

WAC 390-37-061 Enforcement procedures—Alternative responses to noncompliance—Goals and objectives—Factors to be considered. (1) In considering appropriate responses to violations, the PDC staff will consider whether an investigation or adjudicative proceeding constitutes an efficient and effective use of public funds; or whether an alternative response better meets the PDC's mission and public expectations by allowing the expedited resolution of minor violations and technical reporting errors, and the focusing of resources on more significant violations of chapter 42.17A RCW and Title 390 WAC.

(2) A minor violation is a violation that occurs:

(a) When required information is not timely disclosed, but the public is not deprived of critical information;

(b) When incomplete information is disclosed, but a good faith effort to comply with disclosure is made, and the public is not deprived of critical information; or

(c) When any other violation of chapter 42.17A RCW has occurred that does not materially affect the public interest.

(3) In authorizing an alternative response to alleged noncompliance, the executive director may consider the nature of the alleged violation and any relevant circumstances including, but not limited to, the factors described in subsection (4) of this section: Provided, that, if after weighing the relevant circumstances and factors, the executive director determines that there is evidence that so warrants, the allegations must be addressed through an investigation as provided by WAC 390-37-060.

(4) The factors the executive director may consider in permitting an alternative response to noncompliance, an investigation, or an adjudicative proceeding include, but are not limited to:

An alternative response to noncompliance may be appropriate if ...	An investigation and possible adjudicative hearing may be appropriate if ...
It appears that noncompliance resulted from a good-faith error, omission, or misunderstanding.	It appears that the noncompliance may have resulted from a knowing or intentional effort to conceal, deceive or mislead, or violate the law or rule, or from collusive behavior.
The respondent is a first-time filer.	The respondent has experience in complying with the applicable requirements.
The respondent's compliance history indicates the noncompliance was isolated or limited in nature, and not indicative of systematic or ongoing problems.	The noncompliance is part of a pattern of violations by the respondent, or in the case of a political committee or other entity, part of a pattern of violations by the respondent's officers, staff, principal decision makers, consultants, or sponsoring organization.
The impact of the noncompliance on the public was minimal.	The noncompliance deprived the public of timely or accurate information during a time-sensitive period in a campaign, legislative session, etc., or otherwise had a significant or material impact on the public.
The respondent's organization or campaign was relatively unsophisticated or small.	The respondent or the respondent's organization or campaign demonstrated a relatively high level of sophistication, or was well financed and staffed.
The total expenditures by the respondent in the campaign or statement period were relatively modest.	The campaign or statement period involved significant expenditures by the respondent.
The amount of late-reported activity, or the duration of the untimely disclosure, was small in proportion to the amount of activity that was timely reported by the respondent.	The late or unreported activity was significant in amount or duration under the circumstances, including in proportion to the total amount of expenditures by the respondent in the campaign or statement period.
There is no evidence that any person, including an entity or organization, benefited politically or economically from the noncompliance.	It appears the respondent or anyone else benefited politically or economically from the noncompliance.

An alternative response to noncompliance may be appropriate if ...	An investigation and possible adjudicative hearing may be appropriate if ...
Personal emergency or illness of the respondent or member of his or her immediate family contributed to the noncompliance.	There are no circumstances that appear to mitigate or appropriately explain the late reporting or other noncompliance.
Other emergencies such as fire, flood, or utility failure prevented compliance.	There are no circumstances that appear to mitigate or appropriately explain the late reporting or other noncompliance.
PDC staff or equipment error, including technical problems at the agency prevented or delayed electronic filing.	PDC staff or equipment error did not appear to contribute to the noncompliance.
The noncompliance resulted from the respondent's demonstrated good-faith uncertainty concerning staff guidance or instructions, a lack of clarity in the rule or statute, or uncertainty concerning the valid application of the commission's rules.	It appears the respondent understood the application of staff's guidance or instructions, and did not dispute the valid application of the commission's rules.
The respondent quickly took corrective action or initiated other remedial measures prior to any complaint, or when noncompliance was brought to respondent's attention (e.g., filing missing reports, amending incomplete or inaccurate reports, returning prohibited or over limit contributions).	The respondent appeared negligent or unwilling to address the noncompliance.
The respondent made a good-faith effort to comply, including by consulting with PDC staff following a complaint and cooperating during any preliminary investigation, or demonstrated a wish to acknowledge and take responsibility for the alleged violation.	The respondent failed to provide a timely or adequate response to the complaint, or was otherwise uncooperative.
The alleged violation was or is being addressed under an analogous local ordinance, regulation, or policy.	The commission has primary jurisdiction over the alleged violation.
The alleged violation presents a new question or issue for the commission's interpretation.	The alleged violation does not present a case of first impression.
Other factors relevant to a particular case	

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1), 2019 c 428, and 2019 c 261. WSR 20-02-062, § 390-37-061, filed 12/24/19, effective 1/24/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1) and 2018 c 304. WSR 18-24-074, § 390-37-061, filed 11/30/18, effective 12/31/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1). WSR 16-01-015, § 390-37-061, filed 12/4/15, effective 1/4/16.]