

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:

CASE NUMBER

C 2025-048

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Kelly J. Sherman
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (843) 618-3181
TITLE: Former Commissioner – Palmetto Rural
Fire 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 Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure was due between October 19, 2022 and October 24, 2022.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by letters dated June 28, 2024, September 27, 2024, and December 19, 2024 as described in the attached. To date, a properly completed Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure has 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 May, 2025

Meghan W. Dayson
Meghan Walker Dayson, 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
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND) BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2025-048)

State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)

DECISION AND ORDER

Kelly J. Sherman,)
Respondent.)

This matter came before the South Carolina Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on May 8, 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 Kelly J. Sherman (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 was a successful candidate for Palmetto Rural Fire District in a November 8, 2022 general election.
2. Respondent failed to file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) between October 19, 2022 and October 24, 2022.
3. In a June 28, 2024 certified letter mailed to Respondent at 1757 Candy Lane in Florence, the Commission notified Respondent of her failure to timely file a 2022 Pre-Election. According to the United States Postal Service (USPS), the letter was never delivered.
4. In a first-class letter dated December 19, 2024, mailed to 1757 Candy Lane in Florence, the Commission notified Respondent that she still had not filed the 2022 Pre-Election CDR.
5. Following the filing of the Complaint, a Commission Investigator contacted Respondent.

JAK #1

Respondent stated she did not receive the Commission's correspondence. Respondent thereafter filed her 2022 Pre-Election CDR disclosing no contributions or expenditures.

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 an investigation, the Commission must determine whether there is probable cause to believe a violation of the Ethics Act occurred. Section 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 taken action to remedy or correct the alleged violation, it may waive further proceedings. Section 8-13-320(10)(i). The decision to waive further proceedings lies within the sound discretion of the Commission. In addition, Section 8-13-1308 requires all candidates to file a Pre-Election CDR fifteen (15) days before an election.

DECISION

Based on evidence presented, the Commission hereby determines there is probable cause to believe that Respondent violated Section 8-13-1308(A) of the Ethics Act by failing to file a 2022 Pre-Election CDR fifteen (15) days prior to her November 8, 2022 election. However, given that Respondent has corrected this error, the Commission hereby waives further proceedings regarding this Complaint.

THEREFORE, pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, the Commission hereby 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