



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

ROBERT H. TEMBECKJIAN
ADMINISTRATOR & COUNSEL

BETH S. BAR
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

61 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10006

646-386-4791 646-458-0037
TELEPHONE FACSIMILE
www.scjc.state.ny.us

NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE July 29, 2009

Contacts:	<i>Robert H. Tembeckjian, Administrator</i> <i>(646) 386-4800</i>
	<i>Beth S. Bar, Public Information Officer</i> <i>(646) 386-4791</i>

Nassau County Family Court Judge Admonished for Improper Conduct in Two Proceedings

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that Conrad D. Singer, a Judge of the Family Court, Nassau County, should be admonished.

In a determination dated July 1, 2009, the Commission found that Judge Singer improperly exercised the contempt power in a custody matter and made an inappropriate *ex parte* hospital visit to a 14-year-old who was being held for a mental evaluation.

Judge Singer held the attorney in contempt in a 2007 custody matter involving domestic violence issues and fined her \$1,000 for refusing to disclose the address of the shelter where her client was then living, despite her repeated explanation that the law prohibited the disclosure of this information. Moreover, the judge imposed the contempt without the required warning or opportunity for the lawyer to make a statement in her defense, and without inquiring as to the attorney's "principled" and legally "sound" refusal to reveal her client's whereabouts.

Judge Singer's solo visit to and discussion with the 14-year-old, whose attorney and parents were not present, was "completely inappropriate and showed a serious misunderstanding of the role of a judge," even though the judge was motivated by concern for the teenager's well-being.

The determination can be found on the Commission's web site:

www.scjc.state.ny.us.

The Commission Proceedings

Judge Singer was served with a Formal Written Complaint dated January 29, 2009, containing two charges. The Administrator of the Commission, the judge's attorney and Judge Singer entered into an Agreed Statement of Facts on May 4, 2009, stipulating as to the facts and sanction and waiving further submissions and oral argument. The Commission accepted the Agreed Statement on May 14, 2009.

The Commission Determination

The Commission filed a determination dated July 1, 2009. Judge Thomas A. Klonick (the Commission Chair), Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Richard D. Emery, Esq., Paul B. Harding, Esq., Elizabeth B. Hubbard, Marvin E. Jacob, Esq., Judge Jill Konviser, Judge Karen K. Peters, and Judge Terry Jane Ruderman concurred.

Nina M. Moore did not participate. Stephen R. Coffey, Esq. (the Vice Chair), was not present.

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.

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 Singer does not request review by the Court of Appeals, the Commission will admonish him in accordance with the determination.

If the Commission's 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 admonished 232 judges in New York State, 82 of who were full-time judges. The Commission has issued a determination of removal as to 160 judges and has censured 277 judges.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 88 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission's sanctions in 74 cases (65 of which were removals, 6 were censures and 3 were admonitions). Of the remaining 14 cases, two determinations were increased from censure to removal, and 12 were reduced: 9 removal determinations were modified to censure, two censure determinations were modified to admonition, and one censure was rejected and the charges dismissed.

Counsel

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Singer was represented by Michael S. Ross, Esq., 60 East 42nd Street, Forty-Seventh Floor, New York, New York 10165, (212) 505-4060.

The Commission was represented by Robert H. Tembeckjian, Esq., Administrator and Counsel to the Commission, and Roger J. Schwarz, Esq., a senior attorney. Jamie Rosenman, an investigator who recently left the Commission for other employment, assisted in the investigation.

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:

61 Broadway
New York, New York 10006

Corning Tower, Suite 2301
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223

400 Andrews Street
Rochester, New York 14604

MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Hon. Thomas A. Klonick, Chair	Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman	March 31, 2013
Stephen R. Coffey, Esq., Vice Chair	Former Senate President Pro Tem Joseph L. Bruno	March 31, 2011
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq.	Governor David A. Paterson	March 31, 2012
Richard D. Emery, Esq.	Former Senate Minority Leader Malcolm A. Smith	March 31, 2012
Paul B. Harding, Esq.	Former Assembly Minority Leader James Tedisco	March 31, 2013
Elizabeth B. Hubbard	Governor David A. Paterson	March 31, 2011
Marvin E. Jacob, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver	March 31, 2010
Hon. Jill Konviser	Former Governor George E. Pataki	March 31, 2010
Nina M. Moore	Governor David A. Paterson	March 31, 2013
Hon. Karen K. Peters	Former Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye	March 31, 2010
Hon. Terry Jane Ruderman	Former Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye	March 31, 2012