

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
C 2025-021

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Estley Anderson
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Former Todd Swamp Watershed
Conservation District Commissioner

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 properly report the source of private income on the 2021 and 2022 Statement of Economic Interests.

Section 8-13-1140, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires the filing of an updated Statement of Economic Interests for the previous calendar year annually thereafter prior to March 30. Records in the State Ethics Commission indicate that the Respondent was required to file the 2023 Statement of Economic Interests.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirements by letters dated May 21, 2024 and September 19, 2024 as described in the attached. In addition, an email reminder was sent thirty days prior to the deadline. To date, a 2023 Statement of Economic Interests has not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1120 and Section 8-13-1140, SC 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 26th day of February, 2025

[REDACTED]
Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director

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

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2025-021)
State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)
Estley Anderson,)
Respondent.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter came before the South Carolina Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on February 26, 2025. The Commission’s Executive Director reviewed the Complaint, determined it contained facts sufficient to warrant an investigation, and ordered an investigation. On July 17, 2025, the Commission reviewed the Complaint and investigative findings to determine whether probable cause existed to charge Estley Anderson (Respondent) with violating the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act). For the reasons stated herein, the Commission finds probable cause exists but waives further proceedings.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

1. Respondent began serving as a Commissioner for the Todd Swamp Watershed Conservation District on December 1, 2020.
2. Respondent did not file a 2023 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) by March 30, 2023.
3. During a February 29, 2024, Watershed meeting, Respondent announced he intended to resign because he was moving away from the area.
4. Respondent did not file a 2024 SEI on or before March 30, 2024.
5. On April 6, 2024, Respondent submitted a written resignation to the Watershed.
6. In a May 21, 2024 certified letter mailed to Respondent’s address of record, the Commission

JXL #1

notified Respondent of his failure to file the 2023 SEI. This letter was returned to the Commission on July 11, 2024, as “unclaimed.”

7. On September 19, 2024, the certified letter was re-mailed via first-class mail with a tracking number. According to the United States Postal Service (USPS), the letter was delivered on September 21, 2024.
8. On June 20, 2025, following the filing of the Complaint, Respondent filed his 2023 and 2024 SEIs with the assistance of Commission staff. Respondent advised Commission investigators that he did not recall receiving the Commission’s letter regarding the 2023 SEI.

LAW

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320, the Commission is empowered to receive complaints and conduct investigations related to violations of the Ethics Act. Following the receipt of a Complaint and completion of a corresponding investigation, the Commission must determine whether there is probable cause to believe a violation of the Ethics Act occurred. S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-320(10)(i). If the Commission determines probable cause exists, it may order a hearing on the merits or, if the Respondent has acted to remedy or correct the alleged violation, it may waive further proceedings. S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-320(10)(i). The decision to waive further proceedings lies within the sound discretion of the Commission.

Section 8-13-1140 requires public officials to file a SEI on or before March 30 of each year. In addition, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-601(C) provides, “[a] person required to file a [SEI] who is no longer in office on March 30 of the year following the first filing is not required to file an updated [SEI].”

DECISION

Based on evidence presented, the Commission hereby determines there is probable cause

JAF #2

to believe that Respondent violated Section 8-13-1140 of the Ethics Act by failing to timely file 2023 and 2024 SEIs because Respondent was in office on March 30 of each year. See S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-601(C). However, given that Respondent has since filed his 2023 and 2024 SEIs, the Commission hereby waives further proceedings with regard to this Complaint.

THEREFORE, pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, the Commission hereby finds probable cause and waives further proceedings.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 31st DAY OF July, 2025.

SOUTH CAROLINA ETHICS COMMISSION



F. XAVIER STARKES, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina