



**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

November 21, 2022

Delivered electronically to Wade Nelson at "wade@nelsonforsheriff.com"

Subject: Complaint filed by Kaylie Riddoch, PDC Case 112500

Dear Wade Nelson:

Below is a copy of an electronic letter sent to Kaylie Riddoch concerning a complaint filed with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC).

As noted in the letter to Kaylie Riddoch, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1) and will not conduct a more formal investigation into these allegations or take further enforcement action in this matter.

However, pursuant to WAC 390-37-060(1)(d), this serves as a formal written warning concerning your failure to comply with the political advertisement requirements noted in the enclosed letter sent to Kaylie Riddoch. Staff expects you to review all future political advertisement to ensure that it includes the required party preference prior to being made available to the general public. The Commission will consider this formal written warning in deciding on further Commission action if there are future violations of PDC laws or rules.

If you have questions, you may contact Jennifer Hansen at 1-360-586-4560 toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by,

Electronically signed

Jennifer Hansen
Compliance Officer

Electronically signed

Peter Frey Lavalley
Executive Director



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November 21, 2022

Delivered electronically to Kaylie Riddoch at "kaylie.riddoch@gmail.com"

Subject: Complaint regarding Wade Nelson, PDC Case 112500

Dear Kaylie Riddoch:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its review of the complaint you filed on September 18, 2022. The complaint alleged that Wade Neslon, a 2022 candidate for Spokane County Sheriff, may have violated RCW 42.17A.320 for failure to include party preference on written political advertisement.

PDC staff reviewed the allegations; the applicable statutes, rules, and reporting requirements; the response provided by the Respondent; the applicable PDC reports filed by the Respondent; and other relevant information, to determine whether the record supports a finding of one or more violations.

Based on staff's review, we found the following:

- On April 23, 2022, Wade Nelson submitted a Candidate Registration (C-1 report) declaring his candidacy for Spokane County Sheriff in the 2022 election, selecting the "Full Reporting" option and listing Charlotte Benjamin as Ministerial Treasurer. The C-1 report was amended on April 26, 2022 to update the campaign bank account location.
- The definition of "political advertising" found in RCW 42.17A.005(40) includes any advertising displays, newspaper ads, billboards, signs, brochures, articles, tabloids, flyers, letters, radio or television presentations, digital communication, or other means of mass communication, used for the purpose of appealing, directly or indirectly, for votes or for financial or other support or opposition in any election campaign.
- RCW 42.17A.320 requires that all political advertising relating to a candidate running for partisan office must include the candidate's party preference.
- The complaint alleged that the 2022 Nelson Campaign posted yard signs that failed to include the candidate's party preference as "Republican", depriving the public of this information.
- Staff noted that the Spokane County electronic voter's guide identified Wade Nelson as "prefers republican party".
- In his response, Mr. Nelson stated that he and his wife are not politicians, and this is his first time running for public office. He stated that the omission of the party preference was an oversight due to his lack of experience.
- Finally, Mr. Nelson stated that once the lack of party preference was brought to his attention, he took corrective action by adding it to the campaign website plus every sign and piece of literature they were able locate and update. In addition, Mr. Nelson confirmed that all new campaign materials included the required party preference.

It appears that the omission of party preference on political advertisement for the 2022 Nelson Campaign was due to the lack of knowledge of the Respondent as a first-time candidate. Staff found no evidence that Mr. Nelson purposely omitted his party preference in an effort to conceal it from the public.

Based on our findings staff has determined that, in this instance, failure to include party preference on written political advertisement does not amount to a finding of a violation that warrants further investigation.

Pursuant to WAC 390-37-060(1)(d), however, Wade Nelson will receive a formal written warning concerning failure to include his party preference on political advertisement. The formal written warning will include staff's expectation that Mr. Nelson will review all future political advertisement to ensure that it includes the required party preference prior to being made available to the general public. The Commission will consider the formal written warning in deciding on further Commission action if there are future violations of PDC laws or rules.

Based on this information, the PDC finds that no further action is warranted and has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1).

If you have questions, you may contact Jennifer Hansen at 1-360-586-4560 toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed

Jennifer Hansen
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

Electronically signed

Peter Frey Lavalley
Executive Director

cc: Wade Nelson