

Official Use Only
Date Received:

2026-02

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
RECEIVED FEB 4 '26 PM 3:30:12



STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
201 Executive Center Drive
Suite 150
Columbia, SC 29210
ETHICS ACT COMPLAINT FORM

Section 1. READ BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM:

Investigative Authority: The Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (the Act) gives the State Ethics Commission (Commission) the authority to investigate complaints against candidates, public officials, public members, public employees, at the state or local government level in South Carolina as well as lobbyists, and lobbyist's principals.

The Commission has the authority to investigate violations of Title 8, Chapter 13 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 2, Chapter 17 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 59, Chapter 150 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, various provisions of Title 42, Chapter 3 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and various provisions of Title 58, Chapter 3 of the South Carolina Code of Laws

Statute of Limitations: Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(9)(d) of the Act, the Commission cannot take action on a complaint more than four years after the violation is alleged to have occurred.

Blackout Period: Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(9)(b)(1) of the Act, no complaint may be accepted against a candidate for elective office during the fifty-day period before an election in which he is a candidate.

Please note that the Commission does not have the jurisdiction to investigate alleged violations of South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act, violations of the criminal code, instances of rude or discourteous treatment, federal officials, or violations of local ordinances, policies, or procedures.

Section 2. PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT:

Complaints must be submitted by mailing the original of a fully completed complaint form to the Commission at 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, SC 29210. Failing to completely fill out the complaint form will result in the form being returned to you without an investigation being opened. Complaint forms must be either typed or written in clear, legible handwriting.

Both the Complainant and the Respondent have the right to be represented by legal counsel of their choosing. If either the complainant and/or the respondent chooses to be represented by legal counsel, they do so at their own expense.

Section 3. CONFIDENTIALITY:

Complaint forms become public documents if the Commission finds probable cause that a violation of law has occurred. Please note that upon receiving a properly filed complaint form, the Commission will share an unredacted copy of the complaint with the Respondent whether or not an investigation is ordered.

Section 4. COMPLAINT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Please check each circle to acknowledge that you have read and understand the following:

- ☒ I understand that I may be called to testify in an administrative or criminal proceeding should probable cause be found on this matter.
- ☒ I understand that I may be subpoenaed to sit for a deposition where I will be required to answer questions under oath.
- ☒ I understand that my name, address, and phone number will be shared with the Respondent.
- ☒ I understand that my name may be made public by the Respondent or the Commission.

Section 5. CHECK THE POSITION OF THE PERSON AGAINST WHOM THIS COMPLAINT IS FILED:

- ☐ Candidate for public office
- ☐ Elected official at the state or local level
- ☐ Employee of local or state government
- ☐ Lobbyist
- ☐ Lobbyist's Principal
- ☐ Member of South Carolina Legislature
- ☒ Public member (a person appointed to a part-time board, commission, or council at the state or local level)

Section 6. COMPLAINANT AND RESPONDENT INFORMATION:

I. PERSON BRINGING THE COMPLAINT (COMPLAINANT)		
Name:	State Ethics Commission	
Address:	201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150	
City:	Columbia	State: SC Zip Code: 29210
Telephone	(803) 253-4192	Email Address:
II. PERSON AGAINST WHOM COMPLAINT IS BROUGHT (RESPONDENT)		
Name:	John R. Rice	
Address:	[REDACTED]	
City:	Allendale	State: SC Zip Code: 29810
Telephone	[REDACTED]	

Section 7. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS COMPLAINT COMES FROM:

- ☒ Personal knowledge
- ☐ Media Reports
- ☐ From a third-party
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Please specify: _____

Section 8: STATEMENT OF FACTS (Please state the actions of the Respondent upon which your ethics complaint is based):

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. As the Chair of Allendale County Conservation District, Respondent failed to properly report the source of personal income and failed to report his business interests and/or family income from Rice Land and Timber on the 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by a letter dated August 23, 2024 as described in the attached. To date, a properly amended 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests have not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1120, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended.

