



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
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FPPC Enforcement Decisions, August 20, 2026

For Immediate Release:

August 20, 2026

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Additional information on each of the enforcement cases listed below can be found in the agenda on the FPPC website at www.fppc.ca.gov. FPPC agendas are distributed and posted on the agency website at least 10 days prior to each monthly meeting.

The web version of the agenda includes links to the stipulations agreed to between the FPPC Enforcement Division and the individuals and organizations subject to the fines, or the default decisions proposed to the Commission. Exhibits in support of the stipulations and proposed default decisions are also available on the website. If you need further assistance, please contact the FPPC communications office at (916) 322-7761 or press@fppc.ca.gov.

The following are enforcement decisions approved by the Fair Political Practices Commission at its regular monthly meeting held on Thursday, August 20, 2026. Decisions are listed by category and include a brief summary of each case and the total amount of any administrative fine in each case.

Mass Mailings at Public Expense

In the Matter of Nevada County; FPPC No. 21/292. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Nevada County is represented by Trevor Koski, County Counsel, and Christopher Pisano of BBK Law. Nevada County sent prohibited campaign-related mass mailings at public expense, in violation of Government Code Section 89001 and Regulation 18901.1 (2 counts), failed to include the proper advertising disclosures on mailers and other advertisements, in violation of Government Code Section 84502 (2 counts), failed to timely file a semi-annual campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84200, subdivision (b) (1 count), and failed to timely file 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84204 (2 counts). **Fine: \$31,500.**

Advertisements

In the Matter of Sonoma County Deputy Sheriffs' Association, Sonoma County Deputy Sheriffs' Association PAC, Committee for Transparent Justice – No on Measure P, Michael Vail, and Cody Ebert; FPPC No. 20/1111. Staff: Neal Bucknell, Senior Commission Counsel and Kristin Hamilton, Special Investigator. Respondents are represented by Nicholas Sanders of

The Political Law Group, LLP. Committee for Transparent Justice – No on Measure P (“No on P Committee”) was a Sonoma County recipient committee, primarily formed to oppose Measure P in the 2020 election. Sonoma County Deputy Sheriffs’ Association (“DSA”) qualified as a major donor committee in 2020 by virtue of its financial support for the No on P committee. Sonoma County Deputy Sheriffs’ Association PAC (“PAC”) is a Sonoma County general purpose committee, which was sponsored by the DSA. Michael Vail was president of the DSA, principal officer of its PAC, and principal officer of the No on P committee. Cody Ebert was the treasurer for both the PAC and the No on P committee. The DSA, its PAC, the No on P Committee, Vail, and Ebert failed to file required 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Sections 84203 and 84204 (1 count). The No on P Committee, Vail, and Ebert filed campaign statements and reports, but the name of the committee on these filings did not include the required reference to the committee’s sponsors—and they filed statements of organization, which did not include required identifying information regarding the No on P committee’s sponsors—in violation of Government Code Sections 84102 and 84106 (1 count). The DSA, its PAC, the No on P Committee, and Vail paid for advertisements, which did not include the required reference identifying the DSA and its PAC as the sponsors of the committee (and some of the ads failed to state “Paid for by”), in violation of Government Code Sections 84102, 84106, 84504.1, 84504.2, 84504.3, and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 18419, subdivision (b)(1) (2 counts). **Fine: \$11,000.**

In the Matter of Peterson School Board Trustee Area 4 2023, Aaron Peterson, Rick Reyes, and Julio Lara; FPPC No. 23/755. Staff: Kendall L.D Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement and Shaina Elkin, Intake Manager. Aaron Peterson was an unsuccessful candidate for the Claremont Unified School District in the July 25, 2023 Special Election. Peterson School Board Trustee Area 4 2023 was Peterson’s candidate-controlled committee. Rick Reyes served as treasurer, and Julio Lara served as principal officer. The Committee, Peterson, and Reyes failed to timely file two 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (2 counts). The Committee, Peterson, and Lara failed to include the proper advertisement disclosures on social media cover pages, in violation of Government Code Sections 84504.3 and 84502 (2 counts). **Fine: \$480. (Tier One).**

Campaign Late Filer/Reporter

In the Matter of James Knell, 127 WCP, LLC, 710 State St. Partners, LP, 1129 State Street, LP, 1213 State Street, LLC, 1221 Victoria Court, LP, RTK Associates, LP, Santa Barbara Athletic Club, Sima Corporation, Sima El Paseo, LP, and Sima Management Corporation; FPPC No. 21/1022. Staff: Kevin Cornwall, Senior Commission Counsel. The Respondents are represented by Robert A. Curtis of Foley Bezek Behle & Curtis, LLP. James Knell owns the businesses identified as respondents in this matter. Through his businesses, Knell contributed over \$40,000 to four campaign committees controlled by candidates running for the Santa Barbara City Council. Knell exceeded local campaign contributions and failed to timely file two major donor statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200(b) (2 counts), and failed to timely file a 24-Hour Report, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (1 count). **Fine: \$12,000.**

In the Matter of Gaspar Gene Montesano, Joe's Cafe, Inc., Lucky Village, Inc., Quattro, Inc., and Breadhead, Inc.; FPPC No. 26/582. Staff: Kevin Cornwall, Senior Commission Counsel and Roone Peterson, Special Investigator. The Respondents are represented by the Law Office of Andrew J. Cavanaugh. Gaspar Gene Montesano owns the businesses identified as respondents in this matter. Through his businesses, Montesano contributed \$19,600 to the Schwartz for Mayor of Santa Barbara 2021 committee. Montesano exceeded local campaign contribution limits and failed to timely file a major donor statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84200(b) (1 count). **Fine: \$4,000.**

In the Matter of Patty Padilla-Salsberg for SUHSD Board of Trustees 2020, Patricia "Patty" Padilla-Salsberg, and Aaron Salsberg; FPPC No. 21/246. Staff: Vanessa Jimmy, Commission Counsel and Jay Gehres, Special Investigator. Patricia "Patty" Padilla-Salsberg was a successful candidate for the Salinas Union High School Board of Trustees in the November 3, 2020 General Election. Patty Padilla-Salsberg for SUHSD Board of Trustees 2020 was Padilla-Salsberg's candidate-controlled committee. Aaron Salsberg served as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and Salsberg failed to timely file a statement of organization to report its date of qualification, in violation of Government Code Section 84101 (1 count), failed to timely file two pre-election campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5 and 84200.8 (2 counts), failed to timely file two 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (2 counts), failed to timely file two semiannual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (2 counts), and impermissibly accepted cash contributions over \$100, in violation of Government Code Section 84300 (3 counts). **Fine: \$6,236 (Tiers One and Two).**

In the Matter of Stand Up Santa Barbara PAC and Elrawd MacLearn; FPPC No. 22/485. Staff: Theresa Gilbertson, Attorney Supervisor and Kaitlin Osborn, Special Investigator. Stand Up Santa Barbara PAC was a general purpose committee. Elrawd MacLearn was the treasurer. The Committee failed to timely file campaign statements and reports, including a semiannual campaign statement, a pre-election campaign statement, and four 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code sections 84200, 84200.5, and 84203. (6 counts). Further, the Committee and MacLearn failed to maintain all required source documentation for contributions and expenditures for the calendar years 2021 and 2022, in violation of Government Code section 84104. (2 counts). The Committee and MacLearn accepted a prohibited cash contribution of \$300 in 2021, in violation of 85300 (1 count). **Fine: \$3,547 (Tiers One and Two).**

In the Matter of Dr. Allen for Insurance Commissioner 2022, Vinson Eugene Allen, and David L. Gould; FPPC No. 23/607. Staff: Chance Felkins, Commission Counsel. This matter arose from an audit carried out by the Franchise Tax Board's Political Reform Audit Division. Dr. Allen for Insurance Commissioner is a state candidate-controlled committee. The Committee's treasurer is David L. Gould, and the candidate is Vinson Eugene Allen. The Committee failed to maintain receipts, invoices, credit card statements with supporting statements for 39 expenditures made totaling \$195,339; and sub vendor payment totaling \$125,959, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (1 count). Additionally, the Committee failed to timely file a 10-day contribution report after the Committee received a loan for \$90,00 from the candidate, by the applicable deadline, in violation of Government Code Section 85309(c) (1 count). **Fine: \$3,400 (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of Humboldt Cannabis Reform Initiative, Yes on A; Aubrey Thurmond; Mark Thurmond; and Elizabeth Watson; FPPC No. 24/089. Staff: Chance Felkins, Commission Counsel. Respondents represented by Gary Winuk of Kaufman Legal Group. This matter arose from a sworn complaint. Humboldt Cannabis Reform Initiative, Yes on A is a primarily formed ballot measure Committee. Aubrey Thurmond, Mark Thurmond and Elizabeth Watson serve as principal officers of the Committee. Elizabeth Watson also serves as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee failed to timely file a statement of organization, in violation of Government Code Section 84101 (1 count), failed to timely file an odd year quarterly campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (1 count); failed to timely file two 24-Hour Reports, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (2 counts); and failed to timely disclose specific contribution amounts on three semiannual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84211(f)(5) (3 counts). **Fine: \$2,869. (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of Yazmin Llamas for Contra Costa Board of Education 2024 and Yazmin Llamas; FPPC No. 24/1282. Staff: Jonathan Rivera, Commission Counsel. Yazmin Llamas is represented by Gary Winuk of Kaufman Legal Group. Llamas was a successful candidate for the Contra Costa Board of Education in 2024. Yazmin Llamas for Contra Costa Board of Education 2024 was the candidate's candidate-controlled committee. The Committee and Llamas failed to timely file one 24-Hour Report, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (1 count). **Fine: \$2,200 (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of Royal Business Bank, FPPC No. 23/773. Staff: Neal Bucknell, Senior Commission Counsel and Roone Petersen, Special Investigator. Respondent Royal Business Bank is represented by Michael L. Wong of Willkie Farr & Gallagher, LLP. In this matter, Royal Business Bank qualified as a major donor, but failed to file required semiannual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200, subdivision (b) (2 counts)—and failed to file a required 24-Hour report, in violation of Government Code Section 84203 (1 count). **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

