



NEW YORK STATE  
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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## NEWS RELEASE

*March 19, 2024*

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### **Essex County Town Court Justice Resigns After Being Formally Charged with Misconduct**

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Alec H. Friedmann, a Justice of the North Elba Town Court, Essex County – who among other things was formally charged by the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct for demonstrating bias and retaliating against a defense attorney – has resigned from office and agreed never to return.<sup>1</sup>

In November 2023, Judge Friedmann was served with a Formal Written Complaint, alleging that he:

1. Failed to disqualify himself and presided over a criminal case despite being biased against the defense attorney, engaged in unauthorized *ex parte* communications, and dismissed the charges without notice to or consent of the prosecution as required by law, despite having previously been cautioned by the Commission for similar conduct; and,

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<sup>1</sup> A resignation stipulation was formalized on February 8, 2024. The Commission issued an order accepting it on March 14, 2024. The judge's resignation was effective December 31, 2023.

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2. Demonstrated hostility toward a defense attorney in retaliation for a complaint the attorney had filed with the Commission in 2019.

Judge Friedmann waived the statutory provision of confidentiality applicable to Commission proceedings, to the limited extent that the stipulation and the Commission's order accepting it would be public.

Judge Friedmann, who is not an attorney, has served as a Justice of the North Elba Town Court since 2019. His current term would have expired on December 31, 2026.

The stipulation can be found on the Commission's website: [www.cjc.ny.gov](http://www.cjc.ny.gov).

### **Statement by Commission Administrator**

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

“Apart from a judge's obligation to be fair and courteous toward all who have business before the court, judicial retaliation against those who file complaints with the Commission is unacceptable and taken very seriously.”

### **Statistics Relating to Prior Commission Decisions**

The Commission has accepted 132 such stipulations since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

Since 1978, the Commission has issued 283 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State, 349 determinations of censure and 182 determinations of removal.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 102 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission's sanctions in 86 cases (77 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.

**Counsel**

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Friedmann represented himself.

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator Cathleen S. Cenci, Senior Attorney Kathleen E. Klein and Senior Investigator Ryan Fitzpatrick.

**Background Information on Judge Friedmann**

First took office: 2019  
Current term expires: December 31, 2026

**Members of the Commission**

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

**The Public File**

The stipulation and order are attached.

**MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Appointing Authority</b>	<b>Term End</b>
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2028
Taa Grays, Esq., Vice Chair	Senate President Pro Tem Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2027
Hon. Fernando M. Camacho	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2028
Brian C. Doyle, Esq.	Senate Minority Leader Robert G. Ort	March 31, 2024
Hon. John A. Falk	Former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2025
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2026
Nina M. Moore, Ph.D.	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2027
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2026
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