



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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FPPC offers guidance on Form 700 deadline in wake of COVID-19

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic and the upcoming Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) filing deadline on April 1, 2020, the FPPC encourages filers who have access to an electronic Form 700 filing system to take advantage of its use. If electronic filing is not available, filers are strongly encouraged to submit Form 700s by mail rather than in person. Statements postmarked on or before the filing deadline are considered timely filed.

The law does not permit state and local filing officers to waive Form 700 filing requirements or change filing deadlines. The law does provide that late fines need not be assessed by filing officers if, on an impartial basis, the filing officer determines that the late filing was not wilful and that enforcement of the liability will not further the purposes of the Act. This provision applies up to 30 days past the deadline for most Form 700 filings. (See Government Code Section 91013.) In instances where a filer attributes a late Form 700 filing to the COVID-19 pandemic despite best efforts to timely file, the FPPC will be evaluating on a case by case basis whether good cause exists to not impose late filing penalties.

We encourage local filing officers to be flexible when determining whether to assess late fines when the ability to file has been affected by filing office closures and other circumstances related to the virus. While we trust that those who need to file will make their best efforts to file on time, this is an ongoing and ever changing situation and we understand that filing officers may need to adapt and look at each circumstance to determine whether a late filing fine is warranted. Filers who are unable to file are advised to reach out to filing officers in advance, and document all efforts made to file statements despite the current difficult and uncertain circumstances.

The Fair Political Practices Commission's advice telephone line is closed until further notice. The FPPC will, however, continue to timely respond to requests for advice received via email. If you have an advice question related to Form 700 filing please send your question to Form700@fppc.ca.gov. If you do not have access to email you may call 916-322-1052 and leave a message, however responses from that line may be delayed.

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