



# NEWS RELEASE

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## CANDIDATE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE RATES HIT LOWEST RATE SINCE 2011

Seventy-eight percent of candidates who sought legislative seats in the June 4 primary filed personal financial disclosure reports (PFDs), the lowest percentage since 2011, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

As in past years, incumbents were more scrupulous than challengers about their filing duties.

Of the 77 incumbents pursuing Assembly seats, 73 (95%) filed their disclosure forms. Among 107 challengers, 71 (66%) complied with the law.

**Table 1**  
**Percentage of Legislative Primary Candidates**  
**Filing Personal Disclosure Forms with ELEC**

GROUP	CANDIDATES-2019	FILERS-2019	2019	2017	2015	2013	2011
Incumbents	77	73	95%	94%	100%	99%	97%
Challengers	107	71	66%	80%	84%	90%	87%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>91%</b>

Republican incumbents complied at the highest rate (100%) followed by Democratic incumbents (93%). Republican challengers lagged the most (64%).

The compliance rate for all candidates has declined from 91 percent in 2011 (the first year ELEC began analyzing PFD filing rates) to 78 percent.

**Table 2**  
**Compliance Rate by Party Affiliation**

GROUP	2019	2017	2015	2013	2011
Republicans- Incumbents	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Democrats-Incumbents	93%	92%	100%	99%	98%
All Democrats	82%	90%	90%	91%	91%
All Candidates	78%	86%	91%	94%	91%
All Republicans	74%	81%	92%	97%	92%
Democrats-Challengers	70%	89%	79%	83%	83%
Republicans- Challengers	64%	75%	87%	95%	90%

New Jersey law requires candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the State Senate, and the Assembly to file a seven-page personal financial disclosure reports during the year of their candidacy.

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The disclosure forms ask candidates to identify sources of earned income, such as salaries or bonuses, and unearned income, such as rents and dividends. Disclosure is required if the source of income exceeds \$1,000 in any one category. The statements list only sources of income, not dollar amounts. Candidates also report sources of income received by spouses and children of candidates.

Candidates also must disclose gifts valued at more than \$250, and whether they own any property in a city where casino gambling is authorized. Candidates can face fines up to \$1,000 if they fail to file their PFD.

**Table 3**  
**Categories Checked Most Often by Candidates**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Salary- Candidate	130	90%
Salary- Spouse	86	60%
Other	52	36%
Dividends	35	24%
Rent	33	23%
Reimbursement	27	19%
Bonus	24	17%
Commissions	17	12%
Profit	15	10%
Fees	14	10%
Salary- Children	14	10%
Gifts	5	3%
Honorariums	2	1%
Royalties	2	1%
Own Property In City With Casinos*	2	1%

\*While two reports checked this category, neither property listed is within a city with a casino.

Copies of personal financial disclosure forms can be viewed by going to the “Candidate / Committee Filing Report” search page (<http://www.elec.state.nj.us/ELECReport/SearchCandidate.aspx>) and entering the candidate’s name. Look for form PFD-1.

The bipartisan Commission has urged the Legislature to move to May 15 the deadline for the filing of personal financial disclosure reports. This year, candidates were supposed to submit these forms within 10 days after the April 1 deadline for filing primary nomination petitions. This can cause difficulties both for the candidates and ELEC.

May 15 is the same date that incumbent legislators must file separate disclosure forms with the Office of Legislative Services. “By using the same deadline for both reports, the filing process will be more orderly while still providing disclosure well before the election,” said Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director.

The cutoff date for the compliance checks in this report was June 20, 2019. Reports filed after that date would not be included in the totals.