

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaint 20-318

Judge: Bruce E. Staggs

Complainant: Samantha Reno

**NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF EDUCATION REQUIREMENT
OF REPRIMAND ORDER**

On January 26, 2022, the Commission issued a public reprimand to Judge Bruce E. Staggs for violating Rules 1.2, 2.3(B), 2.8(B), and 2.16(B) of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The reprimand order also required Judge Staggs to complete an educational training course, “How to Communicate with Diplomacy and Tact,” through Dale Carnegie Live Online. Judge Staggs completed the course in July 2022.

The Commission now deems the educational training component of the reprimand order issued on January 26, 2022 to be satisfied. This order shall become part of the public record in this matter.

Dated: September 23, 2022

FOR THE COMMISSION

/s/ Louis Frank Dominguez
Hon. Louis Frank Dominguez
Commission Chair

Copies of this order were distributed to all appropriate persons on September 23, 2022.

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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Judge: Bruce E. Staggs

Complainant: Samantha Reno

ORDER

The complainant alleged a justice of the peace violated Rules 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.8, 2.12, 2.16, and 3.1 of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The allegations included, but were not limited to, that the justice of the peace discriminated against her and violated federal law, engaged in improper demeanor, and perpetuated a hostile work environment. The Commission’s investigation also uncovered additional allegations of the justice of the peace making inappropriate comments to staff.

Requesting a County Employee’s Assistance with a Personal Project

J.W. is a county employee who works in the same building as the Benson Justice Court. During court hours, Judge Staggs inquired if he could hire J.W. to perform electrical work at his residence outside of his work hours. This request was made either during or at the conclusion of a staff meeting of the justice court staff. J.W. acknowledged the request was made, but he denied feeling threatened or abused by the judge about this request. While there was not clear and convincing evidence that Judge Staggs violated Rule 1.3 (Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office) regarding this request, Judge Staggs’ request for the performance of personal work made in front of other employees during work hours gives rise to the appearance of impropriety. Such conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

- Rule 1.2, which requires that a judge “act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.”

Referring to Complainant as “Frigid”

Judge Staggs referred to the Complainant as “frigid,” claiming, in part, that it was due to her having a totally cold personality toward him whenever they had a dispute over court policy. Another court employee corroborated that Judge Staggs used the term “frigid” to refer to the clerks when they were cold. Such conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

- Rule 1.2, which requires that a judge “act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.”
- Rule 2.8(B), which states, “a judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity”

Comments to Intimidate Complainant from Filing a Complaint

After Judge Staggs made the comment to the Complainant about her being “frigid,” he observed her reading the Code of Judicial Conduct. He inquired if she intended to file a complaint against him like other employees had done. Judge Staggs has a history of questioning employees about complaints filed against him and soliciting letters from them to support his position. While a judge has a right to defend himself against a complaint, both this investigation and prior investigations involving Judge Staggs show that he becomes cold and hostile to those that have filed complaints against him, or those he believes may have cooperated with a complainant.

Judge Staggs’ inquiry to Complainant about whether she was going to file a complaint against him reasonably gave the impression that he may retaliate, directly or indirectly, against her. The Code places a duty on a judge being investigated by a disciplinary agency to cooperate in the investigation process, not to hinder any investigation by confronting witnesses and complainants regardless of the judge’s intent. Such conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

- Rule 2.16(B), which states, “[a] judge shall not retaliate, directly or indirectly, against a person known or suspected to have assisted or cooperated with an investigation of a judge or a lawyer.

Raising Hand Toward C.C.

C.C. is a former employee of the Benson Justice Court. During the Commission’s investigation of this complaint, C.C. disclosed that she had previously been vocal about the clerks needing pay raises. Sometime between February and April 2021, C.C. was being vocal about the raise issue when Judge Staggs raised his hand toward her, as if to backhand her. C.C. stated that she did not believe that Judge Staggs would actually hit her, but she interpreted it as a message to shut up about the pay raises. While Judge Staggs denied this incident occurred, there was other

corroborating evidence. Judge Staggs' conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

- Rule 1.2, which requires a judge to “act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.”
- Rule 2.8(B), which states, “a judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity”

Inappropriate Comments to Male Staff

C.H. is the security officer assigned to the Benson Justice Court. During the Commission's investigation of this complaint, an allegation was made that sometime in April 2021, Judge Staggs was standing in his office with his foot up on a chair. C.H. came into the office, and Judge Staggs asked C.H. if he was looking at his butt, and if he liked it. While Judge Staggs denied making this comment, there was other corroborating evidence.

The intent of these comments is unknown. Multiple court employees stated that Judge Staggs believed he was jokester or was being funny, when he really was not. Whether these comments were sexually motivated or simply a poor attempt at humor, the comments were inappropriate and unwelcome. Such conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

- Rule 1.2, which requires a judge to “act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.”
- Rule 2.3(B), which states, “a judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, or engage in harassment, including but not limited to bias, prejudice, or harassment based upon race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation . . .” Comment 4 to Rule 2.3 further states, “Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome.”

- Rule 2.8(B), which states, “a judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity”

Remaining Allegations

The Commission did not find clear and convincing evidence for the remaining allegations of the complaints.

Accordingly, Judge Bruce E. Staggs of the Benson Justice Court is hereby publicly reprimanded for his conduct as described above and pursuant to Commission Rule 17(a). The Commission also orders Judge Staggs to complete the following training at his own expense: “How to Communicate with Diplomacy and Tact” through Dave Carnegie – Live Online. Judge Staggs shall complete the training within six months, and provide proof of completion to the Commission.

The record in this case, consisting of the complaint, the judge’s response, and this order shall be made public as required by Rule 9(a).

Dated: January 26, 2022

FOR THE COMMISSION

/s/ Louis Frank Dominguez

Hon. Louis Frank Dominguez
Commission Chair

Copies of this order were distributed to all appropriate persons on January 26, 2022.

October 28, 2020

Comp
20-318
10/29/20

Re: Complaint

Commission of Judicial Conduct,

Good Day I am the Court Manager for the Benson Justice Court 0203. I would like to file a complaint against Judge Bruce E Staggs based on violations of the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct, violation of FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave retaliation, and EEOC pregnancy discrimination act. Per rule 2.15 it is my duty to report violations.

The Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct rules that have been broken are as follows

RULE 1.1 Compliance with The Law

RULE 1.2 Promoting Confidence in The Judiciary

RULE 1.3 Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

RULE 2.1 Giving Precedence to Judicial Duties

RULE 2.3 Bias, Prejudice, And Harassment

RULE 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

RULE 2.5 Competence, Diligence, And Cooperation

RULE 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

RULE 2.12 Supervisory Duties

RULE 2.16 Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities

RULE 3.1 Extrajudicial Activities in General

Specific events are listed below.

Date: End of June 2020

FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave Retaliation

EEOC Pregnancy Discrimination Act

RULE 1.1 Compliance with The Law

RULE 1.2 Promoting Confidence in The Judiciary

RULE 1.3 Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

RULE 2.1 Giving Precedence to Judicial Duties

RULE 2.3 Bias, Prejudice, And Harassment

RULE 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

RULE 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

RULE 2.12 Supervisory Duties

RULE 2.16 Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities

While on FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave I had heard that the court was on a different schedule given the COVID pandemic. Approximately a week before returning I had contacted the judge to inquire as to what my schedule would be when returning. This was in order to have adequate child care lined up. During this call I was informed that because I was out on FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave and out often for my complicated high-risk twin pregnancy before that I could not be on the rotating schedule to lower the risk of contracting the virus. I had expressed that just because I had been out on FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave and for pregnancy that I should not be exempt. I expressed that I have great concern for having an increased risk given that I had two infants at home. He then told me that is just how it is going to be and that is his decision. Judge then went on to inform me of a complaint made by employee S. W . He stated that she had implicated me in the complaint and that it was unbelievable. He had stated that “we need to get on the same page with S .” He had told me that I will need to do my job and fire her because he can’t due to it being retaliation. I told him that I will do my job and that I will follow progressive discipline. If there were any infractions on her behalf once I returned I will act accordingly. The judge then told me that I don’t have to follow that because her position is temporary. He stated that we can let her go at any time and not have a reason. I informed him that I would follow the progressive discipline with any infractions once I return as I believed that to be the right thing to do.

He was trying to order me to fire her as her supervisor. This was in retaliation for him as he could not. This conversation also reflected direct retaliation for being out on FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave and being out for pregnancy prior to FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave. This call was on speaker and my husband had heard the whole thing

Date: 7/21/2020

RULE 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

I had plans to be out of the office. Before leaving I had spoken with C. C and D. N regarding who would be responsible for what tasks the next day due to being short staffed. When I left it was understood who was to complete what duties. When returning to work I had received an email from the Judge stating that I did not do my job. I did not delegate duties knowing that I would be out, and this was neglect of my responsibilities. I responded that I did in fact do my job. The accusations were simply not true. He later had me go into his office and shut the door to discuss this. This conversation consisted of back and forth of him saying that the clerks had told him I did not do this. I am telling him different, so someone is not telling the truth. C. C the clerk in which he accused of saying that I did not delegate responsibilities knocked on the door and entered his office for case related work. I had asked C. C at that point if she recalled the very last discussion we had the prior day and what it was about. She then repeated the delegation of duties I gave. I said thank you. She then left the office shutting the door behind her.

At that point Judge had slammed an open drawer on the right side of his desk. This caused fear in me to the point where I backed my chair up. He then began to reprimand me for asking C. C this. He told me that I could never just say that I was wrong. He proceeded to raise his voice towards me and continue to reprimand me. His body language was aggressive and intimidating to me.

Date: 08/25/2020

RULE 1.1 Compliance with the Law

RULE 1.2 Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary

RULE 1.3 Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

RULE 2.1 Giving Precedence to Judicial Duties

RULE 2.3 Bias, Prejudice, and Harassment

RULE 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

RULE 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

RULE 2.16 Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities

RULE 2.12 Supervisory Duties

While have a meeting with new employee C. D and Judge Staggs the judge was reviewing his office policies.

He had told employee C. D that while he can't tell her that she is not allowed to report to HR or the Judicial committee. He cannot write her up for this. He told her that it is his

policy that she does not go to them with anything in the office. He told her if she does even though he can't write her up that she will be in the dog house and that she will know it.

Date: 10/1/2020

RULE 1.1 Compliance with The Law

RULE 1.2 Promoting Confidence in The Judiciary

RULE 2.1 Giving Precedence to Judicial Duties

RULE 2.3 Bias, Prejudice, And Harassment

RULE 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

RULE 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

RULE 2.16 Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities

FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave Retaliation

EEOC Pregnancy Discrimination Act

In my employee evaluation my Judge used reasons as follows for my poor evaluation.

He does not trust me. He showed great displeasure based on the complaint filed against him from former employee S. W . This was verbally stated. He stated that I had lost his trust. He stated that I should have his back and be his protection. He stated I should not disclose things that he says. He openly made it apparent that he was not happy with me regarding the complaint that he received. He went as far as accusing me of age discrimination with the other ladies in the office aside from S. W . This accusation was and is untrue. All the ladies in the office can attest to that.

He graded me poorly for being out for medical while pregnant. He graded me poorly for being out with a complicated high-risk pregnancy then on FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave. He said this was due to my inability to complete work while out for this. I did express to him in the evaluation that I was out due to pregnancy and FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave, which he cannot hold against me.

Using this against me is not only a liability to him but is also a liability to the county.

He spoke of his displeasure of his poor relationship with my husband in my evaluation. I believe this is not only completely out of line, but severely unprofessional to bring up in my evaluation. His outside relationships and opinions clearly reflected my evaluation.

He gave me a poor evaluation for my professional appearance. I strongly disagree with that. I believe it is his opinion, but I come to the office often in slacks (if not dark in color no tear jeans) and a sweater/long sleeve. He used that my tattoo showed which he finds to be severely unprofessional. He also stated that my shoulder also showed and a small portion of my back tattoo which is bow and a Robin bird. This was on September 25, 2020. This was outside of the evaluation period. I had tattoos when I was hired and none of which are offensive. When given the job offer I was never informed that this would be an issue.

He gave me a poor evaluation for honesty. He stated this is because he feels I was wrong for things I had done in reference to the complaint against him from S. W. I did not feel I was in the wrong. I refused to say I was when not given proper articulation as to why I was wrong. He has accused me of favoring this former employee. He accused me of age discrimination. I refuse to state that I did these things because it is simply not true. I refuse to just state that I did these things simply to appease him because he is the judge/ my supervisor. He has previously expressed this as well as in the evaluation. I am also very confused how he can then tell me I have excellent judgment.

He stated that things have gone well in the last three months, yet I have not changed how I manage or my work ethic. This is also due to S. W. not being in the office.

I believe that my evaluation was solely based on things that he has been holding against me. I do not believe the evaluation is a result of my actual work ethic. I believe that there were things from my personal life and relationships with my husband that had much to do with my evaluation. I completely believe that my poor evaluation is in direct result to his complaint against him from S. W. I believe my poor evaluation was a result of me having to be out for pregnancy and FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave which is federally protected. I believe that this is in retaliation for those things and do not believe this is legally, ethically, and professionally proper to be graded based on these things.

Date: 10/15/2020

RULE 1.1 Compliance with The Law

RULE 1.3 Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

RULE 3.1 Extrajudicial Activities in General

The cleaning man came into the office during an employee meeting. The judge then out loud in the middle of the employee meeting in a raised tone asked him what happened. He stated that he was supposed to contact him regarding helping him with a personal home project and that he never did.

This appeared to be an abuse of his position and had the appearance of impropriety. Clerk M. G. had even looked at me and stated that one could take that as abuse of his power. She stated that the man could easily feel obligated to help him for calling him out in the office while in the judge capacity.

Date: 10/20/2020

RULE 1.1 Compliance with The Law

RULE 1.2 Promoting Confidence in The Judiciary

RULE 1.3 Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

RULE 2.1 Giving Precedence to Judicial Duties

RULE 2.3 Bias, Prejudice, And Harassment

RULE 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

RULE 2.5 Competence, Diligence, And Cooperation

Judge Staggs called me into his office at approx. 0910 hrs. He then asked if I would like to read the jury verdict in the upcoming trial or if I would like for him to. I explained that I would be very nervous and would like for him to read the verdict.

Judge then responded, well it depends on if I am mad at you at the time, be nice to me from now until then or at least the day of. If not, I'll just order you to do it in open court and you won't have a choice.

This was a direct retaliatory threat.

Date: 10/27/2020

RULE 1.1 Compliance with The Law

RULE 2.1 Giving Precedence to Judicial Duties

RULE 2.3 Bias, Prejudice, And Harassment

RULE 2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct

RULE 2.5 Competence, Diligence, And Cooperation

RULE 2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

I approached Judge Staggs and asked if I could purchase a small heater for my office because it is freezing in my office.

He had walked to my office with me. I said see its freezing in here.

He then responded "well that's because it is a direct reflection of your personality"

I responded, "wow rude". He then walked from my office to the main clerk's office. At this point he drew attention to the remark that was made. He then told the clerks that it was up to me to inform them what he said. At this point I felt obligated to repeat it. This was embarrassing and quite upsetting. At that point I then decided to take my allotted break due to being upset with his comment.

12:33 while on lunch judge appeared in my office as well as C. D . Once entering I informed them that I was on lunch, twice.

Judge then made a comment about my frigid attitude. To which C. D asked what he had meant. He then he redirected and stated that keeping the door closed would make it colder in my office. I then again said I was on my lunch. C. D asked if he was saying that I had a frigid attitude. He then stated that he was, and that is what we were talking about earlier. C. D then stated that I was so nice.

12:44 he came in my office asked if there is anything going on. He said because he saw that I was reviewing the code of conduct. He asked if he had done anything wrong. I told him that he had offended me a couple times just that day. I told him do not wish to talk about it especially on my lunch hour. He then appeared displeased and stated that I should put a note on the door stating that I am on lunch that way everyone knows. (I would like to add that I had already told him I was on lunch and he still approached me after knowing I was. I do not believe a note would have changed that)

Late afternoon I was speaking with two new clerks regarding needing 3 hours of ethics vs 1 hour as a county requirement for new employees.

Judge then came out upset and in a raised voice. He stated that he has already contacted the state from the top. He stated that we do not need any continuing education he doesn't care what T R says (Our HR whom he openly dislikes). He stated that there's no requirements by the state and he has the emails. He then directly looked at me and in a raised voice I took to be yelling said, "and I have already told you many times". He then went on to say that there are additional requirements by the county. M. G tried to interrupt several times and inform him that we were talking about them as new employees. Inform that we were discussing what the county was requiring and not the state. I then was very upset and scared of his upset nature, red in color face, and raised voice. I told judge that is all we were talking about and he didn't need to yell at me. I attempted to walk away. He then again in a raised voice stated that he didn't yell at me. I told him that he was yelling. He then he pointed his finger at me and said me and you will talk later. He shortly after came into my office and told me that I was insubordinate in how I spoke to him.

(Insubordinate definition: defiance of authority; refusal to obey orders.... there was no insubordination in telling him there was no need to yell at me)

He stated that he finds it alarming that I was reading the judicial code of conduct. He stated there is no coincidence this was after him offending me earlier. I informed him that I read it on my lunch because it was too cold to go anywhere. I informed him that I have been reading it off and on since 10/14/2020. I stated I was on my lunch, and there is nothing wrong with an employee reading a judicial code of conduct.

He then threatened that he could turn me in for things I have said about defendants. I then asked him what he was talking about. He stated because I had made a comment about a case. This case we took in it was not only out of limited jurisdiction, but out of our precinct jurisdiction. I had made a comment that the case was a cluster. He stated that was against the code of conduct. I told him I don't understand how stating that a case was a mess, not regarding any party, not being in the public, and not disclosing any restricted information about the case was against the code of conduct. He then said fine then our

relationship will completely change. He stated that he will no longer make jokes with me. He stated he will not play around in any manner or laugh. I told him thank you I appreciate that. He stated that my skin was too thin. At that point I told him that is not his place to decide nor does his opinion change how I felt or give him the right. He asked if I would be offended if he apologized to the staff for what he said earlier about my personality and being frigid. I said no and turned to my computer to continue my work.

The manner of which he came out and raised his voice had me shaking. This was quite alarming. I was scared. He was so angry that his face was red. The actions of the day created a hostile work environment. I do not believe his actions to be rational.

Cont. from 10/27/2020

Date: 10/28/2020

C. C approached me at the door to the building at 0800. This was to inform me the clerks had already gotten yelled at first thing in the morning. She said judge stated that he would not be talked to like he was. She said he had a bunch of emails regarding the continuing education. She had stated that he came in with the same state of mind as he left with the day prior.

Speaking with C. D she had stated that she had tried to inform judge that there was just discussion about what they need as new employees. She stated she was then cut off by judge. She had also informed me that she was just very alarmed by his reaction. She stated that he was so angry he was yelling, and that his face was red. She said that she can't believe that he would put his fingers in my face.

The feel of a hostile work environment was immediately created at the start of the work day continuing the same hostile work environment that was created the day prior.

I would like to clarify that I was out often throughout the year due to a complicated high-risk twin pregnancy and out 12 weeks on FFCRA Sick Leave and Expanded Leave. I would like it to be noted that I do fear not only retaliation for this complaint, but I fear his physical reaction once finding out that I have filed a complaint. I do feel that his aggressive and alarming responses are not proper for situations at hand and do feel them to be of an unstable manner. I do believe that he will try and take my job and embellish where he can to try and justify any action against me.

Sincerely,

Samantha Reno

Samantha Reno

02/16/2021

CD had informed me that the previous work week when I had been out of the office that BS had spoken with her to inform her that there was another complaint filed against her and when she said by who he stated "my court manager" and that CDS name was all over the complaint and had highlighted every section that had her name. He had asked CD to write a letter on his behalf stating the things involving her was not true and didn't happen. CD had stated to me that after reading the complaint and areas that she was mentioned in stated that these things did happen and that she would not lie for anyone not for me and nor for him and if she were to write a letter that it would state the truth and that these things did happen. CD stated that he had asked an additional 3 or 4 times if she was going to write the letter. She had stated that BS said that he did not yell on 10/27 and she informed him that he did and put his fingers in my face. CD stated that he then stated that was after I put my finger in his and she told him that I did not. she informed me that he stated that he did not remember but that he did not deny them happening. He stated that if I stated that it happened, and that CD did as well that it must have happened (I believe that this was in regard to 08/25/2021 when he threatened her not to go to the commission or HR). That before his conversation with her that he would have put his hand on a bible and sworn that it didn't that he just doesn't remember it. CD stated that BS stated that he is just going to write me up and send me home anytime my pants are to faded for his liking and anytime my tattoos show. (note: I was unaware that any of my jeans were outside of his dress code. There was one time he had stated that one pair of jeans were pushing it just a little because they were to light in color, and I have not worn those jeans again. I wear a sweater in the office daily that covers my tattoos to be within dress code. At any time that a tattoo may show this is because my sleeve accidentally rises on my arm to which I pull it down or my sweater may fall and a small portion of my chest tattoo may show and I adjust my top to make sure that it doesn't). This clearly shows that due to him being upset that I filed a complaint that he will retaliate by writing me up for every small infraction of an office policy that would not normally arise to be written up for. I have not been written up yet but in the event such a small infraction leads to a write up that normally would not, I would like that to be noted.

CC had informed me that while I was out the previous week that BS had approached her and asked if they were good in reference to her write ups she recently received. BS had then told her that in our meeting post write up that he lied and tried to cover for me being the one to run the report showing that she had been continuously late that it was not N that had noticed her tardiness that it was me and that I was to blame for the ADP report. BS told CC that I was no friend to her. This was in attempt to try and pin CC against me and create tension between the two of us in attempt to have her on his side. CC had stated that she thinks this was what he was doing as well that it was clear as to the motive behind him telling her this and that he was absolutely trying to create a hostile work environment.

- The week prior to the write up that is being talked about the BS had stated in more than one of our morning meetings that CC has been constantly late and had instructed me to review her time for the last 60 days. In that meeting I had informed him that I can only go back 30 days in ADP and he then stated how he doesn't like that about ADP and there must be records of this

elsewhere. He said that the 30-day report would be fine. The following week I did as instructed and ran the report and sent an email with that report to the BS. In the meeting post write up BS told CC that this came about due to N reviewing the timecards and bringing it to the court's attention. After the meeting BS informed me that he told a "white lie" that N did not notice the timecard that he was covering for me. I told him that I wasn't aware that he was lying, and I thought he was telling the truth as well. After I was informed that he lied about this I had met with CC and informed her that this was not the truth that I was the one who ran the timecard report as instructed by BS. When BS approached CC and told her that he lied to cover me CC was already aware of the situation and the truth as to what happened because I told the truth as soon as I was informed of the lie due to not being comfortable with lying to anyone.

BS is attempting to sway the employees to be on his side through the complaint process and is attempting to cause tension between the other employees and me. This again is an attempt to create a hostile work environment and in turn I went home 2/16/2021 with great anxiety and stress to the point of which I cried on the way home. I do not believe that any employee should be on mine or his "side" that the truth is the only side anyone should be on. I don't believe that the employees should be reading any of the complaint due to the appearance of them being swayed, coached, or intimidated to say that any event is true or false. I believe that they should be able to give raw testimony to any event in the complaint without either side whether his or the complaint for authentication and fact purpose.

From: Samantha Reno
Sent: Thursday, June 03, 2021 7:19 PM
To: Elliott, April >
Subject: Resigned from my position

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

April,

I would like to inform you that I will only be able to receive updates on my complaint via personal email. I have resigned from my position as court manager. The hostile work environment was finally too much for me. The effects it has had on my mental stability and my personal relationships was too much. The conditions there only get worse and as long as no one takes serious the environment and working conditions the employees of JP3 have to endure they will continue to lose valuable employees. Two other employees are leaving due to the hostile environment As well. I do hope the commission continues to investigate my complaint and I do hope change is abroad for the ladies that still work there. The fear of speaking up as to the true conditions is real though and I hope that is strongly considered.

Please reach out with any further questions.

-Samantha Reno

March 15, 2021

Commission On Judicial Conduct
1501 West Washington St., Suite 229
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: Case # 20-318

Dear Members of the Commission,

As instructed, I have reviewed the allegations and am filing my written response, with regards to each allegation made by Samantha Reno.

I will answer the allegations in the order that Ms. Elliot listed them on Complaint No. 20-318, dated February 3, 2021, on page #1 & page #2.

• **Discriminated against Ms. Reno for being out on Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and ordered Ms. Reno to fire S. [REDACTED]**

Due to carrying twins, Ms. Reno was diagnosed with a high-risk pregnancy. As such, Ms. Reno was concerned that she wouldn't be able to carry on full work duties during her pregnancy. Ms. Reno was also concerned about loss of income should she not be able to come to work. Ms. Reno requested a laptop computer be ordered so that she could be allowed to work remotely from home, to build up COMP time, should complications arise. This request was granted. A laptop computer arrived in Benson Justice Court #3 on October 28, 2019.

On April 6, 2020, Ms. Reno applied for Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). On April 7, 2020, Ms. Reno went on FFCRA. Ms. Reno also went on FMLA due to the pregnancy. Between the two programs, Ms. Reno was out of the office for almost 3 months, returning to regular work duties on July 1, 2020.

Benson Justice Court #3 was short staffed most of 2020 due to employees on FMLA, employees self-terminating and due to flex schedules because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff was out as follows:

1. Front Desk Clerk, Ms. F [REDACTED], out 3 ½ months: 1/27/2020 - 4/27/2020 on FMLA and then 4/28/2020 - 5/12/2020 for discipline ordered by Ms. Reno.
2. Front Desk Clerk, C [REDACTED] C [REDACTED], out 1 month: 5/3/2020 - 6/9/2020 for a broken hip.
3. Criminal Clerk, S [REDACTED] W [REDACTED], out 1 month: 06/13 2020 - 7/10/2020 on FMLA, citing stress from hostile work environment, that she and Ms. Reno created. She abruptly quit on the day Ms. Elliot held interviews to determine who was creating a hostile work environment at JP-3. A new clerk was not hired for 2 ½ months, until 8/24/2020.
4. Warrant Clerk, R [REDACTED] B [REDACTED], citing stress from a hostile work environment created by Ms. Reno & Ms. W [REDACTED], quit on 7/10/2020 when Ms. Reno returned to work. A new clerk was not hired for 2 months, until 9/8/2020.
5. Court Manager, Samantha Reno out on FFCRA and FMAL for 3 months.

Thirteen months of work was lost, which is equal to a staff member being gone for over a year.

In June of 2020, Benson Justice Court #3 starting rotating staff on a flex schedule, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. So the court wouldn't risk being closed in case of a staff member contracting COVID-19, one-half the staff was off on administrative leave one week and the other one-half of the staff was off on administrative leave the next week. This put us even further behind in our work duties as none of the staff, excluding Ms. Reno, had access to laptop computers to be able to work remotely from home. This flex schedule continued until October 2020. This put us well behind in our duties.

When Ms. Reno went on leave Superior Court Division Director, Ms. Nancy Flinn, and her assistant, Ms. Catherine N..., at great sacrifice due to their own regular 40-hour duties, assisted Benson Justice Court #3 and took over all of Ms. Reno's job duties for statistical reporting and managerial duties. When Ms. Reno returned to the court, she demanded to be included on the flex schedule citing the increased risk of COVID-19 exposure to her children at home. It was denied because:

1. Ms. Flinn and Ms. N... could no longer appropriate the time to perform Ms. Reno's duties.
2. Ms. Reno was desperately needed to fulfill the Court Manager duties that no one else was qualified to perform.
3. The court was getting farther and farther behind each day, due to being short staffed due to the COVID-19 flex schedule.
4. I didn't trust Ms. Reno to put the work in remotely when unsupervised.

From 10/28/2019 - March 24, 2020 while working from home under no direct supervision while in her 2nd - 3rd trimester, with a baby of 1 ½ years of age, a child of 5 ¼ years of age and another child of 7½ years of age, Ms. Reno claimed working the following hours over 8 hours at a time:

Over 8 hours straight, **with no breaks.**

On 19 occasions between 8-9 hours

On 3 occasions between 9-10 hours

On 4 occasions between 10-11 hours

On 1 occasion between 11-12 hours

On 1 occasion 12.1 hours

On 1 occasion 13.5 hours

On 1 occasion 14.9 hours

On 1 occasion 16.1 hours

Ms. Reno claimed 3 hours on Christmas Day 12/25/2019

Over 8 hours, **with breaks**

On 11 occasions between 8-9 hours

On 4 occasions between 9-10 hours

On 6 occasions between 10-11 hours

On 5 occasions between 11-12 hours

From October 28, 2019 to April 7, 2020 Ms. Reno earned a total of 10.1 hours of COMP time as follows:

On 11/27/2019 - 0.3 hours
On 01/04/2020 - 3.9 hours
On 01/25/2020 - 1.2 hours
On 02/22/2020 - 2.9 hours
On 03/14/2020 - 1.8 hours

See Exhibit #1

Following Ms. F and Ms. N being called multiple times, regarding challenges by staff when they couldn't get ahold of Ms. Reno, Ms. F monitored Ms. Reno's hours. Ms. F brought to my attention that Ms. Reno was commonly putting in more than 8 hours without any breaks. When I questioned Ms. Reno about the issue, she defended that she was working the hours without any breaks. Ms. Reno became very agitated when I informed her the average person couldn't justify working 8 hours straight, much less a pregnant mother in her 3rd trimester, that also had the responsibilities of 3 children (1 ½ years of age, 5 ¼ years of age and 7½ years of age). Following this, Ms. Reno was required to turn in daily work logs to justify her work from home, which she didn't feel was necessary and felt that it was a waste of time.

As the Department Head I was there every day and, as the Court Manager, I expected Ms. Reno to be there every day to fulfill the leadership position she was hired for. I discussed this at length with Ms. F and she fully supported my decision. Ms. F and Ms. N could no longer afford to return to Benson Justice Court #3, to fulfill Ms. Reno's duties, as they were getting behind in their own duties.

Ms. Reno stated in the Complaint: *"I expressed that I have great concern for having an increased risk given that I had two infants at home"*. Ms. Reno's husband is a police sergeant, was working many hours of overtime at that time and interacting with multitudes of people each day and thus was at a much greater risk than my clerks. Ms. Reno didn't quarantine herself from her high-risk husband and fully assumed the risk of being in close daily contact with him.

In October of 2020, when Ms. Reno learned that Willcox Justice Court #4 was no longer requiring a 50% flex schedule, Ms. Reno requested that Benson Justice Court #3 go to a different schedule, of having only one staff member out at a time. She stated that by having 50% of the staff out at a time, Benson Justice Court #3 was falling farther and farther behind, and the flex schedule was not sustainable. I granted her request and Benson Justice Court #3 went from being 3 clerks short a week, to only having one clerk being on administrative leave one day a week, on a rotating basis.

See Exhibits #2 & 3.

In November 2020, I allowed Ms. Reno to go on the new 4-10 hour flex schedule.

See Exhibit #4

On November 30, 2020 I wrote Ms. Reno an email asking her to justify why when she was allowed on the 4-10 hour flex schedule, that on the first day on November 23, 2020 she only worked 1.8 hours and on second day on November 24, 2020 she only worked 1.5 hours, and then claimed 12.7 hours in Administrative Leave. Due

to Ms. Reno having a laptop computer both Ms. F and Ms. Ni informed me that Ms. Reno could have worked more than 3.3 hours, instead of claiming 12.7 hours of Administrative Leave. This started a dialogue back-and-forth between Ms. Reno and I that lasted until December 2, 2020. Ms. Reno cited in her November 30, 2020 emails, both in Exhibits 6B and 6D, that the only work she can do from home is "Ncourt, demand batch queue and fare queue" as the reason she could only work 3.3 hours in 2 days.

Doing the research of this Complaint I have discovered that Ms. Reno turned in no less than 8 hours a day, and up to 16.1 hours a day, for a total of 58 days out of the 104 days that she logged in, from October 28, 2020 to April 6, 2020, as per Exhibit #1. This was while in her 2nd - 3rd trimester, with a baby of 1 ½ years of age, a child of 5 ¼ years of age and another child of 7½ years of age that she had to care for along with other household duties.

See Exhibits #5 & 6 A-H.

At that time, I made the decision to reassign Ms. Reno's laptop computer. I contacted C: H Court IT Director, and she put in a workorder for reassigning the laptop computer. Administrative Leave has been taken away by the presiding Superior Court Judge, Tim Dickerson, and Ms. Reno is no longer pregnant, so the laptop is no longer required by her.

Ms. Reno has made the claim that I pressured her to "fire" Ms. W. Ms. We was a temporary, full time employee, paid through enhancement funds. According to HR, Ms. We could be let go at any time, without any reason necessary. The progressive discipline that Ms. Reno stated she would follow, was not required. Ms. Reno was still on leave when she claims that this was occurring. Ms. F was handling Ms. Reno's duties and knew the many challenges that Ms. We was creating in the court. Had I directed Ms. F to terminate Ms. W she would have. Had Ms. W been terminated by Ms. F or by Ms. Reno when she returned, I would have had to sign off on it. This was never ordered, as I didn't want anyone to be able to claim retaliation, just as Ms. Reno is now claiming.

I deny ever discriminating against Ms. Reno for being out on FFCRA Sick Leave and on FMAL. **Every** effort was made to accommodate Ms. Reno with regard to her family and her pregnancy.

I deny ever ordering Ms. Reno, to fire Ms. W

- **Becoming angry, slamming desk drawer, raising voice**

Benson Justice Court #3 has six clerks and one Court Manager. On July 21, 2020, Ms. Reno took time off. Due to the two clerks that had quit and two clerks being on a flex schedule, there were only two clerks in the court that day. Ms. Reno was acting as the Court Manager, but she was also acting as the Criminal Clerk, due to Ms. Weinstein resigning on July 10, 2020. Ms. Reno didn't properly delegate duties, nor train staff to perform her duties when she was gone. Our assigned time by the Cochise County Presiding Superior Court Judge, to see daily prisoners, is at 8:30 am. Victims have the right to be at every hearing. As such we are required to see prisoners at the assigned time, because the victims are informed of this time so they can be present. At 8:30 AM, having not been told anything about any prisoner information, I inquired about prisoners. The staff

wasn't even aware that we had to see two prisoners, much less taken the time to prepare the necessary paperwork.

See Exhibit #7.

On July 21, 2020, we also had criminal trials that started at 9:00 AM. The responsibility to have the Court Calendar on my desk by 12:00 PM each day, for the next day's cases, has been assigned to Ms. Reno for quite some time. After multiple ongoing occurrences of Ms. Reno not supervising staff, by following up and making sure that the court calendar on my desk so I can prepare for the next days cases, I assigned this duty to Ms. Reno personally. On July 20, 2020, I reminded Ms. Reno regarding preparing the criminal trial judgment orders and trial checklists. On July 21, 2020, the case files weren't on my desk, and when they were brought to me they were not properly prepared. Ms. Reno had written in the information in by hand, instead of typing it, as required. The Judgment form is a charging document that is signed by the Defendant. I believe that it should look professional and I have a policy that the information is to be typed in. I had to take the time to type out the paperwork myself, which put the court even further behind schedule and people had to wait.

See Exhibits #8 A-H.

On July 21, 2020, I wrote an email to Ms. Reno, expressing my concerns about Ms. Reno not following policy of getting the calendar and case files on my desk, by 12:00 PM the day before, and having them hand written instead of them being typed. To this day, Ms. Reno is still passing off this duty and is assigning it to the criminal clerk.

See Exhibit #9.

At this time Ms. Reno had been the Benson Justice Court #3 Court Manager for over a year and had many years of previous experience at Willcox Justice Court #4. One of Ms. Reno's primary duties is to teach and manage all clerks in their respective positions. On July 21, 2020, Ms. Reno wrote back an email accepting no responsibility for the mishaps earlier in the day. When I contacted both Judge Ward and Ms. F by phone and read Ms. Reno's response to them, both stated that Ms. Reno was being insubordinate. I was advised to discuss the matter with Ms. Reno.

See Exhibit #10.

On July 22, 2020, I called Ms. Reno into my office to discuss the matter. During the discussion a staff member, Ms. C , entered the office and Ms. Reno questioned Ms. C if she had previously instructed Ms. C: to check for prisoners. When Ms. C left, I expressed my concern to Ms. Reno that she embarrassed Ms. C by putting her on the spot. Instead of accepting responsibility, Ms. Reno involved Ms. C: in a discussion that was being held privately between us, in order to defend herself. Following revealing confidential information to Ms. W , Ms. Reno was warned previously, not to reveal information to staff members that was discussed in private meetings. This was addressed as a goal in Ms. Reno's annual evaluation.

See Exhibit #11.

I believe is very important that the Judge and Court Manager always present a united front to the court clerks. I believe is very important that the Court Manager fully support the Judge's policies when interacting with staff, with regard to the policies that are implemented in the court.

I deny becoming angry, slamming the drawer on my desk, or raising my voice to Ms. Reno.

- **Advising a new clerk not to report something to Human Resources or to the Commission on Judicial Conduct**

Benson Justice Court #3 has a written policy, that should a staff member have a challenge with another staff member, the staff member should discuss the issue at hand first, with the staff member they are having the challenge with. In doing this, it allows them to solve the challenge together for a better outcome. However, if the challenge can't be resolved, then the next step should be that they follow the chain of command, allowing us to help with a positive outcome

Each staff member knows however, that an employee has the right, **at any time**, to go directly to Human Resources or to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. This has been gone over many times in staff meeting.

