

WAC 390-37-182 Penalty factors (full adjudicatory proceedings).

(1) In assessing a penalty after a full adjudicatory proceeding, the commission considers the purposes of chapter 42.17A RCW, including the public's right to know of the financing of political campaigns, lobbying and the financial affairs of elected officials and candidates as declared in the policy of RCW 42.17A.001; and, promoting compliance with the law. The commission also considers and applies RCW 42.17A.755 and may consider any of the additional factors described in subsection (3) of this section.

(2) Under RCW 42.17A.755, the commission:

(a) May waive a penalty for a first-time violation;

(b) Must assess a penalty for a second violation by the same person or individual, regardless if the person or individual committed the violation for a different political committee;

(c) Must assess successively increased penalties for succeeding violations pursuant to the following schedule:

Violations:			
Respondent failed to file or timely file an accurate or complete: (1) Statement of Financial Affairs (F-1 Report) / (2) Candidate Registration / (C-1 Report) / (3) Lobbyist Monthly Expense Report (L-2 Report) / (4) Lobbyist Employer Annual Report (L-3 Report) and (5) Local Treasurer's Annual Report (T-1 Report).			
	1st Occasion	2nd Occasion	3rd Occasion
Filed missing report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Report is filed late and is incomplete or inaccurate.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,000 - \$3,000
Respondent failed to file or timely file accurate and complete campaign disclosure reports:			
Cash Receipts Monetary Contributions Report (C-3 Report)			
Filed missing C-3 Report or amended C-3 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to timely deposit monetary contributions within five business days of receipt.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to include employer and occupation information for contributors of more than \$100.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Campaign Summary Receipts and Expenditures Report (C-4 Report)			
Filed missing C-4 Report or amended C-4 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to properly report the "purpose" of an expenditure under RCW 42.17A.240(6) or 42.17A.255 (5)(b).	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to properly report expenditures made on behalf of a candidate or political committee by any person, agency, firm, organization, etc.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to report a contractual contingent liability.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to properly dispose of surplus funds.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failed to properly make campaign books of account available for public inspection as required immediately preceding the date of an election.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Independent Expenditure Report (C-6 Report)			
Filed missing C-6 Report or amended C-6 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Report is filed late and is incomplete or inaccurate.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Out-of-State Political Committee Report (C-5 Report)			

Violations:			
Respondent failed to file or timely file an accurate or complete: (1) Statement of Financial Affairs (F-1 Report) / (2) Candidate Registration / (C-1 Report) / (3) Lobbyist Monthly Expense Report (L-2 Report) / (4) Lobbyist Employer Annual Report (L-3 Report) and (5) Local Treasurer's Annual Report (T-1 Report).			
	1st Occasion	2nd Occasion	3rd Occasion
Filed missing C-5 Report or amended C-5 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Last Minute Contribution Report (LMC report)			
Filed missing LMC report or amended LMC report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Exceeding contribution limits			
Refunded contributions after being notified of the complaint, over limit contributions were not significant, and respondent provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Other Alleged Violations:			
Exceeding mini reporting threshold			
Filed C-3 and C-4 Reports for full reporting after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failure to file electronically			
Filed C-3 and C-4 Reports electronically after being notified about the complaint, and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Use of public facilities for the purpose of assisting a campaign for the election of any person to any office, or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition			
Use of public facilities was incidental and isolated, and evidence was not submitted indicating that the use may have affected the outcome of the election.	\$0 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000	\$2,500 - \$10,000
Failure to File Lobbyist Registration Report (L-1 Report)			
Filed missing L-1 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Failure to File Agency Lobbying Report (L-5 Report)			
Filed missing L-5 Report or amended L-5 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Grassroots Lobbying Report (L-6 Report)			
Filed missing L-6 Report or amended L-6 Report after being notified about the complaint and provided written explanation with mitigating circumstances.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Sponsor identification requirements for political advertising			
Political advertising failed to include any sponsor identification or included improper or misleading sponsor identification.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Party preference requirement for political advertising			
Political advertising failed to include a candidate's party preference.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Use of current picture requirement in political advertising			

Violations:			
Respondent failed to file or timely file an accurate or complete: (1) Statement of Financial Affairs (F-1 Report) / (2) Candidate Registration / (C-1 Report) / (3) Lobbyist Monthly Expense Report (L-2 Report) / (4) Lobbyist Employer Annual Report (L-3 Report) and (5) Local Treasurer's Annual Report (T-1 Report).			
	1st Occasion	2nd Occasion	3rd Occasion
Political advertising fails to include at least one picture of the candidate used in the advertising that was taken within the last five years, that is no smaller than any other picture of the same candidate used in the same advertisement.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$1,500
Political advertising or electioneering communication—Libel or defamation per se			
Political advertising or an electioneering communication that contains a false statement of material fact about a candidate for public office.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Political advertising or an electioneering communication that falsely represents that a candidate is the incumbent for the office sought when in fact the candidate is not the incumbent.	\$0 - \$500	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Political advertising or an electioneering communication that makes either directly or indirectly, a false claim stating or implying the support or endorsement of any person or organization when in fact the candidate does not have such support or endorsement.	\$0 - \$600	\$600 - \$1,200	\$1,200 - \$2,400
Commercial advertisers—Public inspection of documents			
Commercial advertisers who after accepting or providing political advertising or electioneering communications during an election campaign fail to maintain records and books of account, or make such information available by the methods provided under WAC 390-18-050.	\$0 - \$600	\$600 - \$1,200	\$1,200 - \$2,400
Candidates and political committees—Public inspection of books of account			
Candidates or political committees who fail to accommodate requests for public inspections as required by WAC 390-16-043.	\$0 - \$600	\$600 - \$1,200	\$1,200 - \$2,400
Limitations on employers or labor organizations			
Failed to maintain open for public inspection, during normal business hours, documents and books of accounts showing a copy of each employee's request for funds to be withheld for transfer to a political committee.	\$0 - \$600	\$600 - \$1,200	\$1,200 - \$2,400

(3) In addition to the requirements of RCW 42.17A.755, the commission may consider the nature of the violation and any relevant circumstances, including the following factors:

(a) The respondent's compliance history, including whether the noncompliance was isolated or limited in nature, indicative of systematic or ongoing problems, or 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;

(b) The impact on the public, including whether the noncompliance deprived the public of timely or accurate information during a time-sensitive period, or otherwise had a significant or material impact on the public;

(c) Sophistication of respondent or the financing, staffing, or size of the respondent's campaign or organization;

(d) Amount of financial activity by the respondent during the statement period or election cycle;

(e) Whether the noncompliance resulted from a knowing or intentional effort to conceal, deceive or mislead, or violate the law or rule, or from collusive behavior;

(f) Whether 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;

(g) Whether the respondent or any person, including an entity or organization, benefited politically or economically from the noncompliance;

(h) Personal emergency or illness of the respondent or member of his or her immediate family;

(i) Other emergencies such as fire, flood, or utility failure preventing filing;

(j) PDC staff or equipment error, including technical problems at the PDC preventing or delaying electronic filing;

(k) The respondent's demonstrated good-faith uncertainty concerning staff guidance or instructions;

(l) Corrective action or other remedial measures initiated by respondent prior to enforcement action, or promptly taken when noncompliance brought to respondent's attention (e.g., filing missing reports, amending incomplete or inaccurate reports, returning prohibited or overlimit contributions);

(m) Whether the respondent is a first-time filer;

(n) Good faith efforts to comply, including consultation with PDC staff prior to initiation of enforcement action and cooperation with PDC staff during enforcement action, and a demonstrated wish to acknowledge and take responsibility for the violation;

(o) Penalties imposed in factually similar cases; and

(p) Other factors relevant to a particular case.

(4) The commission may consider the factors in subsections (1) through (3) of this section in determining whether to suspend a portion or all of a penalty upon identified conditions, and whether to accept, reject, or modify a stipulated penalty amount recommended by the parties.

(5) Notwithstanding the above schedule, the commission may assess a penalty of up to ten thousand dollars per violation, or a greater amount if agreed to by the parties, pursuant to RCW 42.17A.755, based on the aggravating factors set forth in subsections (1) through (3) of this section.

(6) The penalty schedule for brief enforcement proceedings is provided under WAC 390-37-143.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1), 2019 c 428, and 2019 c 261. WSR 20-02-062, § 390-37-182, filed 12/24/19, effective 1/24/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1) and 2018 c 304. WSR 18-24-074, § 390-37-182, filed 11/30/18, effective 12/31/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110(1). WSR 16-01-015, § 390-37-182, filed 12/4/15, effective 1/4/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17A.110, 42.17A.755. WSR 13-05-014, § 390-37-182, filed 2/7/13, effective 3/10/13.]