Section 9. VERIFICATION BY OATH OR AFFIRMATION - ORIGINAL NOTARY AND SIGNATURES REQUIRED:

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF RICHLAND

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

Sworn to and subscribed before me this
4th day of February, 2026



Meghan Walker Dayson
Executive Director



Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission expires March 14, 2033

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND	)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
	)	
IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
Complaint C2026-012	)	
	)	
State Ethics Commission	)	NOTICE OF HEARING
Complainant.	)	
	)	
John R. Rice	)	
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, August 20, 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 allegations will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO REPORT INCOME ON STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1120(A) S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That John R. Rice, Chairman of Allendale County Conservation District, failed to identify private sources of income on his 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1120(A).

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO REPORT SPOUSAL INCOME ON STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC
INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1120(A), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That John R. Rice, Chairman of Allendale County Conservation District, failed to identify

private sources of income for his spouse on his 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1120(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 21st day,
of May 2026

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on RESPONDENT John R. Rice, 1798 Ashe Road, Allendale, SC 29810 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 20 day of May 2026, by CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



Maquita S. Kessler, Paralegal
State Ethics Commission

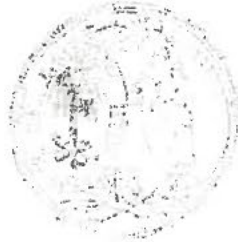
Columbia, South Carolina

(803) 253-4192

Official Use Only
Date Received:

2026-012

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
RECEIVED FEB 4 '26 PM 3:30:12



STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
201 Executive Center Drive
Suite 150
Columbia, SC 29210
ETHICS ACT COMPLAINT FORM

Section 1. READ BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM:

Investigative Authority: The Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (the Act) gives the State Ethics Commission (Commission) the authority to investigate complaints against candidates, public officials, public members, public employees, at the state or local government level in South Carolina as well as lobbyists, and lobbyist's principals.

The Commission has the authority to investigate violations of Title 8, Chapter 13 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 2, Chapter 17 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 59, Chapter 150 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, various provisions of Title 42, Chapter 3 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, and various provisions of Title 58, Chapter 3 of the South Carolina Code of Laws

Statute of Limitations: Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(9)(d) of the Act, the Commission cannot take action on a complaint more than four years after the violation is alleged to have occurred.

Blackout Period: Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(9)(b)(1) of the Act, no complaint may be accepted against a candidate for elective office during the fifty-day period before an election in which he is a candidate.

Please note that the Commission does not have the jurisdiction to investigate alleged violations of South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act, violations of the criminal code, instances of rude or discourteous treatment, federal officials, or violations of local ordinances, policies, or procedures.

Section 2. PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT:

Complaints must be submitted by mailing the original of a fully completed complaint form to the Commission at 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, SC 29210. Failing to completely fill out the complaint form will result in the form being returned to you without an investigation being opened. Complaint forms must be either typed or written in clear, legible handwriting.

Both the Complainant and the Respondent have the right to be represented by legal counsel of their choosing. If either the complainant and/or the respondent chooses to be represented by legal counsel, they do so at their own expense.

Section 3. CONFIDENTIALITY:

Complaint forms become public documents if the Commission finds probable cause that a violation of law has occurred. Please note that upon receiving a properly filed complaint form, the Commission will share an unredacted copy of the complaint with the Respondent whether or not an investigation is ordered.

Section 4. COMPLAINT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Please check each circle to acknowledge that you have read and understand the following:

- ☒ I understand that I may be called to testify in an administrative or criminal proceeding should probable cause be found on this matter.
- ☒ I understand that I may be subpoenaed to sit for a deposition where I will be required to answer questions under oath.
- ☒ I understand that my name, address, and phone number will be shared with the Respondent.
- ☒ I understand that my name may be made public by the Respondent or the Commission.

