



**State of Washington  
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908  
(360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112

**Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: [pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov) • Website: [www.pdc.wa.gov](http://www.pdc.wa.gov)**

October 9, 2023

Delivered electronically to [jjjohnsonhome@msn.com](mailto:jjjohnsonhome@msn.com)

Subject: Complaint filed by Glen Morgan, PDC Case 141020

Dear James A. "JJ" Johnson:

Below is a copy of an electronic letter sent to Glen Morgan concerning a complaint filed with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC).

As noted in the letter to Glen Morgan, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1) and will not conduct a more formal investigation into these allegations or take further enforcement action in this matter.

However, pursuant to WAC 390-37-060(1)(d), this serves as a formal written warning regarding accepting an over-limit contribution during election year 2021. Staff expects you not to accept contributions that exceed limits in future years. The Commission will consider this formal written warning in deciding on further Commission action if there are future violations of PDC laws or rules.

If you have questions, you may contact Tabatha Blacksmith at 1-360-586-8929, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828 or by e-mail at [pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov)

Sincerely,

*Electronically signed Tabatha Blacksmith*  
Tabatha Blacksmith  
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

*Electronically signed Peter Frey Lavalley*  
Peter Frey Lavalley  
Executive Director



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October 9, 2023

Delivered electronically to [glen@wethegoverned.com](mailto:glen@wethegoverned.com)

Subject: Complaint regarding James A. "JJ" Johnson, PDC Case 140020

Dear Glen Morgan:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its review of the complaint you filed on August 3, 2023. The complaint alleged that James A. "JJ" Johnson, a 2021 candidate for City Council Member of the City of Spokane Valley, may have violated RCW 42.17A.405 by accepting a \$500 over-limit contribution for the 2021 Primary election.

PDC staff reviewed the allegations and evidence you submitted; the applicable statutes, rules, and reporting requirements; the responses provided by James A. "JJ" Johnson (the "Respondent"); the applicable PDC reports filed by the Respondent; and other relevant information; and queried the Respondent's data in the PDC contribution and expenditure database, to determine whether the record supports a finding of one or more violations.

Based on staff's review, we found the following:

- Pursuant to RCW 42.17A.405, no person<sup>1</sup> may accept contributions that, in the aggregate, exceed the contribution limit for each election in which the candidate is on the ballot or appears as a write-in candidate.
- Per WAC 390-05-400, the contribution limit for city council candidates was \$1,000 per election in 2021.
- Election records show that the Respondent advanced to the General Election and did not participate in the 2021 Primary Election.
- The Respondent's 2021 campaign received two contributions from Spokane Regional Labor Council: A \$500 contribution for the Primary Election on 6/18/21 and a \$1,000 contribution for the General Election on 9/15/21. The \$500 contribution for the Primary exceeded limits because the Respondent did not participate in that election.

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<sup>1</sup> Person" includes an individual, partnership, joint venture, public or private corporation, association, federal, state, or local governmental entity or agency however constituted, candidate, committee, political committee, political party, executive committee thereof, or any other organization or group of persons, however organized. RCW 42.17A.005(39).

- The Respondent responded to the complaint by email on August 14, 2023 and August 25, 2023 and confirmed that his campaign had inadvertently accepted an over-limit contribution from Spokane Regional Labor Council and wished to correct its error. The Respondent indicated that the campaign’s bank account is closed and asked the PDC for guidance regarding how to proceed. The PDC suggested the Respondent use personal funds to return the \$500 over-limit contribution to the contributor and report this activity as an in-kind contribution to the campaign on a C-4 report.
- The Respondent’s campaign filed a C-4 report for 1/1/22 – 9/30/23 on 9/19/23 disclosing Mr. Johnson’s \$500 in-kind contribution to the campaign for funds paid to Spokane Regional Labor Council to resolve an over-limit Primary contribution that was deposited on 6/18/21. The campaign amended the C-4 report on 9/21/23 to correct the carry-forward expenditure total from its last C-4 report ([report 110174449](#)).
- On September 21, 2023, the campaign’s Treasurer notified the PDC that the \$500 refund to Spokane Regional Labor Council had been made and reported on a C-4 report.
- The Respondent does not have previous warnings or violations of PDC requirements.

Noncompliance appears to be the result of a good-faith error for which the Respondent took responsibility and corrective action, using his own personal funds to return the contribution.

Based on our findings, staff has determined that, in this instance, the Respondent’s acceptance of an over-limit contribution does not amount to a violation that warrants further investigation.

Pursuant to WAC 390-37-060(1)(d), however, James A. “JJ” Johnson will receive a formal written warning concerning accepting an over-limit contribution during election year 2021. The formal written warning will include staff’s expectation that Mr. Johnson does not accept contributions that exceed limits in the future. The Commission will consider the formal written warning in deciding on further Commission action if there are future violations of PDC laws or rules.

Based on this information, the PDC finds that no further action is warranted and has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1).

If you have questions, you may contact Tabatha Blacksmith at 1-360-586-8929, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828 or by e-mail at [pdcc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdcc@pdc.wa.gov)

Sincerely,

Electronically signed Tabatha Blacksmith  
Tabatha Blacksmith  
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

Electronically signed Peter Frey Lavallee  
Peter Frey Lavallee  
Executive Director

cc: James A. “JJ” Johnson