

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:  
CASE NUMBER  
C 2022-124

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINANT: State Ethics Commission  
ADDRESS: 201 Executive Center Drive  
Suite 150  
Columbia, SC 29210  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (803) 253-4192

RESPONDENT: Carolyn E. Bush  
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]  
TITLE: Council Member – Town of Vance

Section 8-13-1308, S.C. Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires candidates to file Campaign Disclosures within ten (10) days of receiving or expending \$500; fifteen (15) days prior to each election; within ten (10) days of the end of each quarter; and a final report when the campaign account is closed. In addition, certified campaign reports detailing campaign contributions and expenditures must contain the total of contributions accepted, the name and address of each person making a contribution, the total expenditures made by or on behalf of the candidate or committee, and the name and address of each person to whom an expenditure is made from campaign funds. Pursuant to Section 8-13-1362 and Regulation 52-504 (C), the Pre-Election and quarterly report are required even when there have been no contributions or expenditures.

Records of the State Ethics Commission indicate that a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure was due between October 16, 2019 and October 21, 2019.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by a certified letter dated March 28, 2022 as described in the attached. To date, no properly completed Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure has been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1308(A), Section 8-13-1308(D)(1), and Section 8-13-1308 (F), S.C. Code Ann., 1976, as amended.

**If there is a finding of probable cause, the following documents become public record: the complaint, the response (if any) by respondent, and the notice of hearing. If a hearing is to be held, the final order and all exhibits become public record. If no hearing is held following a finding of probable cause, the final disposition of the matter becomes public record.**

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF Richland

Personally appeared before me Meghan L. Walker who, first being duly sworn, says that she has read and knows the contents of the above complaint and that the allegations contained therein, are true and correct to the best of her own knowledge, except for those matters therein based upon information and belief, and as to those she believes them to be true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 6th day of October, 2022

[REDACTED]  
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

[REDACTED]  
Notary Public for South Carolina  
My Commission expires 01/22/26

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

REPLY TO: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210 (803)253-4192  
ELECTRONIC COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )  
IN THE MATTER OF: )  
Complaint C2022-124 )  
Carolyn E. Bush )  
Respondent. )  
State Ethics Commission )  
Complainant. )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**NOTICE OF HEARING**

The State Ethics Commission has determined that there is probable cause pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, to support the allegations made in the above-captioned complaint. The Commission will convene a formal hearing into the matter in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i) & (j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.) on Thursday, June 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

The following allegation will be heard:

**COUNT ONE**  
**FAILURE TO FILE A PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(A), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Carolyn E. Bush, Town of Vance Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2019 Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure report, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(A).

You have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to call and examine witnesses, the right to introduce exhibits, and the right to cross-examine opposing witnesses. This hearing will be open to the public as required by Section 8-13-320(10)(j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The procedures to be followed are set forth in the Administrative Procedures

Act, Section 1-23-10, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976 as amended the State Ethics Act, Section 8-13-100, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.).

A pre-hearing conference may be scheduled prior to the hearing to allow exchange of witness lists and evidence, marking of exhibits, and disposition of motions or pleadings. In the event you fail to appear, judgment by default will be rendered against you. If there are any questions concerning the above notice or hearing times, please contact the State Ethics Commission.



Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director  
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 19<sup>th</sup> day,  
of January 2023.

*Certificate of Service by Certified Mail*

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT Carolyn E. Bush, PO Box 348eet, Vance, SC 29163 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 23rd day of January 2023, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



**Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant**  
State Ethics Commission (803) 253-4192

Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
 COUNTY OF RICHLAND )  
 )  
 IN THE MATTER OF: )  
 COMPLAINT C2022-124 )  
 )  
 State Ethics Commission, )  
 Complainant, )  
 )  
 Carolyn E. Bush, )  
 Respondent. )  
 \_\_\_\_\_ )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**CONSENT ORDER**

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on October 6, 2022. Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act), the Complaint against Carolyn E. Bush (Respondent) was considered by the Commission and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing on one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1308(A) for failing to file 2019 Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR). Prior to the call of the case, Respondent agreed to the following:

**STATEMENTS OF FACT**

1. At all times relevant, Respondent served on the Vance Town Council. Respondent was most recently a candidate in a November 5, 2019 election.
2. Respondent failed to file a Pre-Election CDR before the November 5, 2019 election.
3. In a March 28, 2022 certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent of her failure to file the 2019 Pre-Election CDR.
4. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered to Respondent's address of record and signed for by Respondent on April 11, 2022 at 2:12 p.m.
5. On April 18, 2022, Respondent filed a Pre-Election CDR for a 2016 election, but did not file a Pre-Election CDR for her 2019 election.
6. On April 21, 2022, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$10 per day.

7. On May 1, 2022, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$100 per day.
8. On November 22, 2022, Respondent filed her 2019 Pre-Election CDR disclosing no contributions or expenditures.
9. At the time she came into compliance, Respondent had accrued \$5,000 in late-filing penalties.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based upon the Statements of Fact, the Commission concludes, as a matter of law:

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a candidate pursuant to Section 8-13-1300(4). Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
2. Section 8-13-1308(A) provides, in relevant part:

. . . a candidate who does not receive or expend campaign contributions totaling an accumulated aggregate of five hundred dollars or more must file an initial certified campaign report fifteen days before an election.
3. Section 8-13-1510(A) provides, in relevant part:

. . . a person required to file a report or statement under this chapter who files a late statement or report . . . must be assessed a civil penalty as follows: (1) a fine of one hundred dollars if the statement or report is not filed within five days after the established deadline provided by law in this chapter; and (2) after notice has been given by certified or registered mail that a required statement or report has not been filed, a fine of ten dollars per calendar day for the first ten days after notice has been given, and one hundred dollars for each additional calendar day in which the required statement or report is not filed, not exceeding five thousand dollars.
4. Section 8-13-130 allows the Commission to “levy an enforcement or administrative fee on a person who is in violation” of the Ethics Act.

### DISCUSSION

The Commission found probable cause to charge Respondent with one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1308(A). Through this Consent Order, Respondent admits she violated the Ethics Act by failing to timely file her 2019 Pre-Election CDR. In mitigation, Respondent asserts she was unaware of the Pre-Election CDR filing requirement. Respondent further states that she is primary caregiver for her mother and brother, both of whom suffer from serious health conditions.

**DISPOSITION**

1. The Commission finds Respondent in violation of one (1) count of Section 8-13-1308(A).
2. The Commission adopts the Statements of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Discussion, and Disposition as agreed upon by the Respondent.

THEREFORE, the Commission hereby issues this written warning to Respondent, and orders Respondent to pay the Commission, within one (1) year from receipt of this Order, a late-filing penalty of \$500 and an administrative fee of \$300, for a total of \$800. The Commission declines to assess the remaining \$4,500 in accrued late-filing penalties.

By executing this Consent Order, Respondent understands that she is not only admitting to a violation of the Ethics Act, but also confessing to a judgment of \$800 in the event she does not make payment as provided for in this Order, in which case the Commission shall file a Judgment against Respondent with the County Clerk of Court in Respondent's last known County of residence, who shall enter this Order in the amount of \$800 (less any money paid) in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 7<sup>th</sup> DAY OF April 2023.



CAROLYN E. BUSH  
RESPONDENT

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIR