



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Rensselaer County Family Court Judge Should Be Censured for Contributing to Hostile Work Environment

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that Family Court Judge Jill Kehn (Rensselaer County) should be censured for sending hostile and demeaning emails about the court's chief clerk, and for failing to adhere to her administrative judge's directive not to confront court staff about their work.

Judge Kehn agreed to the censure.

Beginning in January 2022 and continuing on and off for about a year, Judge Kehn began denigrating and otherwise criticizing the new chief clerk of the court in emails and conversations with other court staff.¹ She also yelled at and was otherwise disrespectful toward certain staff in the clerk's office.

Moreover, after her administrative judge directed her to address any issues regarding the clerk's office with the District Office of the Third Judicial

¹ The new chief clerk was appointed to the position by the Office of Court Administration in October 2021. Judge Kehn believed the appointment should have gone to the court's then-deputy chief clerk, with whom she was friendly.

District, Judge Kehn berated the chief clerk in a loud voice and yelled at other staff in the office. This prompted a personal visit from the administrative judge, and after a human resources inquiry by the OCA Inspector General, Judge Kehn was transferred from Family Court in Rensselaer County to Albany County.

In accepting the jointly recommended sanction of censure, the Commission noted Judge Kehn's acknowledgement of wrongdoing, acceptance of the public censure and pledge to work collegially with court staff.

Judge Kehn has been a Judge of the Rensselaer County Family Court since 2022, having previously served as a Judge of the Troy City Court (Rensselaer County) from 2015 to 2021. Her current term expires on December 31, 2031.

Statement by Commission Administrator

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

“Judges are obliged to be patient, dignified and courteous toward all with whom they deal in an official capacity, and to cooperate with judicial and non-judicial colleagues in the administration of court business. It is entirely inconsistent with that mandate for a judge to stoke rather than quell dissension among court staff. Judge Kehn appears now to recognize and commit to that responsibility.”

The Commission Proceedings

Judge Kehn was served with a Formal Written Complaint dated April 29, 2024, containing one charge.

On May 30, 2024, the Administrator of the Commission, Judge Kehn 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 June 13, 2024.

The Commission Determination

The Commission filed a determination dated June 21, 2024, in which all 11 members concurred: Joseph W. Belluck, Esq. (the Commission Chair), Taa Grays, Esq. (the Vice Chair), Judge Fernando M. Camacho, Brian C. Doyle, Esq., Judge John A. Falk, Judge Robert J. Miller, Nina M. Moore, Ph.D., Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq., Graham B. Seiter, Esq., Judge Anil C. Singh and Akosua Garcia Yeboah.

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 July 8, 2024, that Judge Kehn 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 Kehn does not request review by the Court of Appeals, the Commission will censure 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 352 determinations of censure against judges in New York State. The Commission has issued 183 determinations of removal and 284 determinations of admonition.

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

Judge Kehn was represented by Peter J. Moschetti, Jr. of Anderson, Moschetti & Taffany, PLLC, 26 Century Hill Drive, Suite 206, Latham, New York, (518) 252-0806.

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator Cathleen S. Cenci, Staff Attorney Shruti Joshi and Senior Investigator Laura Misjak.

Background Information on Judge Kehn

First Took Office (Family Court):	2022
Current Term Expires:	December 31, 2031
Prior Office:	
Troy City Court	2015-2021
Year Admitted to the NYS Bar:	1990

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	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 Wilson	March 31, 2028
Brian C. Doyle, Esq.	Senate Minority Leader Robert G. Ort	March 31, 2028
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 Wilson	March 31, 2026
Akosua Garcia Yeboah	Former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2025