Committee Naming Requirements

In the Matter of Citizens for Laguna's Future and Glenn Gray; FPPC No. 23/009. Staff: Jonathan Rivera, Commission Counsel. Citizens for Laguna's Future was a primarily formed ballot measure committee. Glenn Gray served as the committee's treasurer. The Committee and Gary failed to timely change the name of the Committee to reflect its opposition of the pertinent ballot measure and failed to include the Committee's proper name on advertisements, including a website, yard sign, and flyer, in violation of Government Code Sections 84103, 84107, and 84502 (1 count). **Fine: \$4,000.**

Recordkeeping

In the Matter of Rob Rennie for Assembly 2022, Rob Rennie, and Isabella Rennie; FPPC No. 25/049. Staff Jonathan Rivera, Commission Counsel. This matter arose from an audit performed by the Franchise Tax Board's Political Reform Audit Program. Rob Rennie was an unsuccessful candidate for the State Assembly in the June 7, 2022 Primary Election. Rob Rennie for Assembly 2022 was the Rennie's candidate-controlled committee. Isabella Rennie served as

the Committee's treasurer. The Committee, Rob Rennie, and Isabella Rennie failed to maintain records, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (1 count), failed to timely file a pre-election campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5, 84200.8, 84215(a), and 84605 (1 count), failed to timely file a semiannual campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200, 84215(a), and 84605 (1 count), and failed to timely report a contribution, in violation of Government Code Section 84211 (1 count). **Fine: \$7,500.**

In the Matter of Re-Elect Hudson 4 San Ramon Mayor 2022, David Hudson, and Barbara Hudson; FPPC No. 25/955. Staff: Jaleena Evans, Commission Counsel. This matter arose from an audit performed by the Franchise Tax Board's Political Reform Audit Program. David Hudson was an unsuccessful candidate for Mayor in the November 8, 2022 General Election. Re-Elect Hudson 4 San Ramon Mayor 2022 was Hudson's candidate-controlled committee. Barbara Hudson served as the Committee's treasurer. The Committee and Hudson failed to timely report employer and/or occupation information for contributors on four campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84211 (4 counts), and failed to maintain records for calendar years 2021 and 2022 (2 counts). **Fine: \$1,600 (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of The Committee for Better Government, Ted Davis, and Jack Murphy; FPPC No. 20/1003. Staff: Laura Columbel, Senior Commission Counsel and Alethea Perez, Special Investigator. The Committee for Better Government was a county general purpose committee. Jack Murphy served as the Committee's treasurer and Ted Davis served as the Committee's principal officer. The Committee, Davis, and Murphy failed to maintain adequate records for contributions and independent expenditures for the calendar years 2021, 2022, and 2023, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (3 counts). The Committee and Murphy failed to timely file two pre-election statements, seven semiannual statements, and four 24-Hour Reports for independent expenditures, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200, 84200.5, and 84204 (13 counts). **Fine: \$1,356 (Tier One).**

Campaign Bank Account

In the Matter of Antonio Lopez and Committee to Elect Antonio Lopez for East Palo Alto City Council 2020; FPPC No. 21/266. Staff: Kevin Cornwall, Senior Commission Counsel, and Roone Petersen, Special Investigator. Antonio Lopez was a successful candidate for East Palo Alto City Council in the November 3, 2020 General Election. Committee to Elect Antonio Lopez for East Palo Alto City Council 2020 was Lopez's candidate-controlled committee. The Committee and Lopez failed to timely file two annual campaign statements, in violation of Government Code Section 84200 (2 counts), a terminating Statement of Organization, in violation of Government Code Section 84103 (1 count), and three Form 470s, in violation of Government Code Section 84206 (3 counts). Additionally, the Committee and Lopez failed to timely disclose certain expenditures on two pre-election campaign statements and one semiannual campaign statement, in violation of Government Code Section 84211 (3 counts), failed to process thousands of dollars in expenditures through the campaign bank account, in violation of Government Code Section 85201 (2 counts), and failed to maintain adequate campaign records, in violation of Government Code Section 84104 (1 count). **Fine: \$2,021 (Tiers One and Two).**