See Exhibits #12, 13 & 14.

Ms. Reno stated that I informed Ms. C D that she couldn't go to Human Resources or to the Commission on Judicial Conduct directly. Since Ms. Reno cited Ms. D in the Complaint, I discussed this with Ms. D because 1) I didn't recall making this statement and 2) the claim does not fit the written policy. Ms. D stated to me that did I make the statement an employee couldn't go to Human Resources or to the Commission on Judicial Conduct but, when it was brought to my attention by Ms. Reno that I had said "can't instead of "can", that I quickly corrected myself. Ms. D expressed to me that she clearly understood the policy after I corrected the miss-statement and was never under any impression that she couldn't ever report directly to Human Resources or the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

I deny ever knowingly instructing Ms. D , or any staff member, that they do not have the right to go directly to Human Resources nor the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

I deny ever making a statement to Ms. D about being in the "dog house".

- **Retaliated against Ms. Reno for being on pregnancy leave and S W making a Complaint, accused Ms. Reno of age discrimination and made improper comments about poor relationship with Ms. Reno's husband**

Cochise County policy requires an annual self-evaluation by the employee and joint evaluation by the employee's supervisor and the employee. On August 24, 2020, Ms. Reno filled out her self-evaluation. The total score she gave herself was 106. On September 30, 2020 I met with Ms. Reno and evaluated her. I gave Ms. Reno a total score of 108. I don't understand how Ms. Reno can possibly be claiming retaliation for a low score, when I gave her a higher total score than she scored herself.

I scored Ms. Reno higher in areas of being courteous and service oriented toward the public, making logical informed decisions and completing financial reports. I advised Ms. Reno that she needed improvement in self accountability, working with and relationships with court staff, productivity, attitude, adherence to court policies, being punctual and professional attire. During this evaluation all the above was discussed.

See Exhibits #15 & 16.

Ms. Reno has claimed age discrimination. In February of 2020, five of the staff members were in their 50's, while Ms. Reno and Ms. W are much younger. It was my perception, and also perceived by the rest of staff, that due to their common age and being hired within months of each other, that Ms. Reno and Ms. W bonded quickly. Ms. Reno and Ms. W met together almost every morning in Ms. Reno's office behind closed doors in the A.M. discussing personal business, took their breaks together and had lunch together almost every day. I warned Ms. Reno repetitively that this was creating hostile feelings in the office. I spoke to the Presiding Justice of the Peace, Judge Trevor Ward of Willcox Justice Court #4 from where Ms. Reno worked previously. I asked Judge Ward to speak to Ms. Reno regarding this matter. Judge Ward spoke to Ms. Reno however she did not heed the admonitions given her. The situation eventually developed into a hostile work environment between Ms. Reno and Ms. W, versus the rest of the staff. I ask that the Commission Investigator contact Judge Trevor Ward to verify this. Judge Ward's contact information is tward@courts.az.gov and (520) 384-7003.

On February 2, 2020, Mr. F B, husband of Warrant clerk F B, contacted me and requested a meeting to discuss the resignation of R N. F, due to taking over the management duties at Benson Justice Court #3 while Ms. Reno was out on leave, was very aware of the hostile environment that Ms. Reno had created. When I apprised Ms. F of the meeting, I was advised to take notes of the upcoming meeting, which I did.

On February 3, 2020, R E and her husband met with me to discuss Ms. E tendering her resignation. My notes of this meeting are as follows:

R B and husband met with me and F wanted to give me a verbal 2-week notice. Stated that she couldn't give it to the Court Manager, Samantha Reno, as she felt that Samantha was unapproachable and never listened to her. R stated that the stress was overwhelming and is now affecting her health. R felt Samantha had shown preferential treatment towards the criminal clerk S W on multiple occasions and that all the other staff felt the same. R specifically cited an incident that occurred in mid to late January where I directed S to come into the courtroom to see a prisoner on video. S was aware we were seeing a defendant for another court and that the jail would be calling in. When the jail was calling in I called S to go into the court. S was busy and R stated that S became upset about it. When S returned to her desk, Samantha called to S to come into her office regarding another matter. S shouted back, "What do you want. I'm busy right now and have a lot to do". S went into Samantha's office and they spoke behind closed doors for 5-10 minutes. S then left office and Samantha went to the break room to get some food. Samantha came back to her office and she shut the door loudly and called her husband on speaker phone. They were talking so loudly that R could hear them through the closed door (R's chair is 7' from Ms. Reno's door). Samantha told her husband she was having a bad day. Her husband asked why. Samantha stated "S just snapped at me.

I'm so tired of the people not doing their fucking jobs". Samantha's husband asked who's not doing their job? Samantha answered and said, "R . She doesn't do shit". Samantha's husband stated that Samantha needed to tell R what her responsibilities were. Samantha answered and said, "Like that's going to happen. Whenever she doesn't want to do anything she goes running to the Judge and complains. Judge then undermines my authority and tells her she doesn't have to do it".

R has been tremendously bothered by this and has been completely stressed out the last 2-3 weeks to the point it is affecting her health. She feels that Samantha isn't interested in her challenges, doesn't listen to her and always states "that's not true" when she brings up an issue. Due to the severe stress that is affecting her health, is the primary reason that R wants to give her 2-week notice.

I got R to agree to a sit-down meeting with Samantha and I, to allow R an audience where she could be heard, air her complaints and hopefully work this out. R agreed to delay giving a formal resignation, until we could sit down and talk.

On February 5, 2020 I met with Ms. Reno and Ms. B: in hopes of resolving the situation. My notes of this meeting are as follows:

Samantha, R and I sat down in my chambers and I moderated an open and frank discussion. R informed Samantha about overhearing the conversation that Samantha had with her husband. R informed Samantha tearfully that the comments Samantha made, affected R personally and deeply hurt. R asked Samantha how she would feel had she had overheard the conversation. Samantha first denied the conversation. Later in the conversation Samantha corrected R about what was said and R immediately replied, "I thought you said you didn't have the conversation". Samantha then remembered the conversation but stated it was a private conversation and she would never say that to an employee. R stated that she felt that S was given preferential treatment and stated that the entire staff felt the same. R brought up the incident above and stated that if she had ever said something like that to S, she knew that she would've been written up immediately. Each time R brought up an issue Samantha would demand an actual date when it had occurred. R responded that she didn't have a habit of keeping notes on people and their actions. The conversation lasted more than an hour and turned into Samantha defending herself and adamantly denying that S was given any preferential treatment. At one point Samantha pointed out that R had the least duties of anyone in the court. Samantha stated that she felt she was being undermined that when she gave duties to R that R would complain to me, and then the order was changed. It was discussed at length that due to me knowing the underlying tension in the office was about the perception that S was receiving preferential treatment, that I was the one that questioned why R was given other duties, not R. Eventually Samantha stated that she felt she was the one having to defend herself and that the meeting was really about her instead of R.

At this point I took over the meeting as we were no longer getting anywhere. I expressed to each of them that they had to let the past go. I personally gave an apology to Samantha that if she felt her authority was being undermined I was sorry but that was not the intention. I also apologized to R if I had done anything to cause any tension to her. I did this in hopes that Samantha would extend an apology to R for her remarks. This didn't occur. We continued the discussion for a little longer and I stated that I felt that an apology was in order for the remarks that Samantha made. Samantha then apologized and R accepted it.

I concluded the meeting. RI went back to her duties and Samantha went to her office. I was in the kitchen 10-15 minutes later and Samantha came in. I could tell that she had been crying and she said she had to go home.

A short time later I was in my office and saw Samantha put something in my work bin. Later when I went out to check my work bin, a note below was taped on Samantha's door. In my work bin there was also was a list of duties that Samantha had at JP-4.

See Exhibits #17 & 18.

On February 6, 2020, I met with Ms. Reno to discuss the previous days meeting with Ms. B . My notes of this meeting are as follows:

I met with Samantha to discuss her actions in the meeting yesterday. I informed her that I was very displeased with her performance. I informed her that as a manager she should have participated in the meeting and made the meeting about RI , by listening to RI 's concerns, instead of making the entire meeting about herself, by continually defending her actions. R. was open and honest with her and when RI expressed all her concern's, instead of listening to the concerns and attempting to resolve the underlying issues, all she did was to defend her bad conduct. I expressed that I was very concerned and disappointed that she made an apology to R only after 1) R. caught her in a lie 2) only after I set the stage and I apologized to both of them, instead immediately apologizing when R confronted her with overhearing the conversation with her husband and 3) that the apology was very insincere. I expressed to her that I had warned her about creating a hostile work environment due to her close relationship and preferential treatment of Si We . I expressed to her that I felt it was insubordinate of her to put the sign on her door and to put a list of duties that she had performed at JP-4.

Ms. Reno became very upset and defended all of her actions, taking no responsibility whatsoever. She stated that I had always shown favoritism to R and that I was always undermining her as a Court Manager. I questioned her that if I didn't support her as a Court Manager, with regard to RI why did I sign off on the reprimand that she gave to R in September of 2019? I informed her that while I didn't feel it was warranted, I still signed off on it to support her as a Court Manager. I brought out her letter to me, dated September 19, 2019, where she stated "I do believe that each member of our staff should feel they are being treated fairly. I have always treated them fairly and never given duties to or taken out of favoritism though the perception may be as such". I informed her this letter was proof that I had supported her and that she had been warned that she was creating a hostile work environment by her preferential treatment towards S versus the rest of staff prior to September 2019.

See Exhibit #19.

The more we talked, the more Samantha got upset and angry. She stated that the meeting was unproductive and stated that she needed to leave for the day. She went home immediately afterwards.

Later that evening Ms. Reno went into false labor and was hospitalized. When I called to inquire of her condition, Sergeant Reno was very curt with me.

I have since learned that Sergeant Reno feels that I was the direct cause of Ms. Reno's false labor, due to her becoming so upset during meetings of February 5, 2020 and February 6, to 2020. Since February of 2020, Sergeant Reno has been in the court on limited occasions. When he has come in he has done his best to avoid any interaction, which he did not do previously. All that was discussed in the October 1, 2020 evaluation with respect to Sergeant Reno, was the resultant hostility that has occurred both in the court and from Sergeant Reno, as a direct consequence of the actions of Ms. Reno.

Ms. Reno stated "He went as far as accusing me of age discrimination with the other ladies in the office aside from S. W . The accusation was and is untrue. All the ladies in the office can attest to that".

I have previously attached the minutes of staff meeting of May 15, 2019 as **Exhibit #11** that addressed the hostile work environment created by Ms. Reno. I am attaching the signed statements from all my staff, attesting that the notes of the May 15, 2019 meeting were correct regarding the hostile work environment was created by Ms. Reno (see highlighted section on page 3), due to the preferential treatment Ms. Reno gave Ms. W.

See Exhibits #20 A-D.

I have obtained a statement from Ms. E that attests that the notes of my meetings between Ms. Reno and Ms. B are true and accurate.

See Exhibit #21.

I deny retaliating against Ms. Reno with her employee evaluation scores with respect to Ms. Reno being on pregnancy leave, S W making a complaint, or age discrimination. Ms. Reno's evaluation was factual and fair. I went over the evaluation extensively with the Assistant Court Division Director, Ms. N F , who had a great amount of input regarding the goals, objectives and how the goals will be reached. I ask that the Commission Investigator contact Ms. F to verify the her evaluation input and the hostile work environment created by Ms. Reno. Ms. F contact information is and (

I deny making improper comments regarding Ms. Reno's husband.

- **Asking cleaning man regarding assistance with personal project at home**

J W is employed by Cochise County Facilities, and does maintenance work here in the court. He is not the "cleaning man". Mr. W is very good with electrical repairs and we have a great relationship. Whenever we see each other in the court we stop and talk about family and events occurring in our lives. I met Mr. W on the campaign trail years ago. He allowed me to put up political signs on his residence before I became a judge. I had spoken to Mr. W previously about electrical problems I was having at my home, with regard to a photocell not working properly. I asked Mr. W if I could employ him, after hours, to come out and look at it. He said he was very busy at the time with side jobs, but when he had opening in his schedule, he would

come by. I did inquire of Mr. W at the court when he was going to come by, but I never interrupted an open meeting, nor did I ever ask the question in a raised tone.

I have obtained a statement from Mr. W .

See Exhibit #22.

I deny ever using my position as a Judge, to coerce a Cochise County employee, to perform services for me.

- **Reading the jury verdict**

There was no written policy in Benson Justice Court #3 for jury trial, as there has not been a jury trial for decades. Judge Joseph Knoblock was here for nine years and never held a jury trial. My term began on January 1, 2015 and I have yet to preside over a jury trial. In October 2020, we were preparing for our first jury trial. Due to no written policy, I was meeting constantly with Ms. Reno, to make sure that everything was prepared properly. During one of our meetings we were discussing the wording of the verdict forms and the reading of the verdict. I asked Ms. Reno if she wanted to be involved and read the verdict. Ms. Reno stated that she didn't want to. When I questioned why, Ms. Reno stated that it was because it would make her nervous and she might not do it correctly. I informed her that I would take responsibility to read the verdict.

I deny threatening to state in open court, for Ms. Reno to read the verdict.

- **Frigid attitude, harassed about reading the Code of Conduct, yelled and pointed finger at Miss Reno, threatened to report Ms. Reno and created a hostile work environment**

On October 27, 2020, Ms. Reno requested that she be able to purchase a space heater, like clerk C C was approved for. I acknowledge that I made a comment referencing a space heater that was analogous to Ms. Reno having a totally cold personality towards me, following getting upset whenever she was advised that she was not following policy. This was said privately to her in her office. On multiple occasions she has been cold, withdrawn and has totally avoided me for days and even weeks at a time, following being spoken to about not following policy. As I left Ms. Reno's office, I overheard the clerks in the common area discussing going next door for soda. I made a statement something to the effect that I didn't understand that they were always complaining of being cold, yet they were going out on a cold day, to get a cold soda. At that time Ms. Reno came out of her office and a staff member asked if she was going to get a soda with them. Ms. Reno then voluntarily stated something to the effect, "I don't know, apparently I'm frigid". Ms. Reno volunteered this statement, all on her own without any input from me.

Later in the day I came into Ms. Reno's office and noticed that she was going over the Code Of Judicial Conduct. I asked her if she had gotten a Complaint. The reason that I inquired about the Code Of Judicial Conduct is I was aware that the previous Warrant clerk, R B ; had made known to me that she was going to be filing a Complaint against Ms. Reno, due to the hostile work environment that Ms. Reno and Ms. W had created in the office. Ms. Barney had informed me that she had gone and talked to Ms. F and Ms. N prior to quitting to make a complaint regarding the hostile work environment that Ms. Reno and Ms. W had created. She did not go to Human Resources due to the close personal relationship that Ms. R ,

Court Human Resources Manager, had with both Ms. W and Ms. W's mother. I have recently received the interview notes that were taken by N F. and C N: . This complaint was never submitted to Human Resources or to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

See Exhibits #23 & 24.

Ms. Reno stated "No" that she was not filing a Complaint but was just going over the Code of Conduct, due to a continuing education ethics course she was taking. I didn't believe this and asked her if she was filing one against me, as she had once again, been cold and withdrawn the whole afternoon. Ms. Reno then stated that I had upset her about the analogy I made. I apologized if I hurt her feelings but stated it was my experience that it was an accurate analogy of my feelings due to the treatment I received on multiple occasions, of her closing the door constantly, ignoring me completely and interacting only when absolutely necessary, following whenever I had brought it to her attention for not following policy.

I related my experience with Judge Ward and with Ms. Flores. Following their counsel and input I sent Ms. Reno an email on November 3, 2020, directing Ms. Reno that she had to keep her door opened in the future, so she could provide oversight to the court staff. I also sent this email to both Judge Ward and Ms. Fl .

See Exhibit #25.

On March 24, 2020, Administrative Directive 2020-03 was issued that suspended continuing education requirements for 2020.

On April 13, 2020, N F forwarded an email from S S regarding the requirements for COJET for Cochise County. She also attached Administrative Directive 2020-03. I forwarded in this to my staff.

On June 17, 2020, Ms. F sent an email and advised my staff of the required training for Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure and Distracted Driving.

On June 25, 2020, Ms. Ai B , sent an email reminding that the staff that they had until June 30, 2020 to complete their safety training for Distracted Driving. I forwarded this on to my staff.

On Friday, September 11, 2020, R S , of AOC sent an email stating that all staff working remotely were required to take a security training. T R forwarded this email to entire court division of Cochise County with a heading of "MANDATORY TRAINING". I replied back to Ms. R , informing her that none of my staff were working from home. Ms. Romero replied back, *"Thank you for letting me know. However, this is an important topic that everyone should complete. In fact, network security training is required of all staff annually"*.

On September 30, 2020, following multiple emails to staff at AOC regarding this "MANDATORY TRAINING", S B replied back and definitively stated, that this training was only mandatory for staff working remotely. I forwarded this email to Ms. R and informed her that I was not going to require my staff to take it, as none of them were reworking remotely and we were short staffed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I

suggested that she advise the rest of the County what the true requirements were. I forwarded my email to the IT Director of Cochise County, C: H: i.

On October 2, 2020, Ms. F forwarded an email from R S: that included attachments of Administrative Directives 2020-08 and 2020-21, suspending COJET requirement in 2020. Ms. S: stated: *"I am writing to share that Administrative Directive 2020-21, issued today, has suspended COJET reporting to counties and Educational Services for calendar year 2020. Your court may still choose to implement local training requirements and track completed education locally as well"*.

On October 2, 2020, I emailed Ms. F and stated: *"Other than the blood-borne pathogens and the distracted driving courses, that Cochise County is requiring to be taken, are there any other COJET subjects that myself or staff MUST take through 12/31/2020?"*

On October 5, 2020, Ms. F ; replied back and stated: *"That should be all and you and your staff should be in compliance. Unless specifically directed from the AOC and/or County, you and your staff should not need anything further until the new year"*.

See Exhibit # 26.

I give the above history of emails because over a six-month period I had multiple email discussions, with multiple people, at both AOC and Cochise County. I had many more discussions with Ms. Reno and with my staff regarding the required training. My staff and I were receiving conflicting emails from AOC, Cochise County Human Resources and the Court Division Director. I felt certain on October 5, 2020, that the only training my staff was required to perform, was the blood-borne pathogens and the distracted driving courses.

Following all this confusion, I directed my Court Manager and my staff on multiple occasions, that the only training they had to complete was the blood-borne pathogens and the distracted driving courses. On multiple occasions I overheard my staff complaining that we were short staffed and yet still had to take COJET training. Each time I advised them that I had made sure the blood-borne pathogens and the distracted driving courses were the only two courses they had to take. I advised them that I would accept personal responsibility, as the Department Director, for giving them direction to only take those two courses. I further advised them that they had permission to take any course they wished to take, should they wish to gain additional knowledge on any subject.

On October 27, 2020, I came into the common area and heard the staff, once again, complaining that they had to take additional COJET training. I had addressed this issue many many times during the previous months. I got all the staffs' attention, and in a firm voice, informed them I was concerned about the resultant loss of time due to the complaining, that I did not want to hear about it anymore, that they needed to following instructions to complete both the blood-borne pathogens and the distracted driving courses. I did not "yell" as Ms. Reno claims, however in a very clear and firm voice I informed the entire staff that the staff needed to quit complaining about this issue, and instead of wasting time complaining about it in group discussions, they needed to focus their efforts on getting the work done in the court, as we were far behind.

Even though I was addressing everyone, Ms. Reno felt, that I was personally attacking her and took issue with it. Ms. Reno immediately got angry, in front of the entire staff and raised her voice to me, telling me she was not instructing the staff to take additional training and that it was not her fault. I felt Ms. Reno was not fulfilling her duties as a Court Manager by not supporting my directives to the staff, by continually engaging in and supporting conversations with the staff, complaining about the continuing education requirements. I also felt Ms. Reno was being insubordinate by taking issue in front of the entire staff. I pointed to my office and said that we would speak in my office. Once again, Ms. Reno despite multiple previous warnings, was not exhibiting a united front between the Court Manager and the Judge.

I deny that I forced Ms. Reno to repeat any "frigid" remark in front of the other clerks.

I deny that I harassed Ms. Reno about reading the Code of Conduct.

I deny that I yelled at Ms. Reno.

I deny that I have created a hostile work environment.

Supplement To Complaint

- **Professional Appearance - Tattoos & Jeans**

Ms. Reno has stated: "*He gave me a poor evaluation for my professional appearance*". Benson Justice Court #3 has in place a long-standing dress policy that mirrors that of Pima County Justice Court, the largest Justice Court in Arizona. It has been in place for years. It is my belief that court staff should be dressed professionally, especially in the courtroom. Ms. Reno has consistently spoken against it and has openly stated that I am "old fashioned" and should allow her and the staff to dress down, to conform to the modern times. Due to continued protest by Ms. Reno, I have relaxed the standard and now allow the staff to wear jeans, however they need to be dress jeans and not be faded or have holes or rips in them. Ms. Reno has come to work on multiple occasions in faded jeans.

The dress code does not allow tattoos to be showing. Ms. Reno has come to work on multiple occasions with her tattoos showing. Notwithstanding the written policy Ms. Reno even admitted in her Complaint that she has come to work with her tattoos visible. Ms. Reno was informed of the dress policy when she was hired. Ms. Reno has read the written policy, yet still chooses not to abide by it intermittently.

It is my opinion that as a Court Manager that Ms. Reno needs to set the example to the other staff and be the most professionally dressed. She disagrees totally with this and feels we are in an age and time, that professional appearance isn't required.

The annual evaluation has four grades: "Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)", "Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)", "Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Points)" and "Unacceptable (Zero Points)". On her self-evaluation Ms. Reno gave herself two points for Adherence To Procedures and I gave her two points. For Appearance Ms. Reno gave herself five points and I gave her two points. This was an honest assessment for

her not complying with court policy. This was reinforced on the "Future Goals" section where she was advised to "enforce court policy and lead by example".

I deny that these grades were given, due to retaliation, as Ms. Reno alleges.

- **Attempting to Sway Employees**

C Dr

On August 7, 2018 I sent an email to Ms. Margaret Downie and inquired if I could answer questions directed to me at an election debate regarding a Complaint. Ms. Downie cited Commission Rule 9, Public Access and Confidentiality, C3, and informed me that respondent judge is not prohibited from disclosing any documents or correspondence served on them.

Ms. Reno cited both C Di and C C in her Complaint. I did not believe the details that Ms. Reno cited were accurate regarding the first meeting that Ms. Reno and I had with Ms. D on her first day of employment. I informed Ms. D that a Complaint had been made against me and she had been cited multiple times throughout it. Ms. D immediately became very upset that she had been cited by Ms. Reno, without her permission. As stated above on page 6, Ms. Dr did state that I used the word "can't" instead of "can" when I was going over policy regarding staff having challenges with any other staff member. Due to this being a very serious issue and, due to the fact that I've been falsely accused of this before, I asked Ms. D if she would write a statement regarding the incident. Ms. Di stated said she would sign a statement stating that she clearly understood the policy that a staff member could to go to Human Resources or the Commission on Judicial Conduct at any time. She said that she wanted to first think about it and also to talk to her husband prior to committing to sign any statement.

I asked Ms. D about the events that occurred when Ms. Reno told the entire staff that I told her that she was frigid. This issue was discussed on page 11 above. Ms. Di stated that Ms. Reno volunteered the frigid comment on her own and was not forced to do so.

I asked Ms. Di about the events that occurred when I spoke to the entire staff regarding the continuing education issue. This issue was discussed, on pages 12-14 above. Ms. Di stated that I used a firm voice and the staff knew that I was upset but confirmed that I did not yell at any of the staff members.

I asked Ms. D if she would include these two events in her statement, should she make one.

After a few days, I asked Ms. D was going to be making a statement. Ms. D informed me that she had spoken to her husband and wished to decline making a written statement. She stated that she was in a "no win" situation and felt that she had been unfairly drawn into conflict between two of her superiors. Ms. Di stated should Human Resources or the Commission on Judicial Conduct wish to interview her, she would answer questions, but really didn't want to get involved because of the situation she was being placed in.

C C:

On 01/22/2021, Ms. C... was written up by Ms. Reno for arriving at work late 12 out of 19 times. On 01/25/2021, following being warned multiple times previously, Ms. C... was written up by Ms. Reno for failing to adhere to basic office policy of updating contact information in the computer.

Ms. Reno has stated in her Compliant *"Prior to the write up being talked about BS had stated in more than one of our morning meetings that CC had been consistently late and had instructed me to review her time for the last 60 days"*.

I responded back and informed Ms. Reno that Ms. C... had been written up in the past, (for being late and logging in by phone prior to even arriving at the court) and should be written up.