Section 5. CHECK THE POSITION OF THE PERSON AGAINST WHOM THIS COMPLAINT IS FILED:

- ☐ Candidate for public office
- ☐ Elected official at the state or local level
- ☐ Employee of local or state government
- ☐ Lobbyist
- ☐ Lobbyist's Principal
- ☐ Member of South Carolina Legislature
- ☒ Public member (a person appointed to a part-time board, commission, or council at the state or local level)

Section 6. COMPLAINANT AND RESPONDENT INFORMATION:

I. PERSON BRINGING THE COMPLAINT (COMPLAINANT)			
Name:	State Ethics Commission		
Address:	201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150		
City:	Columbia	State: SC	Zip Code: 29210
Telephone	(803) 253-4192	Email Address:	
II. PERSON AGAINST WHOM COMPLAINT IS BROUGHT (RESPONDENT)			
Name:	John R. Rice		
Address:	[REDACTED]		
City:	[REDACTED]	State: [REDACTED]	Zip Code: [REDACTED]
Telephone	[REDACTED]		

Section 7. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS COMPLAINT COMES FROM:

- ☒ Personal knowledge
- ☐ Media Reports
- ☐ From a third-party
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Please specify: _____

Section 8: STATEMENT OF FACTS (Please state the actions of the Respondent upon which your ethics complaint is based):

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. As the Chair of Allendale County Conservation District, Respondent failed to properly report the source of personal income and failed to report his business interests and/or family income from Rice Land and Timber on the 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by a letter dated August 23, 2024 as described in the attached. To date, a properly amended 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests have not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1120, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended.

Section 9. VERIFICATION BY OATH OR AFFIRMATION - ORIGINAL NOTARY AND SIGNATURES REQUIRED:

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF RICHLAND

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

Sworn to and subscribed before me this
4th day of February, 2026


Meghan Walker Dayson
Executive Director


Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission expires March 14, 2033

John R. Rice

August 23, 2024: A letter is sent regarding his failure to properly report private income on the 2022, 2023, and 2024 Statement of Economic Interests.

December 11, 2025: Legal Department staff speaks to Mr. Rice prior to a complaint. She sends a follow up email.

January 28, 2026: After no response, complaint is filed.

Previous or Current Non-Compliance

Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure (due 10-18-10)	Penalty waived
2012 Statement of Economic Interests	Paid \$100.00
2023 Statement of Economic Interests	GEAR

From: O'Bryan, Rachael <robryan@ethics.sc.gov>
Sent on: Thursday, December 11, 2025 3:48:24 PM
To: rice.john@valmet.com
CC: Baldwin, Melvin <mbaldwin@ethics.sc.gov>; Nabors, Kristin <kristina@ethics.sc.gov>
Subject: Amended Filings - John R. Rice

Mr. Rice,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me just now. When you have a moment, you need to amend your Statements of Economic Interests for 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025. Based on our conversation, you would not be disclosing any income for yourself, private or government. So, you would remove the income you reported on the Personal Income - Private Source (this is the Self Employment you provided). Under Family Members' Income you will need to disclose your wife's income under Private Sources "Rice Land & Timber" and define the type, i.e., salary, wages, etc.

If you have any questions regarding amended your SEIs please let Mel Baldwin know. He is copied on this email and can be reached at our general number listed in my signature block.

Please make these amendments in ten (10) business days. Failure to do so could result in a complaint action being filed.

Thank you,

Rachael O'Bryan
Administrative Assistant - Legal
South Carolina State Ethics Commission
203 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150
Columbia, SC 29210
Phone: 803.253.4192
Fax: 803.253.7539

State of South Carolina

State Ethics Commission

SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIRMAN
F. XAVIER STARKES, VICE CHAIRMAN
BRYANT S. CALDWELL
AJ HOLLOWAY



BRANDOLYN THOMAS PINKSTON
MARY HUNTER B. TOMLINSON
NEAL D. TRUSLOW
MATTHEW N. TYLER

201 EXECUTIVE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 150
COLUMBIA, S.C. 29210

MEGHAN WALKER DAYSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 23, 2024

Mr. John R. Rice
1798 Ashe Road
Allendale, SC 29810

Dear Mr. Rice:

A review of your Statement of Economic Interests indicates that you failed to properly report income from government and private sources for you and your immediate family:

- On the 2021 Statement of Economic Interests, you did not report private income.
- On the 2022-2024 Statement of Economic Interests, you reported private income from "Self". This is not an acceptable source of income and must be a business or company name.

