
Candidate's failure to timely file an accurate and complete registration statement (C-1)/statement of financial affairs (F-1):			
Filed report after hearing notice, but before enforcement hearing. Provided written explanation or appeared at hearing to explain mitigating circumstances. Did not enter into statement of understanding.	\$0 - \$150 per report	\$150 - \$300 per report	\$300 - \$600 per report up to \$1,000
Filed report after hearing notice, but before enforcement hearing. Did not enter into statement of understanding.	\$150 per report	\$300 per report	\$600 per report up to \$1,000
Failed to file report by date of enforcement hearing.	\$250 per report	\$500 per report	consideration by full commission

[Excerpt above]

"Occasion" means established violation. Only violations in the last five years will be considered for the purpose of determining second and third occasions.

(2) In determining the appropriate penalty, the presiding officer may consider the nature of the violation and aggravating and mitigating factors, including:

(a) Whether the respondent is a first-time filer;

(b) The respondent's compliance history for the last five years, including whether the noncompliance was isolated or limited in nature, indicative of systematic or ongoing problems, or part of a pattern of violations by the respondent, or in the case of a political committee or other entity, part of a pattern of violations by the respondent's officers, staff, principal decision makers, consultants, or sponsoring organization;

(c) The respondent's unpaid penalties from a previous enforcement action;

(d) The impact on the public, including whether the noncompliance deprived the public of timely or accurate information during a time-sensitive period, or otherwise had a significant or material impact on the public;

- (e) The amount of financial activity by the respondent during the statement period or election cycle;
 - (f) Whether the late or unreported activity was significant in amount or duration under the circumstances, including in proportion to the total amount of expenditures by the respondent in the campaign or statement period;
 - (g) Corrective action or other remedial measures initiated by respondent prior to enforcement action, or promptly taken when noncompliance brought to respondent's attention;
 - (h) Good faith efforts to comply, including consultation with PDC staff prior to initiation of enforcement action and cooperation with PDC staff during enforcement action, and a demonstrated wish to acknowledge and take responsibility for the violation;
 - (i) Personal emergency or illness of the respondent or member of his or her immediate family;
 - (j) Other emergencies such as fire, flood, or utility failure preventing filing;
 - (k) Sophistication of respondent or the financing, staffing, or size of the respondent's campaign or organization; and
 - (l) PDC staff, third-party vendor, or equipment error, including technical problems at the agency preventing or delaying electronic filing.
- (3) The presiding officer has authority to suspend all or a portion of an assessed penalty under the conditions to be determined by that officer including, but not limited to, payment of the nonsuspended portion of the penalty within five business days of the date of the entry of the order in that case.
- (4) If, on the third occasion, a respondent has outstanding penalties or judgments, the matter will be directed to the full commission for consideration.
- (5) The presiding officer may direct a matter to the full commission if the officer believes one thousand dollars would be an insufficient penalty or the matter warrants consideration by the full commission. Cases will automatically be scheduled before the full commission for an enforcement action when the respondent:
- (a) Was found in violation during a previous reporting period;
 - (b) The violation remains in effect following any appeals; and
 - (c) The person has not filed the disclosure forms that were the subject of the prior violation at the time the current hearing notice is being sent.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [42.17A.110](#)(1) and 2018 c 304. WSR 18-24-074, § 390-37-143, filed 11/30/18, effective 12/31/18. Statutory Authority: RCW [42.17A.110](#)(1) and [42.17A.570](#). WSR 18-10-088, § 390-37-143, filed 5/1/18, effective 6/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW [42.17A.110](#). WSR 17-03-004, § 390-37-143, filed 1/4/17, effective 2/4/17.]