

**BEFORE THE OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND ETHICS
FRANK D. REEVES MUNICIPAL BUILDING
2000-14th STREET, N.W., SUITE 420
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009
(202) 671-0550**

IN THE MATTER OF)	DATE: November 19, 2009
)	
Stephanie Audette)	DOCKET NO.: F09-012
Budget Officer)	
Office of the Chief Financial Officer)	
7212 Wolverton Ct.)	
Clarksville, MD 21029)	

ORDER

Statement of the Case

This matter came before the Office of Campaign Finance (hereinafter OCF) Office of the General Counsel following a determination by its Public Information and Records Management Division, that pursuant to D.C. Official Code §1-1106.02 (2001 Edition), Stephanie Audette, Budget Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, failed to timely file, a Financial Disclosure Statement (hereinafter FDS) for calendar year 2008, on or before May 15, 2009, as required by D.C. Official Code §1-1106.02, and also failed to file on or before the OCF sanctioned extended filing deadline of June 19, 2009.

By Notices of Hearing, Statements of Violations and Orders of Appearance dated August 13, 2009, and September 15, 2009, OCF ordered Stephanie Audette (hereinafter Respondent), to appear at scheduled hearings on August 31, 2009, and September 28, 2009, and show cause why she should not be found in violation of the D.C. Campaign Finance Reform and Conflict of Interest Act of 1974, as amended by D.C. Official Code §§1-1101.01 et seq., and fined accordingly.

Summary of Evidence

On September 22, 2009, Respondent filed an FDS for calendar year 2008, and submitted an affidavit explaining the untimely filing. In the affidavit, Respondent testified that she did not file the FDS in a timely manner because she left the Office of the Chief Financial Officer on October 4, 2008. Respondent testified that, during her exit interview, was not she notified about the obligation to file a FDS after terminating her employment with the District government. Respondent's file shows a history of timely filing.

Findings of Fact

Having reviewed the allegations and the record herein, I find:

1. Respondent was a Budget Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer.
2. Respondent was required to file a Financial Disclosure Statement with OCF for calendar year 2008, on or before June 19, 2009.
3. Respondent filed the required Financial Disclosure Statement on September 22, 2009.
4. Respondent has no history of FDS filing delinquencies.
5. Respondent provided a credible explanation for the filing delinquency in that Respondent was not notified about the duty to file during her exit interview; it is more like than not that she was not notified of the duty; and, upon being advised, Respondent took action to correct her noncompliance by filing.
6. Respondent is currently in compliance with the statute.

Conclusions of Law

Based upon the record provided by OCF, I therefore conclude:

1. Respondent violated D.C. Official Code §1-1106.02.
2. The penalty established at D.C. Official Code §1-1103.05(b)(3), and 3 DCMR §§3711.2(aa), 3711.2 and 3711.4 (March 2007, as amended) for failure to timely file a Financial Disclosure Statement required by D.C. Official Code §1-1106.02 is a fine of \$50.00 per day for each business day subsequent to the due date.
3. In accordance with D.C. Official Code §1-1103.05(b)(3), the respondent may be fined a maximum of \$2,000.00 for failing to timely file a Financial Disclosure Statement.
4. For good cause shown pursuant to 3 DCMR §3711.6, the Director of Campaign Finance (Director) may modify, rescind, dismiss or suspend any fine.

5. Respondent's explanation for failing to timely file is credible in that Respondent was not notified about the duty to file during her exit interview; and Respondent took action to correct her noncompliance provides credible bases for Respondent's failure to timely file.

Recommendation

In view of the foregoing and information included in the record, I hereby recommend that the Director suspend the imposition of the fine in this matter.

10/19/09

Date

Cecelia N. Townes
Hearing Officer

Concurrence

In view of the foregoing, I hereby concur with the Recommendation.

10/19/09

Date

Kathy S. Williams
General Counsel

ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR

IT IS ORDERED that the fine in this matter be hereby suspended.

10/19/09

Date

Cecily E. Collier-Montgomery
Director

SERVICE OF ORDER

This is to certify that I have served a true copy of the foregoing Order on Stephanie Audette, by regular mail, on November 19, 2009.

cc: Chief Natwar M. Gandhi
Office of the Chief Financial Officer
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Suite 203
Washington, DC 20004

NOTICE

Pursuant to 3DCMR §3711.5, any fine imposed by the Director shall become effective on the 16th day following the issuance of a decision and order, if the respondent does not request an appeal of this matter. If applicable, within 10 days of the effective date of this order, please make a check or money order payable to the D.C. Treasurer, c/o Office of Campaign Finance, Suite 420, 2000 Fourteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.