Government income of \$500.00 or more must be reported. In addition, the source (Company/Business) and the type (salary, wages, etc.) but not the amount of any private income is required to be reported in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-1120. If applicable, you must amend your report within ten days to include all government and private sources of income received by you and your immediate family. Immediate family means a child residing in the household, a spouse, or an individual claimed as a dependent for income tax purposes. Section 8-13-100(19) defines income as "the receipt or promise of any consideration, whether or not legally enforceable." If you did not receive any income from a private or government source that must be disclosed, please notify this office in writing. Failure to comply will result in complaint action. Please contact this agency with any questions.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Mel Baldwin.

Mel Baldwin
Administrative Assistant

com217

ALLENDALE COUNTY LOCAL BUSINESSES

Home Business Local Businesses



ADULT DAYCARE/NURSING HOMES

Q Enter search terms...



Alon Jay Adult Daycare Center



Alon-Jay Adult Daycare Center



C & S Assisted Living



John Edward Harter Nursing Center



Triple E Adult Day Care



ADVERTISING

Gooding Advertising

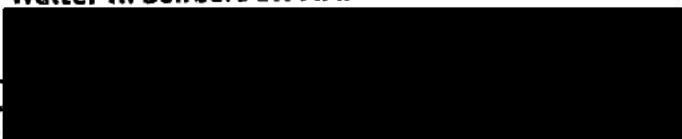


ATTORNEYS

Gooding and Gooding P. A..



Walter H. Sanders Jr. P.A.



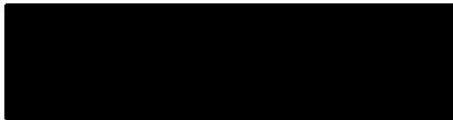
LOGGING

Rice Land and Timber LLC



rice.john@yahoo.com

Riley Forest Products LLC



Wilson Forest Products LLC



MEDIA

WDOG Radio FM 93.5



PHOTOGRAPHY

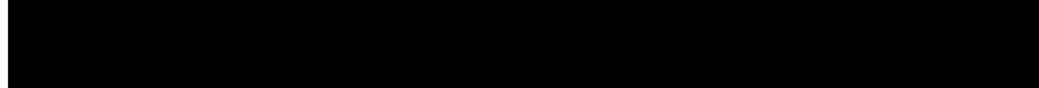
224 PHOTOGRAPHY



224photography.com

MEDICAL: HOSPITALS

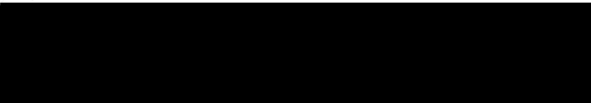
Allendale County Hospital



www.achospital.org

MEDICAL: PHYSICIANS

Laffitte & Warren Medical Center



SEI Report 2022

Disclosing Interests for: 2021

Version: Original Report

Status: Submitted March 14, 2022

PDF Generated: January 27, 2026 at 2:33:42 PM GMT-5

Your Details

Name

John R Rice

Mailing Address

[REDACTED]

County
Allendale

Phone Number

Office Phone

[REDACTED]

Positions Reported

Appointed Position

Chief Administrative Official/Chair

Entity Type Allendale County Conservation District

Appointed to Office 11/2019

Personal Income for 2021

Private Income

Source

Income Type

Self Employment

Self Employment

Income from an SC Governmental Entity

Source

Income Type

Income Amount for 2021

N/A

N/A

\$0.00

Income from Government Contractors Associated with a Governmental Entity

Source

Amount ...

Relationship with...

Nature of Bu...

Entity Invol...

Street Address

No entries

to display.

Gifts Received

Gift Description

Estimated Value

Given By

Relationship to Gift G...

No entries to display.

Speaking Engagement Expenses Paid for or Reimbursed

Hosting Organiz...	Date of Event	Amount Received	Event Purpose	Location
--------------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------	----------

No entries to
display.

Family Members' Income for 2021

Private Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type
--------	-------------

No entries to display.

Government Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type	Income Amount for 2021
--------	-------------	------------------------

No entries to display.

Business Activity in 2021

Regulated Business Associations

Business Name	Your Relationship	Agency Regulation
---------------	-------------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Business Interests

Business Name	Your Relationship
---------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Property Activity in 2021

Improvements to Real Property

Property Description	Street Address	Improvements
----------------------	----------------	--------------

No entries to display.

