

# Holyoke mayor's campaign hit with a fine over election mailers

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HOLYOKE — State campaign finance officials fined Mayor Joshua A. Garcia's committee \$1,000 after determining it failed to properly disclose mailers supporting several Holyoke City Council candidates ahead of the November 2025 election.

A June 2 letter from the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance found the committee violated reporting requirements for independent expenditures, though officials said the spending itself was legal and no further action is warranted.

The findings stem from a complaint about campaign mailers distributed before the Nov. 4, 2025, municipal election.

## State review finds reporting violations

The office said that after reviewing the complaint, it concluded the Garcia Committee did not comply with state campaign finance law governing independent expenditures.

The law requires any entity that spends more than \$250 in a calendar year to file disclosure reports when it independently supports or opposes a candidate, detailing how those funds are used. Additional reporting deadlines apply depending on how close the spending is to an election.

Reports must be filed with the city or town clerk when expenditures are made to influence a municipal race involving candidates who do not file directly with the state.

The office said a municipal mailer distributed in Holyoke before the Nov. 4 election endorsed eight city council candidates and identified "The Committee to Elect Josh Garcia" as the sponsor.

According to the office, the candidates were not involved in creating or distributing the mailers and had no prior knowledge of them.

While the Garcia Committee did report the spending in its October 2025 filing, regulators said the portion tied to the council candidates should also have been reported to the city clerk as independent expenditures, the office said.

It added that because the mailers were distributed late in the election cycle, additional timely filings were required but were not made.

State officials said the violation was resolved without further penalties beyond the fine.

## Spending was legal, reporting missed

To resolve the matter, the committee paid a \$1,000 fine. The Office of Campaign and Political Finance said that because the issue has been corrected and fully disclosed, no further enforcement action will be taken.

The agency added that it expects future compliance and warned that additional violations could result in a referral to the attorney general.

In a statement Friday, Garcia's campaign said the fine stemmed from a failure to file required expenditure reports on time, not from improper spending.

Garcia said the expenditures were legal, but that they missed reporting deadlines due to changes in campaign finance law of which he was unaware.

"I believed strongly in the ability of the candidates I publicly supported," Garcia wrote in a statement, adding that he appreciated the guidance from the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance. "I am very thankful for the guardians of our election process."