

# STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:**  
**CASE NUMBER**  
C 2024 - 010

## COMPLAINT FORM

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

**RESPONDENT:** Erica Cokley  
**ADDRESS:** [REDACTED]  
**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** (843) 478-5092  
**TITLE:** Former Charleston County Constituent  
Board Member District 10

Section 8-13-1120, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires disclosure of the source, type, and amount of income from a governmental entity and a listing of the private source and type of any income received by the filer or a member of the filer's immediate family during the reporting period. Respondent failed to report her private source of income, Voices United, on her 2020, 2021, and 2022 Statement of Economic Interests.

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 19, 2022 and October 24, 2022, and a quarterly Campaign Disclosure was due no later than July 10, 2022, January 10, 2023, April 10, 2023, July 10, 2023, October 10, 2023, and January 10, 2024. Respondent was sent an email reminder thirty days before and ten days before each Campaign Disclosure deadline.

Respondent was reminded of the income requirements by letters dated May 9, 2022, June 6, 2022, and June 13, 2022 and was reminded of the Campaign Disclosure requirements by letters dated June 9, 2023 and March 5, 2024 as described in the attached. To date, a properly completed 2020 Statement of Economic Interests, 2021 Statement of Economic Interests, 2022 Statement of Economic Interests, Pre-Election, Quarter 2 2022, Quarter 4 2022, Quarter 1 2023, Quarter 2 2023, Quarter 3 2023, and Quarter 4 2023 Campaign Disclosures have not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1120, 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 Walker Davson 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  
16th day of March, 2024

[REDACTED]  
Meghan Walker Davson, 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**

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND ) BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
) )  
IN THE MATTER OF: ) )  
) )  
Complaint C2024-010 ) )  
) )  
State Ethics Commission ) **NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Complainant. ) )  
) )  
Erica Cokley ) )  
Respondent. ) )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

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, 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, October 16, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

The following allegations will be heard:

**COUNT ONE**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose contributions of \$100 or less in the aggregate on her 2021 Quarter 3 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT TWO**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member,

did in Richland County, fail to disclose contributions of \$100 or less in the aggregate on her 2021 Quarter 4 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT THREE**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose contributions of \$100 or more on her CDRs, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT FOUR**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose thirteen (13) expenditures totaling \$83.32 on her 2020 Quarter 3 and 2020 Quarter 4 CDRs, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT FIVE**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose an October 8, 2020 cash withdrawal from Murphy Express in the amount of \$40.00, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT SIX**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose a November 13, 2020 expenditure to Sq Kenneth Seabrook in the amount of \$20.00, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT SEVEN**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose a November 27, 2020 expenditure to Godaddy.com in the amount of \$21.79, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT EIGHT**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose a November 27, 2020 expenditure to Walmart in the amount of \$215.11, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT NINE**  
**FAILURE TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose a November 30, 2020 expenditure to Walmart Super Center in the amount of \$135.66, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F).

**COUNT TEN**  
**FAILURE TO DEPOSIT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS**  
**SECTION 8-13-1312, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to deposit two (2) campaign contributions reported on Respondent's 2020 Quarter 3/Pre-Election CDR into her campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1312.

**COUNT ELEVEN**  
**FAILURE TO DEPOSIT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS**  
**SECTION 8-13-1312, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to deposit one (1) campaign contribution reported on Respondent's 2020 Quarter 4 CDR into her campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1312.

**COUNT TWELVE**  
**FAILURE TO MAKE CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE THROUGH CAMPAIGN**  
**ACCOUNT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1312, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, fail to make an October 7, 2020 expenditure to Regal Prints, LLC in the amount of \$50.00 through her campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1312.

**COUNT THIRTEEN**  
**EXCESSIVE CASH WITHDRAWAL**  
**SECTION 8-13-1348(E), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, withdrawal \$200.00 from her campaign bank account on October 1, 2020, in violation of Section 8-13-1348(E).

**COUNT FOURTEEN**  
**EXCESSIVE CASH WITHDRAWAL**  
**SECTION 8-13-1348(E), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, withdrawal \$200.00 from her campaign bank account on October 13, 2020, in violation of Section 8-13-1348(E).

