

FAIR ELECTION PRACTICES CAMPAIGN HEARING PANEL PROCEDURES – 2019

HEARINGS:

1. The FEPC will meet to hear complaints within 3 to 7 days of receiving a complaint, during the period preceding an election. **No hearings will be held on or after Election Day.** The Hearing Panel will judge complaints regarding the context of the Fair Campaign Pledge only. No other criteria will be used. Supporting evidence is appreciated and should be limited to no more than 20 pages.
2. We are inviting observers to our Hearing Panel who are welcome to attend hearings, but not the Panel's deliberations. Invited observers of the Hearing Panel will not have a vote. The invited observers of the Hearing Panel will be the representatives of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party as designated by each Party's Chairperson.
3. Both the complainant and the candidate complained against will have an opportunity to be heard by the Hearing Panel. Candidates are expected to appear before the Hearing Panel but may ask a representative to speak on their behalf. Presentations by each side will be limited: twenty minutes for presentation of issues and five minutes for clarification and rebuttal. The media will not be invited.
4. All properly filed complaints accepted by the FEPC Hearing Panel will be heard notwithstanding the failure of either side to appear. At its discretion, the Panel may choose to render a decision on a complaint without a hearing if the facts are clear and time is critical. The Panel will work from August 1, 2019 until the day before the General Election (November 4, 2019), generally during regular business hours. (Any FEPC Hearing Panel action will be deferred until the candidate lists are officially certified by the Board of Elections.)
5. Two copies of the original complaint package and any additional material must be provided by the complainant to the Panel Chair and the other candidate at the hearing.
6. Only the candidate(s) involved in the complaint and/or their one representative may be present and speak at the hearing.
7. There will be no "appeal" process. All decisions of the FEPC Hearing Panel are final.

DECISIONS:

1. The voting members of the Hearing Panel (not to exceed a panel of 4) shall be composed of an equal number of registered Democrats and registered Republicans. Alternates and the Chair may be used to accomplish this number. In the event of a tie vote, the complaint is deemed denied.
2. A member of the Hearing Panel cannot be actively involved with a candidate and should recuse him or herself, if necessary, from the hearing. Passive activity is that which does

not publicly identify the panel member as a supporter; giving donations is an example of “passive involvement” rather than “active involvement”. Speaking on behalf of a candidate and actively working for the candidates, such as writing/editing speeches, writing letters to the editor or op-ed pieces, posting lawn signs or bumper stickers, and distributing campaign materials, are examples of “active involvement”.

3. Actions of the Hearing Panel will be by majority vote. Decisions will be expressed in written form. Decisions will summarize which allegations are valid or invalid.
4. All decisions will be released by the FEPC Hearing Panel Chair to the candidates and the news media as soon as possible after the votes are taken. The Panel will not delay public release of its decision even if unable to make direct contact with the candidates.

The Fair Election Practices Campaign Hearing Panel members are: Jim Morris (Chair), Rob Brown, Ralph Esposito, Susan Kramarsky, and Channing Philbrick. Alternates are Peter Knapp, Lois Giess, Jim Peters, Sue Roberts, Patricia Knapp, Ed Jeffries, Lynda Garner Goldstein, and Marilyn O'Connor.