Failure to Properly Recuse

In the Matter of Doria Robinson, FPPC No. 25/236. Staff: Theresa Gilbertson, Attorney Supervisor and Paul Rasey, Special Investigator. Doria Robinson is a city councilmember for the City of Richmond. On October 3, 2023, Robinson improperly recused from a governmental decision in which Robinson had a conflict of interest. Robinson left the room during the governmental decision but failed to identify, on the record, the financial interest that gave rise to the conflict of interest, in violation of Government Code section 87105 (1 count). **Fine: \$400 (Tier One).**

Statement of Economic Interests Late Filer/Reporter

In the Matter of Kevin Riley; FPPC No. 26/160. Staff: Kendall L.D. Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement and Amber Rodriguez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst. Kevin Riley, a Planning Commissioner for the City of Antioch, failed to timely file a 2024 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (1 count). **Fine: \$800 (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of Mike Kozlowski; FPPC No. 25/662. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Mike Kozlowski, as a Folsom City Council Member and Alternate Member and Member of the Board of Directors, Elk Grove-Rancho Cordova-EL Dorado, failed to timely file a 2022, 2024, and 2025 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Sections 87203 and 87300 (3 counts). **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Rod Houser; FPPC No. 24/1393. Staff: Jack Blattner, Commission Counsel. Rod Houser, Consultant for the City of Santa Rosa's Water Department, failed to timely file a 2021 Annual Statement of Economic Interests and a Leaving Office Statement of Economic Interest, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (2 counts). **Fine: \$600 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Luhua Cheng; FPPC No. 23/711. Staff: Theresa Gilbertson, Attorney Supervisor and Joselyne Soto, Associate Governmental Program Analyst. Luhua Cheng, as a Primary Care Physician for the County of Santa Clara, failed to timely file the 2021 and 2023 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (2 counts). **Fine: \$400 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Masaru Oshita; FPPC No. 26/382. Staff: Kendall L.D. Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement and Amber Rodriguez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst. Masaru Oshita, a Commission Member for the Emergency Medical Services Authority Commission, failed to timely file a 2024 Annual and 2025 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (2 counts). **Fine: \$400 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Samuel Burton; FPPC No. 26/128. Staff: Alex Rose, Senior Commission Counsel. Samuel Burton, as a Blythe City Council Member, failed to timely file a 2024 and 2025 Annual Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 (2 counts). **Fine: \$400 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Timothy Banuelos; FPPC No. 25/634. Staff: Theresa Gilbertson, Attorney Supervisor and Joselyne Soto, Associate Governmental Program Analyst. Timothy Banuelos, as Planning Commissioner for the City of Pinole, failed to timely file the 2023 Annual and Leaving Office Statements of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87203 and 87204 (2 counts). **Fine: \$400 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Dale Beatty; FPPC No. 26/607. Staff: Kendall L.D. Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement and Amber Rodriguez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst. Dale Beatty, an Alternate Committee Member for the Emergency Medical Care Committee, failed to timely file a 2024 Annual Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (1 count). **Fine: \$200 (Tier One).**

In the Matter of Joanna Rees; FPPC No. 26/419. Staff: Kendall L.D. Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement and Amber Rodriguez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst. Joanna Rees, a Board Member for the Workforce Development Board, failed to timely file an Assuming Office Statement of Economic Interests, in violation of Government Code Section 87300 (1 count). **Fine: \$200 (Tier One).**

Lobbying Reporting

In the Matter of Mountain Recreation and Conservation Authority and Rorie Skei; FPPC No. 26/074. Staff: Chance Felkins, Commission Counsel. Mountain Recreation and Conservation Authority (“MRCA”) is a lobbyist employer. Rorie Skei is the organization’s Chief Deputy Executive Officer. MRCA failed to timely file ten lobbyist employer quarterly reports, in violation of Government Code Section 86117 (10 counts). **Fine: \$16,980 (Tier Two).**

In the Matter of International Interior Design Association, Northern California Chapter Inc. and Veronica Vaskinn; FPPC No. 25/1203. Staff: Chance Felkins, Commission Counsel. Respondents are represented by KC Jenkins of Bell, McAndrews & Hiltachk, LLP. International Interior Design Association, Northern California Chapter Inc. (“IIDA”) is a lobbyist employer. Veronica Vaskin is the organization’s Chapter Administrator. IIDA failed to timely file ten lobbyist employer quarterly reports, in violation of Government Code Section 86117 (10 counts). **Fine: \$10,800 (Tier Two).**