Property With Potential Conflict of Interest

Property Description	Street Address	Potential Conflict
----------------------	----------------	--------------------

SEI Report 2023

Disclosing Interests for: 2022

Version: Original Report

Status: Submitted March 18, 2024

PDF Generated: January 27, 2026 at 2:34:41 PM GMT-5

Your Details

Name

John R Rice

Mailing Address



County
Allendale

Phone Number

Office Phone



Positions Reported

Appointed Position

Chief Administrative Official/Chair

Entity Type Allendale County Conservation District

Appointed to Office 11/2019

Personal Income for 2022

Private Income

Source

Income Type

Self Employment

Self Employment

Income from an SC Governmental Entity

Source

Income Type

Income Amount for 2022

No entries to display.

Income from Government Contractors Associated with a Governmental Entity

Source

Amount ...

Relationship with...

Nature of Bu...

Entity Invol...

Street Address

No entries

to display.

Gifts Received

Gift Description

Estimated Value

Given By

Relationship to Gift G...

No entries to display.

Speaking Engagement Expenses Paid for or Reimbursed

Hosting Organiz...	Date of Event	Amount Received	Event Purpose	Location
--------------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------	----------

No entries to
display.

Family Members' Income for 2022

Private Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type
--------	-------------

No entries to display.

Government Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type	Income Amount for 2022
--------	-------------	------------------------

No entries to display.

Business Activity in 2022

Regulated Business Associations

Business Name	Your Relationship	Agency Regulation
---------------	-------------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Business Interests

Business Name	Your Relationship
---------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Property Activity in 2022

Improvements to Real Property

Property Description	Street Address	Improvements
----------------------	----------------	--------------

No entries to display.

Property With Potential Conflict of Interest

Property Description	Street Address	Potential Conflict
----------------------	----------------	--------------------

SEI Report 2024

Disclosing Interests for: 2023

Version: Original Report

Status: Submitted March 18, 2024

PDF Generated: January 27, 2026 at 2:36:21 PM GMT-5

Your Details

Name

John R Rice

Mailing Address

[REDACTED]

County
Allendale

Phone Number

Office Phone

[REDACTED]

Positions Reported

Appointed Position

Chief Administrative Official/Chair

Entity Type Allendale County Conservation District

Appointed to Office 11/2019

Personal Income for 2023

Private Income

Source

Income Type

Self Employment

Self Employment

Income from an SC Governmental Entity

Source

Income Type

Income Amount for 2023

No entries to display.

Income from Government Contractors Associated with a Governmental Entity

Source

Amount ...

Relationship with...

Nature of Bu...

Entity Invol...

Street Address

No entries

to display.

Gifts Received

Gift Description

Estimated Value

Given By

Relationship to Gift G...⁴⁵

No entries to display.

Speaking Engagement Expenses Paid for or Reimbursed

Hosting Organiz...	Date of Event	Amount Received	Event Purpose	Location
--------------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------	----------

No entries to
display.

Family Members' Income for 2023

Private Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type
--------	-------------

No entries to display.

Government Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type	Income Amount for 2023
--------	-------------	------------------------

No entries to display.

Business Activity in 2023

Regulated Business Associations

Business Name	Your Relationship	Agency Regulation
---------------	-------------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Business Interests

Business Name	Your Relationship
---------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Property Activity in 2023

Improvements to Real Property

Property Description	Street Address	Improvements
----------------------	----------------	--------------

No entries to display.

Property With Potential Conflict of Interest

Property Description	Street Address	Potential Conflict
----------------------	----------------	--------------------

SEI Report 2025

Disclosing Interests for: 2024

Version: Original Report

Status: Submitted March 18, 2025

PDF Generated: January 27, 2026 at 2:36:48 PM GMT-5

Your Details

Name

John R Rice

Mailing Address

[REDACTED]

Phone Number

Office Phone

[REDACTED]

County
Allendale

Positions Reported

Appointed Position

Chief Administrative Official/Chair

Entity Type Allendale County Conservation District

Appointed to Office 11/2019

Personal Income for 2024

Private Income

Source

Income Type

Self Employment

Self Employment

Income from an SC Governmental Entity

Source

Income Type

Income Amount for 2024

No entries to display.

Income from Government Contractors Associated with a Governmental Entity

Source

Amount ...

Relationship with...

Nature of Bu...