**COUNT FIFTEEN**  
**USE OF CAMPAIGN FUNDS FOR PERSONAL EXPENSES**  
**SECTION 8-13-1348(A), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, use campaign funds to pay a personal expense of \$60.96 to Marshalls on August 11, 2020, in violation of Section 8-13-1348(A).

**COUNT SIXTEEN**  
**USE OF CAMPAIGN FUNDS FOR PERSONAL EXPENSES**  
**SECTION 8-13-1348(A), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, use campaign funds to pay a personal expense of \$402.42 to Progressive Insurance on September 1, 2020, in violation of Section 8-13-1348(A).

**COUNT SEVENTEEN**  
**ACCEPTANCE OF CASH EXCEEDING CASH CONTRIBUTION LIMIT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1314(A)(2), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Erica Cokley, former Charleston County School Board - District 10 Board member, did in Richland County, accept \$217.03 in cash contribution(s), in violation of Section 8-13-1314(A)(2).

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.

Dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day,  
of March 2025.

  
Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director  
State Ethics Commission

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF: )

Complaint C2024-010 )

State Ethics Commission, )  
Complainant. )

**MOTION TO DISMISS**


Erica Cokley, )  
Respondent. )

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10) of South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act) and corresponding regulations S.C. Code Ann. Regs 52-703(C) and 52-706(C), the undersigned hereby seeks an Order dismissing the above-captioned complaint. This motion is based on the following:

1. Respondent was first elected to the Charleston County School District (District) Board of Trustees (Board) in a November 3, 2020 election. Respondent subsequently filed to run for re-election in a November 8, 2022 election.
2. The Complaint was filed on March 18, 2024. The Commission subsequently found probable cause to believe Respondent violated the Ethics Act by (1) failing to disclose contributions and expenditures, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F); (2) failing to make contributions and expenditures out of, and failing to deposit contributions into, a campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1312; and (3) making improper withdrawals and expenditures from a campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1348.
3. The Commission's investigation revealed that in November 2021, Respondent received a threatening text message stating that her son would soon be dead. Thereafter, in January 2022, Respondent's 23-year-old son died.
4. Respondent attempted to withdraw from the November 8, 2022 election, but her name ultimately appeared on the ballot and she was declared the winner. Respondent declined to assume the office.
5. Commission Investigators have recently discovered that Respondent is without a permanent residence and has very limited resources, including limited access to internet and telephone.

6. Commission staff believes continuing to pursue this Complaint would produce an unnecessary and undue hardship on Respondent and, in the interests of justice, asks that the matter be dismissed.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Courtney M. Laster (Bar No. 77807)  
S.C. State Ethics Commission  
201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150  
Columbia, South Carolina 29210  
claster@ethics.sc.gov

Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF: )

Complaint C2024-010 )

State Ethics Commission, )  
Complainant. )

**ORDER**

Erica Cokley, )  
Respondent. )

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act), the State Ethics Commission convened on November 20, 2025 and heard Commission staff's Motion to Dismiss the above-captioned complaint based on the following:

1. Respondent ran for office in a November 8, 2022 election for the Charleston County School District (District) Board of Trustees (Board).
2. The Complaint was filed on March 18, 2024. The Commission subsequently found probable cause to believe Respondent violated the Ethics Act by (1) failing to disclose contributions and expenditures, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F); (2) failing to make contributions and expenditures out of, and failing to deposit contributions into, a campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1312; and (3) making improper withdrawals and expenditures from a campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1348.
3. The Commission's investigation revealed that in November 2021, Respondent received a threatening text message stating that her son would soon be dead. Thereafter, in January 2022, Respondent's 23-year-old son died.
4. Respondent attempted to withdraw from the November 8, 2022 election, but her name ultimately appeared on the ballot and she was declared the winner. Respondent declined to assume the office.
5. Commission Investigators have recently discovered that Respondent is without a permanent residence and has very limited resources, including limited access to internet and telephone.
6. Commission staff believes continuing to pursue this Complaint would produce an unnecessary and undue hardship on Respondent and be contrary to the interests of justice.

*Handwritten signature and initials*

Based on the foregoing, and in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-703(C) and 52-706(C), the Commission hereby grants the Motion to Dismiss C2024-010.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 20<sup>th</sup> DAY OF November, 2025.

SOUTH CAROLINA ETHICS COMMISSION

  
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F. XAVIER STARKES, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina