

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:

CASE NUMBER

C 2025-005

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Kristen M. Poston
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Former Commissioner – James Island
Public Service District

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 an accumulated aggregate of \$500.00 or more; 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 Quarter 3 2022 and Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure was due between October 19, 2022 and October 24, 2022, and a Campaign Disclosure was due no later than January 10, 2023, April 10, 2023, July 10, 2023, October 10, 2023, January 10, 2024, April 10, 2024, July 10, 2024, and October 10, 2024. Respondent was sent an email reminder thirty days before and ten days before each Campaign Disclosure deadline.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirements by a certified letter dated February 16, 2024 as described in the attached. To date, a properly completed Quarter 3 2022 and Pre-Election, Quarter 4 2022, Quarter 1 2023, Quarter 2 2023, Quarter 3 2023, Quarter 4 2023, Quarter 1 2024, Quarter 2 2024, and Quarter 3 2024 Campaign Disclosure have not 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 Walker Dayson 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
8th day of January 2025
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director

Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission expires 01/27/26

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 C2025-005)
State Ethics Commission)
Complainant.)
Kristen M. Poston)
Respondent.)
_____)

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, 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, February 19, 2026 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 Kristin M. Poston, former Commissioner of the James Island Public Service District, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2022 Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR), 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 Walker Dayson, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 19th day,
of September 2025.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on RESPONDENT Kristen M. Poston, 1438 Kemper Ave., Charleston, SC 29412 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 19th day of September 2025, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



Columbia, South Carolina

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

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2025-005)

State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant,)

vs.)

Kristen M. Poston,)
Respondent.)
_____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CONSENT ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on January 8, 2025. Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act), the Complaint against Kristen M. Poston (Respondent) was considered by the Commission and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Prior to the call of the case, Respondent agreed to the following:

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. Respondent was elected as a Commissioner of the James Island Public Service District on November 6, 2018. Respondent ran for re-election in the November 8, 2022, general election but was defeated.
2. Respondent failed to file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) fifteen (15) days prior to the November 8, 2022, general election.
3. In a February 16, 2024, certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent of her failure to timely file a 2022 Pre-Election CDR. According to the United States Postal Service (USPS), the certified letter was "Delivered, Left with Individual" at Respondent's address of record on February 21, 2024, at 3:40 p.m. The return receipt contains an illegible signature.
4. On February 4, 2026, Respondent came into compliance by filing a 2022 Pre-Election CDR.

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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. Respondent was required to file a 2022 Pre-Election CDR fifteen (15) days prior to her November 8, 2022, election in accordance with Section 8-13-1308(A), which 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 or fails to file a required 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 Section 8-13-1308(A) for failing to timely file a 2022 Pre-Election CDR prior to the November 8, 2022, election. Through this Consent Order, Respondent admits she violated the Ethics Act as outlined herein. In mitigation, Respondent states she has been diagnosed with and undergone treatment for a serious medical condition in recent years which has posed a challenge to her ability to participate meaningfully in the Commission’s attempts to bring her filing into compliance. In addition, her diagnosis and treatment affect her ability to maintain full-time employment, and a late-filing penalty would likely

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impose significant financial hardship.

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 Public Reprimand to Respondent and orders Respondent to pay the Commission, within one (1) year from receipt of this Order, an administrative fee of \$300.00. The Commission declines to assess any late-filing penalties given the facts and mitigation outlined herein.

By executing this Consent Order, Respondent understands that she is confessing to a judgment of \$300.00 (less any money paid to the Commission) in the event she does not make full and timely payment as provided in this Order. In that event, the Commission shall file a Judgment against Respondent in the County of Respondent's last known residence. Upon said filing, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$300.00 (less any money paid to the Commission) in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 11th DAY OF February 2026.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


KRISTEN M. POSTON
RESPONDENT