Entity Invol...

Street Address

No entries

to display.

Gifts Received

Gift Description

Estimated Value

Given By

Relationship to Gift G...

No entries to display.

Speaking Engagement Expenses Paid for or Reimbursed

Hosting Organiz...	Date of Event	Amount Received	Event Purpose	Location
--------------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------	----------

No entries to
display.

Family Members' Income for 2024

Private Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type
--------	-------------

No entries to display.

Government Income for Immediate Family Members

Source	Income Type	Income Amount for 2024
--------	-------------	------------------------

No entries to display.

Business Activity in 2024

Regulated Business Associations

Business Name	Your Relationship	Agency Regulation
---------------	-------------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Business Interests

Business Name	Your Relationship
---------------	-------------------

No entries to display.

Property Activity in 2024

Improvements to Real Property

Property Description	Street Address	Improvements
----------------------	----------------	--------------

No entries to display.

Property With Potential Conflict of Interest

Property Description	Street Address	Potential Conflict
----------------------	----------------	--------------------

State of South Carolina State Ethics Commission



F. XAVIER STARKES, CHAIRMAN
NEAL D. TRUSLOW, VICE CHAIRMAN
BRYANT S. CALDWELL
HELEN MUNNERLYN



SARA PARRISH
MARY HUNTER B. TOMLINSON
MATTHEW N. TYLER

201 EXECUTIVE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 150
COLUMBIA, S.C. 29210

MEGHAN WALKER DAYSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 21, 2026

John R. Rice

Certified Mail: 9214 8969 0099 9790 1428 1575 19

RE: Complaint C2026-012

In the Matter of John R. Rice

Dear Mr. Rice:

The State Ethics Commission has considered the above captioned complaint and has determined that probable cause exists to support the alleged violation. As a result of the Commission's determination, you are hereby provided with the Notice of Hearing. In accordance with 8-13-320 (10)(g), South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, all complaint matters are now public upon the issuance of the Notice of Hearing.

Please be aware that under recent General Assembly amendments to the Ethics Reform Act in 2016 Act No. 282, effective April 1, 2017, this and all other Ethics Commission hearings are now open to the public. The Ethics Commission will provide timely notice of Commission hearings to the public pursuant to the requirement of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Please contact Marquita S. Kessler, Paralegal, at 803-253-4192 or mkessler@ethics.sc.gov as soon as possible to:

- Confirm receipt of this Notice of Hearing and notify the Commission whether you will or will not attend the scheduled hearing at 9:30am, Thursday, August 20, 2026, at the State Ethics Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150 Columbia, SC 29210.
- Confirm address, telephone number and email address.
- Notify the Commission if an attorney will be representing you.

If you do not attend the hearing, a judgment by default will be rendered.

Sincerely,

Meghan Walker Dayson

Meghan Walker Dayson
Executive Director

MWD:mk

Enclosure: Notice of Hearing

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND	)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
	)	
IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
Complaint C2026-012	)	
	)	
State Ethics Commission	)	NOTICE OF HEARING
Complainant.	)	
	)	
John R. Rice	)	
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, August 20, 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 allegations will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO REPORT INCOME ON STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1120(A) S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That John R. Rice, Chairman of Allendale County Conservation District, failed to identify private sources of income on his 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1120(A).

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO REPORT SPOUSAL INCOME ON STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC
INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1120(A), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That John R. Rice, Chairman of Allendale County Conservation District, failed to identify

private sources of income for his spouse on his 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Section 8-13-1120(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 21st day,
of May 2026

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on RESPONDENT John R. Rice, 1798 Ashe Road, Allendale, SC 29810 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 20 day of May 2026, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.


Maquita S. Kessler, Paralegal
State Ethics Commission

Columbia, South Carolina

(803) 253-4192



June 03, 2026

Dear MARQUITA SHARAIN KESSLER:

The following is in response to your request for proof of delivery on your item with the tracking number:
9214 8969 0099 9790 1428 1575 19.

