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COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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MEMBERS
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CORNING TOWER, SUITE 2301
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12223

518-453-4600 518-299-1757
TELEPHONE FACSIMILE
www.cjc.ny.gov

ROBERT H. TEMBECKJIAN
ADMINISTRATOR & COUNSEL

CATHLEEN S. CENCI
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

S. PETER PEDROTTY
KATHLEEN E. KLEIN
SENIOR ATTORNEYS

CONFIDENTIAL

April 16, 2021

Ms. Elena Sassower
Box 8101
White Plains, NY 10602

Re: File No. 2021/A-0083-0085

Dear Ms. Sassower:

This is to acknowledge receipt by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct of your complaints dated February 7th, 8th, 11th, April 2nd & April 9, 2021.

Your complaints will be presented to the Commission, which will decide whether or not to inquire into it. We will contact you after the Commission has reviewed the matter.

For your information, we have enclosed some background material about the Commission, its jurisdiction and its limitations.

Very truly yours,

Letitia Walsh

Letitia Walsh
Administrative Assistant

Enclosure

The Commission's Authority and Jurisdiction

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct receives and reviews written complaints of misconduct against judges of the state unified court system, which includes State, County, Municipal, Town and Village Courts.

Upon review of a complaint, the Commission decides whether to investigate or dismiss it.

The types of complaints that may be investigated by the Commission include improper demeanor, conflicts of interest, intoxication, bias, prejudice, favoritism, corruption, prohibited business or political activity, serious financial and records mismanagement and other misconduct on or off the bench. Physical or mental disability may also be investigated.

The Commission is a disciplinary agency, not an appellate court. It has no authority to reverse a lower court ruling or decision, order a new trial, raise or reduce the amount of bail or change the sentence imposed upon a defendant. The Commission does not issue advisory opinions, give legal advice to complainants or represent litigants.

Disciplinary Action

Investigation of a complaint may entail such measures as interviewing witnesses, analyzing documents and getting the judge's response to the allegations. If a complaint is investigated and the allegations are not substantiated, the Commission will dismiss the complaint. If the allegations appear to have merit, the Commission may direct that formal charges be served against the judge and a formal hearing be held.

After a formal hearing, the Commission may dismiss the complaint or caution the judge privately about the matter. The Commission may

also determine that the judge should be publicly admonished or censured, removed from office or, in a case of disability, retired. Determinations to admonish, censure, remove or retire a judge are subject to review by the Court of Appeals, New York State's highest court.

Confidentiality

Commission proceedings are, by law, confidential. A matter becomes public only if the Commission has determined that the judge should be admonished, censured, removed or retired, or if the judge under formal charges has waived confidentiality.

In the course of an investigation, the judge may be given a copy of the complaint and be asked questions about it. If the Commission directs that the matter proceed to a hearing, both the judge and the complainant, as well as other witnesses, may be required to testify.

The Commission is required to notify the complainant of the disposition of the complaint.

Jurisdiction

The Commission's jurisdiction is limited to judges. Complaints against other court personnel or lawyers are not investigated. Among others, the Commission **does not** have jurisdiction over the following:

- New York City Housing Court Judges
- Support Magistrates
- Attorneys or District Attorneys
- Administrative Law Judges (ALJ)
- Federal Judges
- Court Attorney/Referees
- Judicial Hearing Officers (JHO)
- Former or retired judges

Additional Resources

When appropriate, the Commission refers complaints to other agencies. Please see the following columns for referral information for judges and others over whom the Commission lacks jurisdiction.

NYC Housing Court Judges

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
New York City Civil Court
111 Centre Street
New York, New York 10013

Support Magistrates

NYC (New York, Kings, Bronx, Queens and Richmond Counties)
Administrative Judge
New York City Family Court
60 Lafayette Street
New York, New York 10013

Outside of NYC

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
Office of Court Administration
4 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2001
Albany, New York 12223

Attorneys/District Attorneys

Complaints against attorneys may be made to the appropriate Attorney Disciplinary/Grievance Committee. The office you need to contact depends upon the location of your lawyer's office. For more information please visit:
<http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/grievance/complaints.shtml>.

Administrative Law Judges (ALJ)

ALJs preside over administrative hearings and work for individual agencies which have oversight procedures. Please contact the agency in which your case took place for referral information.

Federal Judges

Each judicial circuit provides rules explaining how and where to file a complaint. For more information please visit
<http://www.uscourts.gov/judges-judgeships/judicial-conduct-disability>

Judges in Other States:

<http://cjc.ny.gov/Related.Groups/other-states.htm>

Court Attorney/Referees

NYC – Family Courts
New York City Family Court
60 Lafayette Street
New York, New York 10013

NYC – All other courts

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
New York City Civil Court
111 Centre Street
Room 1240
New York, New York 10013

Outside of NYC

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
Office of Court Administration
4 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2001
Albany, New York 12223

Judicial Hearing Officers (JHO)

NYC

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for
New York City Courts
111 Centre Street
New York, New York 10013

Outside of NYC

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
Office of Court Administration
4 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2001
Albany, New York 12223

Commission of Corrections

Facilities within NYC

Executive Director
51 Chambers Street, Room 923
New York, New York 10007

Facilities outside of NYC

Complaint Officer
A.E. Smith State Office Building
80 South Swan Street, 12th Floor
Albany, New York 12210

Traffic and Parking Violations Bureau

Information about Traffic Violations Bureau
convictions: <https://dmv.ny.gov/tickets/appeal-tvb-ticket-conviction>

FAQs

Q. Does the Commission have a complaint form that I must use?

A. A signed letter, email, or fax detailing the allegations of misconduct and naming the judge is sufficient. However, we do have a complaint form, which is available on our website.

Q. Will the judge know that I submitted a complaint?

A. Perhaps. If the Commission decides to investigate your complaint, the judge is likely to be asked to respond to the allegations you made.

Q. Must the judge disqualify himself or herself from my case if I make a complaint?

A. No.

Q. Can the Commission direct that a judge be disqualified, or that a new trial be held, or that any other relief be granted?

A. No. The Commission is not a court and has no authority to grant relief to litigants.

Q. Will I hear further from the Commission?

A. Yes. The Commission is required to inform complainants of the disposition of their complaints.

**Please Visit Our Website or
Send Us an Email:**

www.cjc.ny.gov
cjc@cjc.ny.gov

About the Commission Members

There are 11 Commission members, each serving a four-year term. The Governor appoints four members, the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals appoints three, and each of the four leaders of the State Legislature appoints one. The members serve part-time without compensation. Four of the Commission members are judges, at least one must be a lawyer, and at least two must be non-lawyers. The Commission elects one of its members to serve as chair, and it has a clerk. The Commission appoints an Administrator and Counsel, who serves full-time and hires and directs the staff.

Commission Offices

Principal Office

61 Broadway, Suite 1200
New York, New York 10006
(646) 386-4800
Fax: (646) 458-0037

Corning Tower, Suite 2301
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223
(518) 453-4600
Fax: (518) 486-1850

400 Andrews Street, Suite 700
Rochester, New York 14604
(585) 784-4141
Fax: (585) 232-7834

State of New York



Commission

on

Judicial Conduct

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL
CONDUCT
CORNING TOWER, SUITE 2301
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA
ALBANY, NY 12223

ALBANY NY 120
19 APR 2021 PM 3 L



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Box 8101
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10602-810101

