



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

June 13, 2017

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New York State Acting Supreme Court Justice Should Be Admonished for Seeking Favorable Results in Other Courts for Her Son and for a Friend

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that Leticia M. Ramirez, a Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York and an Acting Justice of the Supreme Court, 1st Judicial District, New York County, should be admonished for improperly communicating with other courts in unrelated two cases, seeking favorable results for a friend and for her own son, and invoking her judicial office while doing so.

Judge Ramirez agreed to the admonition.

In 2013, Judge Ramirez invoked her judicial title on behalf of her childhood babysitter, in a letter that was filed in another court in connection with an application to vacate a nine-year old misdemeanor conviction on a gambling charge. Then in the fall of 2014, Judge Ramirez invoked her judicial office in affirmations that she wrote on behalf of her son's *pro se* petition for a writ of habeas corpus in connection with his conviction on a felony charge.

In its determination the Commission stated: “When a litigant is the beneficiary of influential support from a judge based on personal connections, it creates two systems of justice, one for the average person and one for those with ‘right’ connections, and undermines public confidence in the impartial administration of justice and in the integrity of the judiciary as a whole.”

In accepting the stipulated sanction, the Commission was “mindful that [the judge] has acknowledged her misconduct” and had stipulated that she “now more fully appreciates her obligation to refrain from lending or even appearing to lend the prestige of her judicial office.”

Judge Ramirez has served as a Judge of the New York City Civil Court since 2011 and an Acting Justice of the Supreme Court, 1st Judicial District since 2015. The judge has also served as an Acting Judge of the Family Court, Kings County, from 2011 to 2015. Her current term expires on December 31, 2020.

The Commission Proceedings

Judge Ramirez was served with a Formal Written Complaint dated January 11, 2017, containing two charges.

On April 10, 2017, the Administrator of the Commission, Judge Ramirez and Judge Ramirez’s attorney entered into an Agreed Statement of Facts, stipulating as to the facts and sanction and waiving further submissions and oral argument.

The Commission accepted the Agreed Statement on April 27, 2017.

The Commission Determination

The Commission filed a determination dated May 4, 2017, in which ten members concurred: Joseph W. Belluck, Esq. (the Commission Chair), Paul B. Harding, Esq. (the Vice Chair), Judge Rolando Acosta, Joel Cohen, Esq., Jodie Corngold, Judge John A. Falk, Judge Leslie G. Leach, Richard A. Stoloff, Esq., Judge David A. Weinstein and Akosua Garcia Yeboah.

One member, Taa Grays, Esq., was not present.

Statement by Commission Administrator

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

“Every judge knows or should know that it is wrong to seek favorable results from another court for a friend or relative, and doubly wrong to invoke one’s judicial title while doing so. To her credit, Judge Ramirez has acknowledged her wrongdoing and agreed to a public reprimand for such conduct in two cases.”

Court of Appeals Review

The Commission transmitted its determination to the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 44, subdivision 7. Judge Ramirez received it on June 12, 2017, and the Commission was subsequently notified by the Court of Appeals that service was complete. Consequently, the matter is now public.

A judge may either accept the Commission's determination or, within 30 days from receipt, make a written request to the Chief Judge for a review of the determination by the Court of Appeals.

Pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 44, subdivision 7, if Judge Ramirez does not request review by the Court of Appeals, the Commission will admonish her in accordance with the determination.

If a Commission determination is reviewed by the Court of Appeals, the Court may accept the determined sanction, impose a different sanction including admonition, censure or removal, or impose no sanction.

Statistics Relating to Prior Determinations

Since 1978, the Commission has issued 267 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State. The Commission has issued 170 determinations of removal and 319 determinations of censure.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 96 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission’s sanctions in 80 cases (71 of which were removals, six were censures and three were admonitions). Of the remaining 16 cases, two sanctions were increased from censure to removal, and 13 were reduced: nine removal determinations were modified to censure, one removal was modified to admonition, two censures were modified to admonition, and one censure was rejected and the charges dismissed. The Court remitted one matter to the Commission for further proceedings. One request for review is pending.

*June 13, 2017**Page 4***Counsel**

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Ramirez was represented by Deborah Scalise, of Scalise & Hamilton, LLP, 670 White Plains Road, Suite 325, Scarsdale, New York, 10583, (914) 725-2801.

The Commission was represented by Robert H. Tembeckjian, Administrator and Counsel to the Commission; Mark Levine, Deputy Administrator in Charge of the New York City office; and Staff Attorney Daniel W. Davis. Investigator Christina Partida assisted in the investigation.

Background Information on Judge Ramirez

First took office (NYC Civil Court):	2011
Current Term Expires:	December 31, 2020
Year Admitted to NYS Bar:	2000
Other Judicial Office:	Acting Justice of the Supreme Court- 2015 Previously served as an acting Judge of the Family Court from 2011-2015

Members of the Commission

The Commission members serve four-year terms. A list of members is appended.

The Public File

The determination is attached. The record of the proceedings upon which the determination is based is available for inspection by appointment during regular business hours at the Commission's three offices:

<p>61 Broadway Suite 1200 New York, New York 10006</p>	<p>Corning Tower, Suite 2301 Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12223</p>	<p>400 Andrews Street Suite 700 Rochester, New York 14604</p>
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MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2020
Paul B. Harding, Esq., Vice Chair	Assembly Minority Leader Brian M. Kolb	March 31, 2021
Hon. Rolando T. Acosta	Former Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman	March 31, 2018
Joel Cohen, Esq.	Former Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver	March 31, 2018
Jodie Corngold	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2019
Taa Grays, Esq.	Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2020
Hon. John A. Falk	Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2021
Hon. Leslie G. Leach	Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2020
Richard A. Stoloff, Esq.	Former Senate President Pro Tem Dean Skelos	March 31, 2019
Hon. David A. Weinstein	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2018
Akosua Garcia Yeboah	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2021