Item Details

Status:	Delivered, Individual Picked Up at Postal Facility
Status Date / Time:	June 01, 2026, 03:01 pm
Location:	ALLENDALE, SC 29810
Postal Product:	First-Class Mail®
Extra Services:	Certified Mail™ Return Receipt Electronic
Recipient Name:	JOHN R. RICE

Shipment Details

Weight:

Recipient Signature

Signature of Recipient:	<table><tbody><tr><td>Signature</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>Printed Name</td><td>[Redacted]</td></tr><tr><td>Delivery Address</td><td>1798 Ashe Rd</td></tr></tbody></table>	Signature	X	Printed Name	[Redacted]	Delivery Address	1798 Ashe Rd
Signature	X						
Printed Name	[Redacted]						
Delivery Address	1798 Ashe Rd						
Address of Recipient:							

Note: Scanned image may reflect a different destination address due to Intended Recipient's delivery instructions on file.

Thank you for selecting the United States Postal Service® for your mailing needs. If you require additional assistance, please contact your local Post Office™ or a Postal representative at 1-800-222-1811.

Sincerely,

United States Postal Service®
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-0004

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

IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2026-012)

State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)

John R. Rice,)
Respondent.)

DECISION AND ORDER

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act of 1991 (Ethics Act), the Commission reviewed the above-captioned Complaint against John R. Rice (Respondent) and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Present at the hearing on August 20, 2026, were Commissioners Helen Munnerlyn, Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson, and F. Xavier Starks, Hearing Panel Chair. Respondent was duly notified but did not appear. The Commission was represented by Courtney M. Laster, Esq. The following charges were considered: one (1) count of Section 8-13-1120(A) for failing to identify personal private sources of income on his 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 Statements of Economic Interests (SEI) and one (1) count of Section 8-13-1120(A) for failing to identify private sources of income for his spouse on his 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 SEIs.

FINDINGS OF FACTS

Having carefully reviewed the evidence presented, the Panel finds as fact:

1. Respondent has served as Chairman of the Allendale County Conservation District (District) since 2008. From 2008-2019, Respondent served in an elected position. Since 2019, Respondent has served in an appointed position as the District's Chairman and Chief Administrative Official.

JKH

2. Respondent filed his 2022 SEI on March 14, 2022, his 2023 and 2024¹ SEIs on March 18, 2024, and his 2025 SEI on March 18, 2025. In each of these SEIs, Respondent listed “Self-Employment” as his private source of income.
3. In an August 23, 2024 first-class letter mailed to Respondent’s address of record, the Commission notified Respondent of his failure to properly disclose private sources of income on his 2022, 2023, and 2024 SEIs.²
4. On December 11, 2025, a Commission staff member spoke with Respondent via telephone and advised him of the filing requirements. Respondent stated that his spouse received income from Rice Land and Timber, LLC. The Commission staff member advised Respondent to amend his SEIs to reflect any private sources of income for himself and his spouse. A follow-up email was sent to Respondent later that day.
5. Respondent did not respond to the August 23, 2024 letter or reply to the December 11, 2025 email and did not correct his filings. Thus, the Complaint was filed on February 4, 2026.
6. On February 23, 2026, Commission Investigator Ryanne Caldwell telephoned Respondent and left a voicemail. Caldwell followed up with a text message the same day.
7. On February 25, 2026, Caldwell spoke with Respondent via telephone. Respondent verified receipt of the Complaint and stated he did not receive a 1099 or W-2 from Rice Land and Timber, LLC. Respondent stated that his spouse received income from Rice Land and Timber, LLC at all relevant times. Respondent stated he would make the necessary amendments to his

¹ Respondent’s 2024 SEI was filed late according to Section 8-13-1140. However, this late filing has been addressed through the Commission’s standard non-compliance process and is not part of the current Complaint.

² The letter did not address Respondent’s 2025 SEI because the deadline for filing had not passed.



SEIs.

