



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Brooklyn Civil Court Judge Should Be Admonished for Asserting Her Judicial Office in a Traffic Incident

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that Jill R. Epstein, a Judge of the New York City Civil Court (Kings County) should be admonished for asserting her judicial office during a confrontation over a double-parked car.

In April 2022, while driving to work, Judge Epstein became stuck behind a double-parked car outside of a school. She entered the school, identified herself as a judge to the school safety officer, said she had to get to work at the courthouse and asked about the vehicle. When the teacher whose car had been double-parked came outside to move the car, Judge Epstein became angry, called her a “stupid bitch,” said she too had a parking placard but could not use it double-park, and added she had a courthouse to run.

The Commission determination stated that Judge Epstein “improperly asserted her judicial status when speaking with the school safety officer and created the appearance that she expected special treatment and deference due to her judicial position.” It also noted that she sent a written apology to the teacher and was subject to administrative action by her supervisors.

Judge Epstein has been a Judge of the Civil Court since 2019. Her current term expires on December 31, 2028.

Statement by Commission Administrator

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

“A judge must uphold the integrity and dignity of judicial office at all times, on or off the bench, and avoid asserting the judicial title in personal situations, such as when frustrated by a traffic jam. Here, Judge Epstein forthrightly accepted responsibility and made amends, allowing for the mildest public discipline available.”

The Commission Proceedings

Judge Epstein was served with a Formal Written Complaint dated June 7, 2023, containing one charge.

On July 13, 2023, the Administrator of the Commission, Judge Epstein and her attorney entered into an Agreed Statement of Facts, stipulating to the facts and sanction and waiving further submissions and oral argument.

The Commission accepted the Agreed Statement on July 20, 2023.

The Commission Determination

The Commission filed a determination dated August 14, 2023, in which eight members concurred: Joseph W. Belluck, Esq. (the Commission Chair), Judge Fernando M. Camacho, Judge John A. Falk, Judge Robert J. Miller, Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq., Graham B. Seiter, Esq., Judge Anil C. Singh and Akosua Garcia Yeboah.

Two members, Taa Grays, Esq. (the Vice Chair), and Ronald J. Rosenberg, Esq., were 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. The Commission was notified on August 23, 2023, that Judge Epstein had received the determination. 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 Epstein 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 281 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State. The Commission has issued 179 determinations of removal and 349 determinations of censure.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 101 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission's sanctions in 85 cases (76 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 currently pending.

Counsel

Judge Epstein was represented by Deborah A. Scalise, of Scalise & Hamilton, P.C., 111 Brook Street, Suite 202, Scarsdale, NY 10583, (914) 725-2801.

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator Mark Levine, Senior Attorney Vickie Ma and Investigator Andrew Fenwick.

Background Information on Judge Epstein

First Took Office:	2019
Current Term Expires:	December 31, 2028

Members of the Commission

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

The Public File

The determination and other records are available on the Commission's website: www.cjc.ny.gov.

MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2024
Taa Grays, Esq., Vice Chair	Senate President Pro Tem Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2027
Hon. Fernando M. Camacho	Former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2024
Hon. John A. Falk	Former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2025
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2026
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2026
Ronald J. Rosenberg, Esq.	Former Senate Minority Leader John J. Flanagan	March 31, 2024
Graham B. Seiter, Esq.	Assembly Minority Leader William A. Barclay	March 31, 2025
Hon. Anil C. Singh	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2026
Akosua Garcia Yeboah	Former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2025
Vacant	Governor	March 31, 2027