

# **Bond Case Briefs**

*Municipal Finance Law Since 1971*

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## **PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT - WASHINGTON**

### **Matter of Recall of Clouse**

**Supreme Court of Washington, En Banc - February 26, 2026 - P.3d - 2026 WL 532076**

Voter filed recall petition against county commissioner. The Superior Court, Thurston County, Jennifer A. Forbes, J., dismissed petition. Voter appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Petition's charges against commissioner were factually insufficient insofar as they referenced a vague, undefined benefit received by commissioner because of her personal relationship with an employee;
- Petition's charges against commissioner were factually insufficient insofar as they suggested that commissioner increased the risk of an adverse employment claim and failed to limit such risk to the county;
- Petition's charge that commissioner's general conduct was inconsistent with behavioral requirements and expectations included in county policy was factually insufficient;
- Petition's charge, as amended by the trial court, that commissioner selected for employment and continued to employ as her subordinate someone with whom she had a personal relationship was factually sufficient;
- Petition's charge, as amended by the trial court, that commissioner accepted a specific quantity of money from a subordinate employee for personal use without clarifying whether she needed to repay the employee was factually sufficient;
- Petition failed to identify requisite standard, law, or rule that would establish that commissioner acted unlawfully by selecting for employment and continuing to employ as her subordinate someone with whom she had a personal relationship;
- Petition failed to identify requisite standard, law, or rule that would establish that commissioner acted unlawfully by accepting a specific quantity of money from a subordinate employee for personal use without clarifying whether she needed to repay the employee; and
- Petition failed to show that commissioner's discretionary act in hiring, and continuing to employ, subordinate with whom commissioner had a personal relationship was manifestly unreasonable behavior.