8. On March 4, 2026, Caldwell emailed a reminder to Respondent regarding his filing requirements.
9. On March 6, 2026, Respondent amended his 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 SEIs to disclose Rice Land and Timber, LLC as a personal source of private income. Respondent did not disclose any private sources of income for his spouse.
10. On March 10, 2026, Caldwell emailed Respondent and acknowledged that Respondent had amended his 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 SEIs to reflect Rice Land and Timber, LLC as a personal private source of income. Caldwell further reminded Respondent that he needed to disclose his spouse's private sources of income on these SEIs.
11. On March 27, 2026, Caldwell emailed a reminder to Respondent and followed up with a text message.
12. On March 30, 2026, Respondent amended his 2025 SEI to include Rice Land and Timber LLC as a private source of income for his spouse. Respondent did not amend the 2022, 2023, or 2024 SEIs to include a private source of income for his spouse.
13. During the Commission's investigation, Investigator RYANNE CALDWELL ran a CLEAR report,³ which disclosed Rice Land and Timber, LLC as a business associated with Respondent. Caldwell also searched records maintained by the South Carolina Secretary of State, which revealed Rice Land and Timber, LLC's Articles of Incorporation. According to the Articles of Incorporation, Respondent is the sole organizer and registered agent of Rice Land and Timber, LLC.

³ A CLEAR report is an investigative tool designed to provide law enforcement with background information about an individual, including business associations.

JA #3

14. On May 8, 2026, Caldwell emailed a reminder to Respondent and followed up with a text message. Later that day, Caldwell spoke with Respondent via telephone and advised him to disclose his spouse's private sources of income in his 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 SEIs. Respondent informed Caldwell that he would consider making the necessary amendments.
15. As of the date of the hearing, Respondent had not amended his 2022, 2023, 2024, or 2025 SEIs to disclose his spouse's private sources of income.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based upon the Findings of Facts, The Panel concludes, as a matter of law:

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a "public member" pursuant to Section 8-13-100(26).
2. At all times relevant, the District was a political subdivision of the State pursuant to S.C. Code

Ann. § 48-9-30:

"District" or "soil and water conservation district" means a governmental subdivision of this State, a public body corporate and politic, organized in accordance with the provisions of this chapter for the purposes, with the powers and subject to the restrictions herein set forth.

3. At all times relevant, Respondent served as the District's Chairman and Chief Administrative Official, which required him to file an SEI in accordance with Section 8-13-1110(B)(6):

Each of the following public officials, public members, and public employees must file a [SEI] with the appropriate supervisory office, unless otherwise provided . . . the chief administrative official or employee of each political subdivision including, but not limited to, school districts, libraries, regional planning councils, airport commissions, hospitals, community action agencies, water and sewer districts, and development commissions

4. Respondent failed to disclose personal private sources of income for himself and his spouse on his 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 SEIs, in violation of Section 8-13-1120(A)(10), which requires filers to disclose:

JA #4

a listing of the private source and type of any income received in the previous year by the filer or a member of his immediate family

5. Pursuant to Section 8-13-100(18), an “immediate family member” includes “a spouse of a candidate, public official, public member, or public employee.”
6. 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.
7. Section 8-13-320(10)(l) allows the Commission to assess a \$2,000.00 civil penalty for each violation of the Ethics Act.

DECISION

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Panel has determined, based on a preponderance of evidence, that Respondent John R. Rice is in violation of two (2) counts of Section 8-13-1120(A) for failing to identify personal private sources of income on his 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 SEIs and for failing to identify private sources of income for an immediate family member (his spouse) on his 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 SEIs.

THEREFORE, Respondent is hereby issued this Public Reprimand and assessed a reduced civil penalty of \$2,000.00 (\$1,000.00 per count), and an administrative fee of \$1,100.00, for a total of \$3,100.00.

AND, pursuant to Section 8-13-320 of the Ethics Act, if the \$3,100.00 is not paid in full within one (1) year from Respondent’s receipt of this Order, the total amount owed shall revert to the maximum possible assessment of \$5,100.00 (a civil penalty of \$2,000.00 per count and an administrative fee of \$1,100.00) in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(k)(ii) and the Commission shall enter a judgment against Respondent in the amount of \$5,100.00 with the Clerk

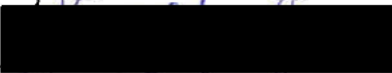
JR #5

of Court's Office in the county of Respondent's last known residence. In that event, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$5,100.00 in its judgment rolls, without cost to the Commission.

FINALLY, Respondent John R. Rice has ten (10) days from receipt of this Order to appeal this Decision and Order to the full Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 8th DAY OF September, 2026.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


F. XAVIER STARKES, HEARING PANEL CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina