

Jones, Kevin (Legal)

reported via email

(Wed, 8 Jan 2025 at 5:44 AM)

To:"pdc@pdc.wa.gov" pdc@pdc.wa.gov

External Email

Dear PDC Staff – Please find attached Staples’ response to the complaint in PDC Case Number 164037.

Regards,

Kevin

Kevin Jones

VP, Associate General Counsel

Staples Legal Department

500 Staples Dr., Framingham, MA 01702

508.253.4573

kevin.jones@staples.com



500 STAPLES DR.
FRAMINGHAM, MA 01702
508.253.4573
KEVIN.JONES@STAPLES.COM

January 8, 2025

BY EMAIL

Public Disclosure Commission
ATTN: PDC Staff
711 Capitol Way S #206
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: PDC Case Number 164037

Dear PDC Staff:

I am writing on behalf of Staples the Office Superstore, LLC and its affiliates ("Staples") in response to the above-referenced complaint that was filed with the Public Disclosure Commission ("PDC") by Mr. Conner Edwards ("Complainant") alleging a violation of RCW 42.17A.345 for failure to timely provide complete commercial advertiser books of account upon request ("Complaint"). Thank you for giving Staples an opportunity to address the Complaint.

During the 2024 election season, Staples received other records requests pursuant to RCW 42.17A.345 and responded to them by producing available records (see, e.g., Exhibit 1 enclosed herewith). Unlike those other requests, however, Complainant's request did not identify any specific set of records that it was seeking. For example, the request did not identify which Staples business channel, stores, time period, candidates, customers, or advertisements it was seeking. Given the manner in which Staples' records of printing transactions are stored and retrieved, it would be unduly burdensome and not reasonably feasible to produce records without having any specified scope for the request.

In the Complaint, Complainant has provided a list of approximately 3500 campaign expenditures that contain the word "staples." However, the vast majority of these expenditures do not appear to be political advertising within the scope of RCW 42.17A.345. For example, the list includes many purchases of the product "staples" from other competing retailers such as Amazon and Office Depot, many purchases of general office supplies from Staples, and even for the potential printing transactions, many items which do not appear to be political advertisements. It would be unduly burdensome for Staples to attempt to identify any valid requests from among this overinclusive list.

The 2024 election season was the first time that the Staples Legal Department can recall receiving records requests pursuant to RCW 42.17A.345. Now that it has some initial experience in responding to these types of requests as reflected in the enclosed exhibit, Staples plans to develop additional procedures in an effort to expedite the response process, promote readiness to respond, and reduce the level of burden during future election cycles.

Staples appreciates the opportunity to address the Complaint and hopes that this response addresses any concerns that the Commission may have. Please let us know if you have any further questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin V. Jones".

Kevin V. Jones, Esq.
Vice President, Associate General Counsel
Staples Legal Department

Enclosure



500 STAPLES DR.
FRAMINGHAM, MA 01702

August 7, 2024

VIA EMAIL

[REDACTED]

RE: Records Request

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

Staples the Office Superstore, LLC ("Staples") is in receipt of your request that it provide copies of certain records for inspection pursuant to R.C.W. § 42.17A.345 and W.A.C. § 390-18-050. The subject matter of your request is political advertising printed by or for certain specified entities or individuals at Staples Store #1301 in Moses Lake, WA from January 1, 2023 to present.

Based on its review to date, Staples has not been able to identify any responsive printing transactions recorded under the names of the entities specified in your request (i.e., Grant County Republican Party Central Committee, GCRPCC, Grant County Republican, and Connecting Communities).

With respect to the individuals specified in your request, please find enclosed copies of responsive records for printing transactions recorded under those names that Staples has been able to identify as political advertising based on its review to date. These records have been labeled as STAPLES000001 through STAPLES000016 for reference.

Sincerely,

Staples Legal Department

Enclosures