Following the write-ups, Ms. C... had a bad attitude for many days. I called Ms. Reno and Ms. C... into my chambers to discuss the poor attitude. Ms. C... admitted that she was very angry and felt that she shouldn't have been written up, and blamed me personally. I informed her that I was personally responsible for advising Ms. Reno of the failure to update contact information. I explained that since I had warned her and the staff on so many occasions previously, and the contact information was still failing to be updated, that the write up was necessary. We then discussed the write up for the failure to be at work on time. I informed Ms. C... that I didn't discover it, but that it was brought to my attention. When I stated this fact, I noted the immediate "Oh No" look on Ms. Reno's face. Not wanting to put Ms. Reno in a bad position with an angry employee, I told Ms. C... that it was N... F..., from Court Administration, who brought the tardiness to my attention as she always monitors our time. Ms. C... stated that she was doing the work of 3 people and also due to her broken hip, almost 9 months earlier on 5/3/2020, that consideration should be given due to the fact that some morning she is slow in getting going. Ms. C... was emphatic that she didn't feel the write up was justified.

Whenever contact is made to the court, either by correspondence, phone or in person, it is court policy that the clerk must verify the defendant's contact information. The staff has been instructed about doing this in a multitude of staff meetings. The staff have also been advised personally whenever they fail to do so, which occurs frequently. Due to staff not following this basic policy, I have instituted a policy that whenever correspondence is received, besides stamping in the document and initialing it, the staff must use a yellow highlighter through the contact information. This way I know the contact information has been updated.

Following the above meeting, whenever Ms. C... put motions in my inbox for me to rule on, instead of a simple highlight with initials, she would assertively highlight the entire section of the contact information. Following receiving multiple motions assertively highlighted, I asked Ms. C... if she was attempting to make a point. She answered very directly "Yes I am". I answered, "So noted". This insubordinate behavior continued to occur, so following receiving more assertively highlighted motions, I stopped at her cubicle and made the statement "Are we ok?". Ms. C... answered "No we are not". Hoping to resolve the tension between us that had never existed before, I informed Ms. C... that it was Ms. Reno that brought her tardiness to my attention and that it was Ms. Reno who was concerned about it. I apologized for not being truthful with her.

Since that time, I have begun keeping copies of the assertively highlighted motions. Even on the motion answer sheet for Mr. ... that is attached, Ms. C... highlighted the contact information, which isn't necessary.

See Exhibits #27, 28, 29, 30 & 31.

Ms. Reno states in her Complaint Supplement a totally different version of who, made who aware, of the tardiness of Ms. C and the events that took place at the meeting with Ms. C. Ms. Reno was the one who notified me of Ms. C being tardy. We spoke about Ms. C's tardiness in meeting following Ms. Reno's notification to me, not prior to as she alleges. This allegation is false as proved by an email Ms. Reno sent me on 1/19/2021 stating: "*Judge, I was in correcting time for Danele's log in and looked at C's time. If you get a moment to look at it please do. I count in the last 3 weeks less than a hand full of times that she was on time. This of concern to me*".

See Exhibit #30.

I deny that I was attempting to create a hostile work environment.

I deny that I was attempting to turn employees against Ms. Reno.

I deny I was trying to sway employees when I was attempting to document the truth.

Relationship

The good relationship that Ms. Reno and I had, begun disintegrating beginning in February and March of 2020, due to four major issues as previously described above:

1. The hostile work environment created by Ms. Reno and Ms. W, between the two of them and the other Clerks, which resulted in Benson Justice Court #3 losing a good employee.
2. My not supporting Ms. Reno for the false reporting of hours.
3. The annual evaluation that I gave Ms. Reno.
4. Not allowing Ms. Reno to be part of the COVID-19 flex schedule when she returned to work, following being out on FMLA and FFCRA leave.

Ms. Reno **firmly** believes that she did not create any hostile work environment. To this day she accepts no responsibility for it whatsoever. Ms. Reno **firmly** believes that I didn't support her conduct when the workplace hostility issue was discussed with Ms. B. Ms. Reno **firmly** believes she didn't falsify hours and that I should have defended her hours. Ms. Reno **firmly** believes that I retaliated against her being out on FMLA and FFCRA leave by giving her a poor annual evaluation. Ms. Reno **firmly** believes that I retaliated against her by not allowing her to participate in the COVID-19 flex schedule.

As a result, trust has been lost on both sides. This has caused tension between us, which is escalating. Our relationship has declined and is continuing to decline further, as I have now begun calling Ms. Reno into accountability when she does not follow office policy, does not support my policies, and is insubordinate.

Conclusion

I believe that I have lost my ability to lead and to enforce policy at Benson Justice Court #3. The staff has now seen on multiple occasions that whenever a staff member is informed they are not following policy, instead of

taking responsibility for their actions and modifying their behavior, they get upset and take it personally. Instead of being willing to follow the recommended policy of discussing a matter immediately to resolve it, they dwell on it, complain among themselves, building up the tension even more, and then they file a Complaint. When they file their Complaint, they don't file it on the single issue but bring out every issue they feel they have been disrespected on in the past, sometimes going back years. This conduct has literally taken over the climate, if not the culture at JP-3.

I have documented the issue of staff not following basic policy of updating defendants contact information. Arrest warrants have been issued by me for failures to appear. Defendants in some cases have subsequently been arrested when they shouldn't have been, because the proper contact information had not been updated in the computer. This has occurred, notwithstanding the defendant supplied the correct contact information to the court. Taking someone's freedom away is a **serious** issue, especially when it is not warranted. Since Ms. C. has been written up on January 22, 2021, she has failed to update the contact information twice when she has submitted motions to me. Since when Ms. C. was updated contact information, I believe she is being insubordinate by aggressively highlighting the entire contact information, expressing her continued anger, instead of using a simple highlight. As documented, I brought to her attention and asked if we were "ok". She informed me that we were not. Still she continues to aggressively highlight the contact information. I cannot take action for fear of retaliation, especially since Ms. Reno has cited Ms. C. in her Complaint. Ms. D. has also failed to update contact information and again I cannot take action, fearing the claim of retaliation, because Ms. Reno has cited Ms. D. in her Complaint.

I have been here six years. I have signed off on a total of five write ups. The two write-ups, against Ms. B and Ms. F I did not feel were warranted, however I did so supporting Ms. Reno. I signed off one write up of Ms. C when I was made aware that she was logging in remotely, prior to arriving at the court, when she was late. I signed off on the recent write up of Ms. C. being habitually late, when Ms. Reno brought the issue to my attention. I have only ordered one write up on a staff member ever, that being Ms. C., due to contact information not being properly updated. This was only done following multiple warnings both to her personally and to the entire staff in staff meetings.

Recognizing that I have weaknesses in leadership, I previously petitioned Cochise County Presiding Superior Court Judge Conlogue and Superior Court Administrator E. S. for assistance at Benson Justice Court #3, as I felt it was out of control, but received none. I was informed that I had to wait until the Complaints were resolved, which subsequently took over three long years. I have received a tremendous amount of assistance from Court Division Director, Ms. N. F., on handling administrative issues, however, she is unable to address HR issues.

I could not turn to Cochise County Court Human Resources due to the relationship I have with HR director, Ms. T. R. When previous Court Manager, A. N. was removed from Benson Justice Court #3, I was made aware of that after it occurred, when I received a call from Judge Conlogue while attending a Justice of the Peace Conference. I subsequently learned that the budget at Benson Justice Court #3 was impacted. I related to Ms. R., in open meeting with Judge Conlogue and Ms. F. present, that this was tremendously upsetting me. I later learned that I had offended Ms. R. for bringing this matter up in an open meeting. I personally apologized to her and thought the issue was resolved. I have later learned that she felt she was tremendously insulted and continues to hold a grudge.

I believe that Ms. Reno should recuse herself from all dealings with Benson Justice Court #3 due to this hostile relationship and subsequent retaliation. Ms. Smith filed a Complaint against me, 9 months after leaving the court regarding many issues that occurred when she wasn't even in the court. At the time of the filing of the Complaint, Ms. Smith was the personal hairdresser for Ms. Reno. Ms. Clark who filed also a lengthy complaint against me is close personal friends with Ms. Reno. They have a relationship outside of work and even traveled to Tucson together multiple times, for their vacation. Ms. Reno was fully aware of the hostile feelings that Ms. Clark held towards me, from before I even took office. I have further proof of this, from an unsigned document dated April 14, 2015, that Ms. Reno submitted to the Commission on December 20, 2019. Ms. Reno had knowledge that Ms. Clark had filed a Complaint against me immediately following Ms. Nunez being removed from Benson Justice Court #3. Notwithstanding this knowledge, Ms. Reno strongly advocated to me personally for Ms. Clark to become the interim Court Manager at Benson Justice Court #3, prior to me being informed that a Complaint had been made. Ms. Reno filed a Complaint against me after interviewing Susan White at the Sierra Vista Library after hours. I have learned that Ms. Reno was "best friends" with Ms. White's mother. When Ms. White was interviewed for a position HR Benson Justice Court #3, Ms. Reno was present representing Cochise County HR. Ms. Reno strongly advocated for Ms. White to be hired but failed to disclose her personal relationship with her and her mother.

Administrative Order 2018-010 directs HR to send a staff member directly to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. This flawed Administrative Order removes any chance of HR being involved to resolve any matters between a Judge and a staff member. Ms. Fisher became aware immediately that the allegations by Ms. White were against a Judge. Ms. Reno not only continued the interviewing process but, made another date to continue the interview.

Attempting to get assistance, I have requested to be able to address this issue with Cochise County HR. I've been instructed not to do this but to open a dialogue with the recently newly appointed Cochise County Court Administrator, Jim Smith, for assistance with the constantly occurring drama at Benson Justice Court #3. On March 11, 2021, Mr. Smith opened the dialogue and offered, as Ms. Reno's supervisor, to intercede and to assist to heal the climate and culture at Benson Justice Court #3. I am enthusiastic for this to happen.

I **FULLY** recognize the challenges existing at Benson Justice Court #3 are a direct result of my lack of leadership in being able to effectively communicate with my staff. I am willing to do whatever it takes to resolve any issues that staff have should they feel offended or disrespected. What I am not willing to do is to allow staff to continue to break policy, especially when it affects defendant's lives. At this time I'm not able to enforce policy through my Court Manager, as she doesn't believe in the policies, nor is she willing to present a united front with the staff. I believe both of us need to learn to be managers and not friends of the staff.

I believe that the exhibits that I have submitted prove that Ms. Reno has made many false allegations. I believe that that exhibits that I have submitted prove that Ms. Reno is the person who has created a hostile work environment at Benson Justice Court #3 by giving preferential treatment to Ms. White.

I believe that the exhibits that I have submitted prove that I did not allow Ms. Reno to be included in the flex schedule, not because of retaliation, but because a lack of trust for submitting false hours. Doing the research of this Complaint I have discovered that Ms. Reno turned in no less than 8 hours a day, and up to 16.1 hours a

day, for a total of 58 days out of the 104 days that she logged in, from October 28, 2020 to April 6, 2020, as per Exhibit #1. This was while in her 2nd - 3rd trimester, with a baby of 1 ½ years of age, a child of 5 ¼ years of age and another child of 7½ years of age that she had to care for along with other household duties.

I believe that the Annual Evaluation exhibits that I have submitted prove that I did not discriminate against Ms. Reno for being on FFCRA and FMLA leave. A laptop computer was ordered specifically for Ms. Reno, not only to build up COMP hours but to work from home, when she couldn't come into the court during her 2nd - 3rd trimester.

I did not retaliate against Ms. W i. She could have been let go at anytime due to being a temporary employee. Even though she should have been let go, she wasn't, due to the fear of retaliation that is now being claimed.

I did not make improper comments regarding Ms. Reno's husband.

I have never acted aggressively in body language, in voice, or threatened either Ms. Reno or any staff member.

I have never knowingly told a clerk they cannot make a complaint to Human Resources or to the Commission on Judicial Conduct. I have supplied Exhibits #12, 13 & 14 as proof.

I did not retaliate against Ms. Reno during her annual evaluation. I have supplied Exhibits #15 & 16 as proof.

I did not engage in age discrimination. I have supplied Exhibits #20 A-D as proof.

I did not use my position as a Judge, to coerce a Cochise County employee, to perform services at my home for me. I have supplied Exhibit #22 as proof.

I did not harass Ms. Reno about reading the Code of Conduct.

I have not created a hostile work environment by the above allegations.

I have not attempted to turn the staff against Ms. Reno.

