

Menu

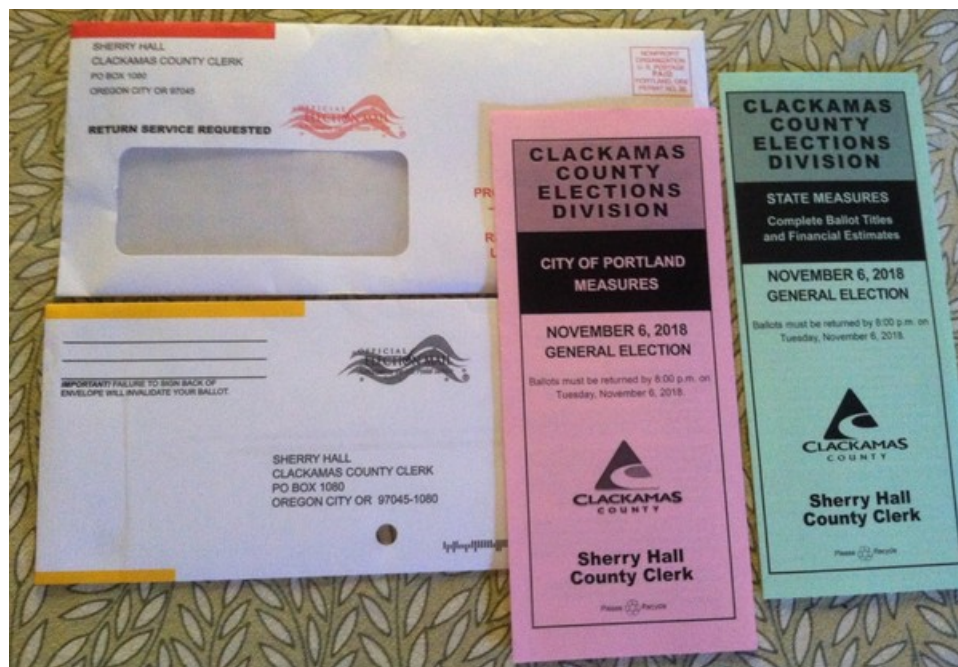
Subscribe

Sign In Search

POLITICS

Clackamas elections official draws complaint for self-promotion

Posted Oct 23, 2018



Clackamas elections chief Sherry Hall has her name printed in large type in multiple places in materials mailed with county election ballots. She oversees the election and is in a run-off in it. A complaint is now before state elections officials. (Betty Brickson)

0

0
shares

By [Dana Tims | Special to The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)

Clackamas County resident Betty Brickson did a double take when her general-election ballot arrived in the mail several days ago.

"Sherry Hall's name appeared no fewer than four times in the ballot materials," Brickson said. "It made it seem as if my ballot was nothing more than one of her campaign mailers."

Brickson filed a formal complaint via email Monday with the Oregon Secretary of State's office, arguing that Hall, who is running for a fourth term as Clackamas County clerk, is giving herself an unfair advantage over her opponent, Pamela White. ⊗

Voters in the county will return their ballots in envelopes addressed to Sherry Hall.

"She is essentially giving herself the biggest lawn sign in the county by sending materials prepared this way to every registered voter," said Brickson, a 20-year county resident. "I think this is just wrong."

State elections officials said they haven't been able to verify yet whether Brickson did, indeed, file a complaint. That's because the electronic-filing method she used is not read in real time. Instead, it goes into a queue, where it will be reviewed and assigned to an elections division staff member in the order in which it was filed.

But regardless, officials say, Hall is not violating any Oregon election law by including her name on ballot mailing materials.

"It's not against the law for county clerks to have their names on return envelopes," said Debra Royal, chief of staff to Secretary of State Dennis Richardson. "Since voters are returning their ballots to their own county clerk, there's nothing in our statutes that prohibit clerks from including their names on return envelopes."

Clerks in surrounding counties do not follow Hall's practice. Election offices in both Washington and Multnomah county, for instance, name only the office, and not the clerk, on their ballot materials.

The state of Washington, two years ago, specifically banned elections officials from including their own names on ballot materials if they are running for re-election.



Hall's practice of including her name has caught the attention of Clackamas County commissioners for some time, said Jim Bernard, chairman of the county board.

"It's obviously unfair," he said. "Name familiarity is the reason most people get elected."

He said he will ask other commissioners this week if they have an interest in introducing a bill into the 2019 Oregon legislature outlawing the practice.

Hall, who has drawn criticism in the past for some of her office's practices, said there is an easy way to resolve any controversy.

"I've followed the law at every step," she said. "But if someone wants to get the law changed, (lawmakers are) in session in Salem next year."

—Dana Tims

[View Comments 0](#)

Note to readers: if you purchase something through one of our affiliate links we may earn a commission.

ADVANCE
LOCAL

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** and **Privacy Policy**

© 2019 Oregon Live LLC. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Oregon Live LLC.

Community Rules apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

[▶ Ad Choices](#)

1



Monday, April 22 | Gerding Theater at the Armory