



# NEWS RELEASE

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Eighty-eight percent of candidates who are campaigning for the June 6 primary filed personal financial disclosures (PDF) reports, up two percentage points from the 2021 election, according to an analysis by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC).

While this year's rate of compliance failed to top the 94 percent rate in 2013, it is higher than the low of 78 percent in 2019.

Of the 93 incumbents seeking either state Senate or Assembly posts, 83 (89 %) filed their statutorily required disclosure forms. It is the first time in more than a decade that compliance for all incumbents dipped below 90 percent. In 2021, the incumbent compliance rate was 94 percent.

A field of 162 challengers are seeking legislative seats. Among that group, 141 (87%) have met their disclosure obligations. That was better than the 80 percent compliance rate in 2021. Ninety percent of challengers in 2013 filed their disclosure forms- the best rate since ELEC began tracking compliance in 2011.

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

| GROUP         | CANDIDATES-2023 | FILERS-2023 | 2023       | 2021       | 2019       | 2017       | 2015       | 2013       | 2011       |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Incumbents    | 93              | 83          | 89%        | 94%        | 95%        | 94%        | 100%       | 99%        | 97%        |
| Challengers   | 162             | 141         | 87%        | 81%        | 66%        | 80%        | 84%        | 90%        | 87%        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>255</b>      | <b>224</b>  | <b>88%</b> | <b>87%</b> | <b>78%</b> | <b>86%</b> | <b>91%</b> | <b>94%</b> | <b>91%</b> |

In the current year, Democratic incumbents rated highest at 93 percent compliance compared to 85 percent for Republican incumbents. Compliance rates among Democratic and Republican challengers were closer- 88 percent for Democrats compared to 87 percent for Republicans.

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Looking at all Democratic candidates, compliance was 90 percent in contrast to the 86 percent mark achieved by all Republican candidates.

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

| <b>GROUP</b>                  | <b>2023</b> | <b>2021</b> | <b>2019</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2011</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Democratic Incumbents</b>  | <b>93%</b>  | 94%         | 93%         | 92%         | 100%        | 99%         | 98%         |
| <b>All Democrats</b>          | <b>90%</b>  | 90%         | 82%         | 90%         | 90%         | 91%         | 91%         |
| <b>All Candidates</b>         | <b>88%</b>  | 86%         | 78%         | 86%         | 91%         | 94%         | 91%         |
| <b>Democratic Challengers</b> | <b>88%</b>  | 84%         | 70%         | 89%         | 79%         | 83%         | 83%         |
| <b>Republican Challengers</b> | <b>87%</b>  | 77%         | 64%         | 75%         | 87%         | 95%         | 90%         |
| <b>All Republicans</b>        | <b>86%</b>  | 83%         | 74%         | 81%         | 92%         | 97%         | 92%         |
| <b>Republican Incumbents</b>  | <b>85%</b>  | 95%         | 100%        | 100%        | 100%        | 100%        | 95%         |

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

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 must 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                 | 202           | 79%              |
| Salary- Spouse                    | 111           | 44%              |
| Other                             | 76            | 30%              |
| Dividends                         | 54            | 21%              |
| Rent                              | 48            | 19%              |
| Reimbursement                     | 40            | 16%              |
| Bonus                             | 35            | 14%              |
| Commissions                       | 24            | 9%               |
| Profit                            | 23            | 9%               |
| Salary- Children                  | 21            | 8%               |
| Fees                              | 20            | 8%               |
| Honorariums                       | 5             | 3%               |
| Own Property in City with Casinos | 3             | 1%               |
| Gifts                             | 2             | 1%               |
| Royalties                         | 1             | 0.4%             |

Jeff Brindle, ELEC’s Executive Director, said ELEC for many years has recommended that the Legislature move to May 15 the deadline for filing of personal financial disclosure reports. Candidates are 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. “Using the same deadline for both reports makes more sense. The filing process will be smoother and still provide disclosure well before the election,” said Brindle.

Copies of personal financial disclosure forms can be viewed by going to the “Candidate or Committee Reports” search page (<https://www.elec.nj.gov/publicinformation/viewreports.htm>) and entering the candidate’s name. Look for form PFD-1.

The cutoff date for the compliance checks in this report was May 19, 2023. Reports filed after that date are not included in the totals.

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