I will await the response to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

Respectfully,

Judge Bruce Staggs

Reno, Samantha Rae

Exhibit #1

10/28/2019 - 4/13/2020, Selected range of dates

1 Employee(s) Selected

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Mon 10/28				7:28AM		7:33AM	8:02AM		1:02PM		
Mon 10/28				1:03PM		1:04PM				5.1	5.1
Tue 10/29				8:12AM		4:31PM				8.3	13.4
Wed 10/30				8:07AM		4:16PM				8.1	21.5
Thu 10/31				8:28AM		9:12AM				0.7	22.2
Fri 11/01				7:54AM		2:27PM				6.5	28.7
Sat 11/02		PTO	5.9							5.9	34.6
Sun 11/03											34.6
Mon 11/04				7:32AM		7:40AM	8:11AM		4:12PM		
Mon 11/04				8:05PM		11:00PM				11.0	45.6
Tue 11/05				8:23AM		1:00PM					
Tue 11/05				7:39PM		9:03PM				6.0	51.6
Wed 11/06				8:00AM		3:03PM				7.0	58.6
Thu 11/07				8:00AM		4:24PM				8.4	67.0
Fri 11/08				8:12AM		2:48PM				6.6	73.6
Sat 11/09				8:42AM		9:42AM				1.0	74.6
Sun 11/10											74.6
Mon 11/11		Veterans Day	8.0							8.0	82.6
Tue 11/12				9:00AM		2:00PM				5.0	87.6
Wed 11/13				7:47AM		3:46PM	6:00PM		10:00PM	12.0	99.6
Thu 11/14				8:05AM		4:05PM	6:30PM		7:00PM	8.5	108.1

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Fri 11/15				8:54AM		10:56AM	11:30AM		4:00PM	6.5	114.6
Sat 11/16											114.6
Sun 11/17											114.6
Mon 11/18				7:31AM		7:45AM	8:09AM		5:16PM	9.3	123.9
Tue 11/19											123.9
Wed 11/20				7:50AM		8:40AM	9:11AM		11:11AM		
Wed 11/20				1:15PM		10:17PM				11.9	135.8
Thu 11/21											135.8
Fri 11/22				9:37PM		11:49PM				2.2	138.0
Sat 11/23		PTO	11.6								
Sat 11/23				4:03PM		9:05PM				16.6	154.6
Sun 11/24											154.6
Mon 11/25				7:48AM		8:01AM	8:38AM		12:59PM		
Mon 11/25				8:06PM		11:30PM				8.0	162.6
Tue 11/26				8:09AM		12:09PM					
Tue 11/26				4:21PM		5:21PM				5.0	167.6
Wed 11/27		Comp Time Earned	0.3							0.3	167.9
Thu 11/28		Thanksgiving	8.0							8.0	175.9
Fri 11/29		Thanksgiving Day After	8.0								
Fri 11/29				12:00PM		11:00PM				19.0	194.9
Sat 11/30											194.9
Sun 12/01											194.9
Mon 12/02				7:30AM		7:38AM	8:08AM		4:14PM	8.2	203.1

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Tue 12/03		PTO	5.6							5.6	208.7
Wed 12/04				8:20AM		4:09PM				7.8	216.5
Thu 12/05				8:30AM		3:37PM					
Thu 12/05				8:59PM		11:59PM				10.1	226.6
Fri 12/06				9:07AM		3:24PM					
Fri 12/06				8:00PM		10:00PM				8.3	234.9
Sat 12/07											234.9
Sun 12/08											234.9
Mon 12/09				7:35AM		7:46AM	8:28AM		4:28PM	8.2	243.1
Tue 12/10				7:25PM		11:50PM				4.4	247.5
Wed 12/11				8:24AM		4:00PM	4:01PM		4:02PM		
Wed 12/11				8:03PM		11:37PM				11.2	258.7
Thu 12/12				12:35PM		1:21PM	4:05PM		9:29PM	6.2	264.9
Fri 12/13				9:31AM		2:32PM				5.0	269.9
Sat 12/14				4:40PM		9:40PM				5.0	274.9
Sun 12/15											274.9
Mon 12/16				7:36AM		7:46AM	8:23AM		4:27PM	8.2	283.1
Tue 12/17											283.1
Wed 12/18				8:29AM		4:35PM				8.1	291.2
Thu 12/19				8:12AM		1:08PM					
Thu 12/19				6:34PM		10:18PM				8.6	299.8
Fri 12/20				9:10AM		4:16PM				7.1	306.9

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Sat 12/21		PTO	8.0							8.0	314.9
Sun 12/22											314.9
Mon 12/23											314.9
Tue 12/24				7:40AM		7:57AM	8:22AM		4:06PM	8.0	322.9
Wed 12/25		Christmas	8.0								
Wed 12/25				7:25PM		10:26PM				11.0 3	333.9
Thu 12/26				7:56AM		1:29PM					
Thu 12/26				7:18PM		10:18PM				8.5	342.4
Fri 12/27				12:04PM		8:39PM				8.6	351.0
Sat 12/28				5:02PM		8:21PM	8:22PM		8:58PM	3.9	354.9
Sun 12/29											354.9
Mon 12/30				8:19AM		8:38AM	9:10AM		4:04PM	7.2	362.1
Tue 12/31				8:13AM		4:09PM				7.9	370.0
Wed 1/01		New Years Day	8.0							8.0	378.0
Thu 1/02											378.0
Fri 1/03				8:09AM		2:06PM				5.9	383.9
Sat 1/04		Comp Time Earned	3.9								
Sat 1/04				6:38AM		5:38PM				14.9 11.0	398.8
Sun 1/05											398.8
Mon 1/06				7:43AM		8:03AM	8:22AM		4:27PM	8.4	407.2
Tue 1/07				8:37AM		4:20PM				7.7	414.9
Wed 1/08				8:02AM		4:31PM				8.5	423.4
Thu 1/09				8:44AM		2:26PM				5.7	429.1
Fri 1/10				8:06AM		12:16PM				4.2	433.3

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Sat 1/11		PTO	5.5							5.5	438.8
Sun 1/12				12:25PM		8:40PM				8.2	447.0
Mon 1/13											447.0
Tue 1/14				7:42AM		7:48AM	8:14AM		4:02PM	7.9	454.9
Wed 1/15				8:56AM		5:06PM				8.2	463.1
Thu 1/16		Comp Time Taken	0.8							0.8	463.9
Fri 1/17				8:10AM		2:34PM				6.4	470.3
Sat 1/18				12:48PM		9:20PM				8.5	478.8
Sun 1/19											478.8
Mon 1/20		Martin Luther King Jr	8.0							8.0	486.8
Tue 1/21				11:47AM		10:17PM				10.5	497.3
Wed 1/22				7:25AM		7:44AM	8:24AM		12:15PM		
Wed 1/22				4:11PM		10:00PM				10.0	507.3
Thu 1/23				9:05AM		3:58PM				6.9	514.2
Fri 1/24				10:16PM		12:00AM				1.7	515.9
Sat 1/25		Comp Time Earned	1.2								
Sat 1/25				12:00AM		12:18AM					
Sat 1/25				9:25PM		12:00AM				4.1	520.0
Sun 1/26				12:00AM		12:24AM					
Sun 1/26				3:46PM		7:56PM				4.6	524.6
Mon 1/27				7:55AM		8:09AM	8:41AM		4:15PM		
Mon 1/27				7:47PM		11:05PM				11.1	535.7
Tue 1/28				9:54AM		4:02PM					
Tue 1/28				7:12PM		10:16PM				9.2	544.9
Wed 1/29				10:53AM		4:03PM					
Wed 1/29				7:09PM		9:37PM				7.7	552.6
Thu 1/30											552.6
Fri 1/31				2:01PM		9:25PM				7.4	560.0

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Sat 2/01											560.0
Sun 2/02											560.0
Mon 2/03				7:29AM		7:39AM	8:09AM		4:02PM	8.0	568.0
Tue 2/04				8:40AM		2:46PM					
Tue 2/04				7:24PM		11:35PM				10.3	578.3
Wed 2/05				8:27AM		1:39PM				5.2	583.5
Thu 2/06				9:04AM		12:53PM				3.8	587.3
Fri 2/07		Admin Leave	8.0							8.0	595.3
Sat 2/08		Comp Time Taken	4.7							4.7	600.0
Sun 2/09											600.0
Mon 2/10											600.0
Tue 2/11				11:12AM		5:38PM				6.4	606.4
Wed 2/12				8:00AM		8:19AM	8:50AM		4:41PM	8.2	614.6
Thu 2/13				7:55PM		12:00AM				4.1	618.7
Fri 2/14				12:00AM		1:18AM					
Fri 2/14				9:04AM		5:15PM				9.5	628.2
Sat 2/15		Sick	11.8							11.8	640.0
Sun 2/16											640.0
Mon 2/17		Presidents Day	8.0							8.0	648.0
Tue 2/18				10:29AM		6:36PM				8.1	656.1
Wed 2/19				7:27AM		7:35AM	8:04AM		12:51PM		
Wed 2/19				2:27PM		5:43PM				8.2	664.3
Thu 2/20				11:48AM		7:54PM				8.1	672.4
Fri 2/21				9:32AM		2:45PM	3:35PM		6:01PM	7.6	680.0
Sat 2/22		Comp Time Earned	2.9							2.9	682.9

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Mon 3/16											804.7
Tue 3/17				7:12AM		11:17PM				16.1	820.8
Wed 3/18				8:09AM		8:15PM				12.1	832.9
Thu 3/19				6:33AM		3:49PM				9.3	842.2
Fri 3/20		PTO	0.7							0.7	842.9
Sat 3/21		Comp Time Taken	1.8							1.8	844.7
Sun 3/22											844.7
Mon 3/23				11:21AM		9:21PM				10.0	854.7
Tue 3/24				11:46AM		7:46PM				8.0	862.7
Wed 3/25											862.7
Thu 3/26				11:17AM		5:17PM	6:58PM		10:58PM	10.0	872.7
Fri 3/27				8:02AM		1:02PM	2:02PM		6:02PM	9.0	881.7
Sat 3/28		Comp Time Taken	3.0							3.0	884.7
Sun 3/29											884.7
Mon 3/30											884.7
Tue 3/31				7:56AM		12:00PM	1:00PM		4:55PM		
Tue 3/31				7:45PM		10:45PM				11.0	895.7
Wed 4/01				6:59AM		11:59AM	1:00PM		5:00PM		
Wed 4/01				8:00PM		10:00PM				11.0	906.7
Thu 4/02		Comp Time Taken	7.6							7.6	914.3
Fri 4/03		Sick	10.4							10.4	924.7
Sat 4/04											924.7
Sun 4/05											924.7
Mon 4/06				8:00AM		12:00PM	1:00PM		5:00PM		
Mon 4/06				7:31PM		9:31PM				10.0	934.7
Tue 4/07		FF-PSL-EE	8.0							8.0	942.7

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Wed 4/08		FF-PSL-EE	8.0 ▼							8.0	950.7
Thu 4/09		FF-PSL-EE	8.0 ▼							8.0	958.7
Fri 4/10		FF-PSL-EE	6.0 ▼							6.0	964.7
Sat 4/11											964.7
Sun 4/12											964.7
Mon 4/13		FF-PSL-EE	8.0 ▼							8.0	972.7

Totals

All All

Account	Pay Code	Amount
	Admin Leave	8.0
	Comp Time Earned	11.9
	Comp Time Taken	17.9
	FF-PSL-EE	38.0
	Holiday	56.0
	Holiday Worked	14.0
	Overtime	-1.8
	PTO	37.3
	Regular	769.2
	Sick	22.2

Firefox
<https://eed2.adp.com/122budpstatic/applications/navigator/html5/d...>

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Thu 4/02		Comp Time Taken	7.6							7.6	914.3
Fri 4/03		Sick	10.4							10.4	924.7
Sat 4/04											924.7
Sun 4/05											924.7
Mon 4/06				8:00AM		12:00PM	1:00PM		5:00PM		
Mon 4/06				7:31PM		9:31PM				10.0	934.7
Tue 4/07		FF-PSL-EE	8.0							8.0	942.7

Totals

Account	Pay Code	Amount
	Admin Leave	8.0
	Comp Time Earned	11.9
	Comp Time Taken	17.9
	FF-PSL-EE	8.0
	Holiday	56.0
	Holiday Worked	14.0
	Overtime	-1.8
	PTO	37.3
	Regular	769.2
	Sick	22.2

Staggs, Bruce

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 1:45 PM
To: Reno, Samantha
Subject: COVID-19 Schedule / 4-10 Schedule

Samantha,

Per discussion please make up a 4 10 work schedule that we can review.

Judge

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 10:26 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce <
Subject: Covid Schedule

Good Day,

So I am aware that JP4 is not doing the covid admin schedule anymore. Is this not mandatory and if not can we get off of it?



