



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Judicial Conduct Commission Reports Record Number of Complaints and Inquiries in 2022

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct received 2,439 complaints in 2022 – the most in its history -- representing a 25% increase from 2021, a 14% increase over the previous record high in 2017, and a 24% increase over the 5-year average of 1965 a year.

The Commission also rendered 25 public decisions, the most in a single year since 2009.

The information is reported in the Commission's newly released 2023 Annual Report, covering its activities in 2022, available online at www.cjc.ny.gov.

The Commission also reported the following:

- 549 preliminary inquiries were conducted.¹
- 344 full-fledged investigations were undertaken: 170 new ones and 174 carried forward from 2021.

¹ Defined in the Commission rules as the preliminary analysis, clarification and fact-finding activity intended to aid the Commission in determining whether or not to investigate a complaint.

- 13 judges were publicly disciplined: three judges were removed from office, seven were censured and three were admonished.
- 12 judges resigned and publicly agreed never to return to judicial office.
- Six other judges resigned while complaints were pending, where it had not been determined permanent departure from office was warranted or appropriate.²
- 27 judges were issued confidential cautionary letters.
- 187 matters were pending at year's end.

Established in the State Constitution as an independent agency in 1978, the Commission evaluates and investigates complaints of misconduct against judges of the state unified court system and, where appropriate, disciplines such judges for ethics violations. Through 2022, it rendered public decisions against 928 judges, including 178 who were removed from office and 122 who resigned and publicly agreed never to return to the bench.

All Commission decisions and the Annual Reports are available on the agency's website: www.cjc.ny.gov.³

Commentary

In addition to summaries of the year's public disciplines, confidential cautions and statistics, the 2023 Annual Report comments on the perils of social media, courtroom decorum both virtually and in-person, ethical obligations of judges and judicial candidates, Town and Village Justices' fiduciary obligations, and the misuse of parking placards.

The Commission's Budget

For the second year in a row, the Governor's Executive Budget recommended the appropriation the Commission requested: an increase from \$7.2 million to \$8.1 million, which will allow the Commission to hire additional staff and implement a much-needed electronic case-management system, upgrade its records-keeping software and IT capabilities, and meet mandated increases in rent and other contractual obligations.

² The Commission notifies such judges that proceedings would resume if they return to the bench.

³ The website and Annual Report also report on cases decided by two predecessor commissions, beginning with a legislatively-created temporary commission on judicial conduct in 1975, whose dockets were carried over to the current Commission.

Statement by Commission Chairman Joseph W. Belluck

“Faith in the integrity of the courts is fundamental to the rule of law. The work of the Judicial Conduct Commission promotes public confidence in a judiciary that is both independent and accountable. I thank my dedicated fellow Commission members and our talented staff for unfailingly meeting their commitments.”

Statement by Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian

“The Judicial Conduct Commission is a notable success story in government ethics enforcement. It promotes judicial independence and public confidence in the courts, by disciplining those judges who have engaged in misconduct, and exonerating those who have been wrongly accused.”

Office Addresses

The Commission’s offices are located at the following addresses:

61 Broadway Suite 1200 New York, NY 10006	Corning Tower, Suite 2301 Empire State Plaza Albany, NY 12223	400 Andrews Street Suite 700 Rochester, NY 14604
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Commission Members

There are 11 members of the Commission on Judicial Conduct. Four are appointed by the Governor, three by the Chief Judge and four by the leaders of the Legislature. Members serve overlapping 4-year terms and are eligible for re-appointment. The present Commission members are:⁴

Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., <i>Chair</i>	
Taa Grays, Esq., <i>Vice Chair</i>	
Hon. Fernando M. Camacho	Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.
Jodie Corngold	Ronald J. Rosenberg, Esq.
Hon. John A. Falk	Graham B. Seiter, Esq.
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Akosua Garcia Yeboah

⁴ There is currently one vacancy on the Commission.