Samantha Reno

Court Manager

Benson Justice Court



Exhibit #3



OCTOBER 2020 FLEX WORK SCHEDULE (4 - 10HR SHIFTS)

NOTE: IF THERE ARE ANY PRE-SCHEDULED DAYS OFF THEY ARE STILL VALID. THIS IS THE DAY EACH WEEK THAT YOU MUST BE OFF TO COMPLY WITH OUR COVID REQUIREMENTS. IF POSSIBLE TO SCHEDULE ANY APPOINTMENTS DURING YOUR SCHEDULED TIME OFF PLEASE DO SO. THE ADDITIONAL TIME MUST BE SPENT COMPLETING WORK AND UTILIZING TIME WITHOUT PHONES AND WINDOW TRAFFIC TO GET AHEAD OF THE DAY.

EMPLOYEE	10/12 - 10/16	10/19 - 10/23	10/26 - 10/30	11/2 - 11/6
	DAY OFF	DAY OFF	DAY OFF	DAY OFF
	TUE	FRI	TUE	FRI
	FRI	WED	FRI	WED
	THUR	FRI	THUR	FRI
	WED	MON	WED	MON
	MON	TUE	MON	TUE
	FRI	THUR	FRI	THUR



NOVEMBER 2020 FLEX WORK SCHEDULE (4 - 10HR SHIFTS)

PLEASE VIEW THERE HAVE BEEN CHANGES MADE.

NOTE:

PLEASE SEE THE SCHEDULE BELOW. DUE TO THE RECENT OUTBREAKS OF COVID WITHIN THE COURT SYSTEM WE HAVE DECIDED TO TAKE GREATER MEASURES TO PROTECT US ALL. WHEN ON CALL YOU ARE WELCOME TO COME IN AFTER HOURS TO COMPLETE ANY WORK NEEDED TO BE COMPLETED. WE UNDERSTAND THE CONCERNS WITH STAYING CAUGHT UP ON WORK. WE APPRECIATE THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION.

EMPLOYEE	11/23 - 11/27	11/30 - 12/4	12/7 - 12/11	12/14 - 12/18	12/21 - 12/25	12/28 - 01/01
	HOLIDAY THUR/FRI				HOLIDAY FRI	HOLIDAY FRI
	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR	OFF
	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR	O/C WED - FRI
	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR	O/C WED - FRI
	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR - FRI	O/C WED - FRI	O/C THUR	O/C WED - FRI
	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE
SAM	O/C MON - TUE OFF WED	O/C MON - TUE	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE	O/C MON - WED OFF THUR	O/C MON - TUE
	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE	O/C MON - WED	O/C MON - TUE



My Information Manage My Employees GoTo Widgets-Timecard Q | X +

Timecards

Reno, Samantha Res < 1 of 1

Loaded: 7:49 AM Previous Pay Period (Employee(s) Selected)

Grid Actions View Add Date Timecard Print Refresh Calendar Print Go To

Date	Schedule	Pay Code	Amount	In	Transfer	Out	In	Transfer	Out	Daily	Period
Thu 11/19				8:03AM		12:37PM	1:25PM		5:06PM	8.1	32.1
Fri 11/20				7:27AM		7:39AM	8:31AM		12:36PM		
Fri 11/20				1:27PM		4:47PM				7.9	40.0
Sat 11/21											40.0
Sun 11/22											40.0
Mon 11/23	Admin Leave		6.2								
Mon 11/23				8:25AM		10:15AM				8.0	48.0
Tue 11/24	Admin Leave		6.5								
Tue 11/24				8:25AM		10:50AM				8.0	56.0
Wed 11/25	PTO		8.0	8:00AM						8.0	64.0
Thu 11/26	Thanksgiving		8.0							8.0	72.0
Fri 11/27	Thanksgiving De..		8.0							8.0	80.0
Sat 11/28											80.0

Claimed 12.7 hours out 16 Administrative leave hours claimed when could have worked more as had a laptop.

Exhibit #6 A

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 8:52 AM
To: Reno, Samantha
Cc: F , N
Subject: Time Card

Samantha,

I went to approve your time card and was surprised to see that you only have 1.8 hours on 11/23/2020 and 1.5 hours on 11/24/2020.

Due the fact that you have a laptop computer you have full access to the court. Could you please explain why a full 8 hours was not put in on both 11/23/2020 and 11/24/2020?

Please get back to me as soon as possible as I need to approve timecards.

Judge Staggs



Judge Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace, JP-3
Magistrate, City of Benson
126 W. 5th Street, Suite #1
Benson, Arizona 85602
(520) 586-8100
(520) 586-8117 fax

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Exhibit # 6 B

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 8:56 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce < >
Subject: RE: Time Card

That is the amount of time in which it took me to process the ncourt, demand batch queue, and fare queue. The remainder of the work I have been doing is requiring me to pull and scan files which I do not have access to.



Samantha Reno

Court Manager

enson Justice Court

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☎ (

From: Staggs, Bruce

Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 9:00 AM

To: Reno, Samantha

Cc: F , N <

Subject: RE: Time Card

Exhibit #6C

Samantha,

Are you informing me, that having your laptop, there is nothing else that you can do remotely?

Judge

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 9:43 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Time Card

Exhibit #60

Unless I have cases scanned in that is correct I do not have access to day to day stuff coming in except for the demand queues the online payments, sending to fare queue. I need to pull cases and go through them one on one to determine if they meet the purge guidelines and scan them in to work towards a paperless court like we discussed. But that is not something I can do from home. I not only do not have a scanner at home but the last I knew of we were not supposed to be taking cases from the court to our house unless that rule has been waived due to covid. since returning I have kept up on work and day to day tasks so the things in which I have been working on once those are done is reorganizing and updating the court and the cases in the back. This is work that I can only do in the office.



Samantha Reno

Court Manager
Benson Justice Court

Staggs, Bruce

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 4:24 PM
To: Reno, Samantha
Cc: @cochise.az.gov
Subject: Time Card
Attachments: Remote Work From Home.docx

Samantha,

In working with staff during the pandemic and ensuring their health and safety, I have allowed staff to work different schedules. I understand staff does not easily have access to their work since they do not have a laptop, allowing them the Administrative time. We are encouraged to allow staff to work from home if possible without having to use the available Administrative time.

In speaking with other courts and Court Administration, it is my understanding that majority of the court managers are able to work remotely with their VPN access. I am aware that C who has been assisting JP 1 and JP 2 remotely, has been able to process much work for the courts and has been able to fully assist the public. I am attaching a list of duties that C provided me with that she was able to complete remotely.

As you are aware, I have asked staff on multiple occasions to work on their individual duties for our Office Policy Manual, which will help our court and staff going forward. Both you and they should be working on them from home during Administrative time.

You currently have a laptop which provides you with full access to your work whether you are in the office or remote. There should be no excuse or reason as to the decrease in work hours when you are remote. You have full capabilities to assist staff in their work and work on County financials. I have expressed to you previously, that although you have not been formally trained on budget, you are encouraged to navigate through it to understand it or reach out to counterparts. As budget is upcoming in February, we can begin running reports to review them and see what the status is for our court. Again, having full access on your laptop does not restrict or limit you of your work or what you can assist staff with. If you solely worked on the items listed last week, it is concerning and you may need additional duties in the office.

At this time, I have approved the timecard submitted however, going forward if the remote work continues to be the same you will be required to be in the office daily. I am not able to justify the minimal hours you worked last week on 11/21/2020 and 11/23/2020 when more can be done and needs to be done remotely.

Please provide daily reports of work that is completed when remote.

Judge Staggs

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 9:34 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce <@courts.az.gov>
Subject: RE: Time Card

Attached is the list you sent me in red is what I already do and what can be done if the work is scanned into me as I stated previously. Yesterday I spent a good portion of my morning trying to gain access to upload the calendar, I assisted staff with financial questions and such, I processed over \$3800 on ncourt this took a majority of my day. I have advised the staff before leaving that any work that I can assist with they can send me I do not have knowledge of what they get on a daily basis so I am unaware if they are sending me what they can. I am keeping up with the daily queues and payments if these are caught up they don't take much to maintain on a daily basis. What I had stated to you was that without work scanned in I can not do more. While in the office I do not only do the stuff that I am "required" to do I assist the clerks and do help with other duties. I am also working on cleaning up the cases in the court that is much needed so there is no need to be concerned with the amount of work I have to complete. I keep plenty busy and am the type of employee who takes the initiative and doesn't wait to be told.

This teamed schedule is done for the safety of the court, employees, and their families to minimize the risk of exposure to them and the courts. I do not understand how you can single me out if I do not work a complete 8 hours from home and not allow me to take the same precautions as the rest of the staff. This is concerning to me that you would deny me the same safety as the rest of the staff.

While I understand your concerns I can assure you that I am not neglecting my duties nor am I neglecting providing the staff with assistance as needed.



Samantha Reno

Court Manager

Benson Justice Court

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 7:37 AM
To: Reno, Samantha <reno@courts.az.gov>
Cc: Flores, Niltza <niltza@cochise.az.gov>
Subject: RE: Time Card

Exhibit # 6 G

Samantha,

I'm sorry you feel that way. I am responsible for taking the safety measures needed for the staff however, we also need to ensure we are providing a service to the public.

You are the only employee in our office that has the capability to work remotely and as a leader of the team, you are required to ensure the court and administrative duties are being completed. Prior to recently allowing you to be on the flex/Administrative schedule, you were working daily in the office. You have your own space, where you can freely work on your daily tasks. As the Court Manager, you are required to provide oversight of staff and the duties they are working on. Since we do have new staff, we need to make sure that they are understanding the work and processing the work as needed.

As stated previously, I need to ensure I am able to justify the hours worked. I was not able to do that previously when you were working from home and I cannot do it now. When Court Administration questioned your hours when you were allowed to work from home, I couldn't justify it, and I informed you that you needed to justify your time.

I have, on multiple occasions, requested detailed job duties not only from you but from all staff. As of today I have received one from C Ci two weeks ago, which was very brief. I spoke with C Ci regarding the brief document submitted and requested she be much more detailed as this will be used for cross training purposes. C Ci understood and will be re-submitting the document to me. As the Court Manager, this is a task you can have oversight and review for staff to ensure they are listing the correct information.

To my knowledge, you have not worked on the budget and have not prepared for it. As listed in your job description, you are required to assist in the preparation of budget.

In addition, I informed you in August of our Triannual Court Operational Review coming up. This is another task you will have to prepare for and this is time where you can be spot checking cases, monies, and so forth to help prepare for the auditors. I have yet to be advised of any preparation for this important event.

I advised you in June regarding the purging of old employee records was required by the State. Checking just now, this has yet to be done.

Furthermore, you are given the same safety precautions of as the rest of the staff. Again, the difference lies in what you are capable of handling remotely versus what they are able to work on. You are not being singled out. You are the Court Manager of the office therefore, having full capabilities does not require the use of Administrative leave.

I am giving direction to you once again to:

1. Make a detailed job description for yourself
2. Ensure that the staff complete a detailed job description
3. Prepare for the upcoming audit
4. Purge the old employee records

Judge Staggs

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 9:07 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Time Card
Attachments: 12-1-2020.docx

Exhibit #6H

Judge,
I understand my job duties and do complete my duties from home and have forwarded my phone to my cell to provide assistance to the public. My duties are not being neglected. I am available to the staff while at home and the staff has not had any problem getting ahold of me when needed, nor have they been denied any assistance in their daily duties. I am confident that our new staff is understanding their duties.

I understand the issue prior to the birth of my twins which was nearly 8 months ago now, and the availability to work from home then is not the same as the pandemic now. Being on a teamed schedule is to minimize the risk to myself and the staff. You cannot single me out and show bias towards me and not allow me the same safety opportunities as every other staff member. By not allowing to be on a team so that I am not exposed to all staff and in turn exposing all staff then yes that is singling me out. As of this point I am given the same safety opportunities. If you chose to remove me from the teamed schedule then that would be taken from me. The justification for me being out of the office is to minimize risk of exposure as that is the justification for every single clerk in the county. The hours that I work I will provide the list of what I work on.

I do not have full capability due to not having case files at home I do have more capability yes. I will continue to do the most that I can from home and complete all that is scanned into me from staff to help in their daily duties as I have. As far as the audit I have reached out to N previously and she had informed me that I have done all that I can to prepare for that up to this point. She stated that I am just to stay on top of the finances and balancing which I have. I would like to know what is expected of me to prepare for the budget as to my knowledge I am up to date on my financial obligations and am unaware of what it is that you are speaking of?



Samantha Reno

Court Manager
Benson Justice Court

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 7:37 AM
To: Reno, Samantha <@courts.az.gov>
Cc: Flores, Niltza <@cochise.az.gov>
Subject: RE: Time Card

Samantha,

Exhib. 6. 4#7

FILED

2018 SEP 19 PM 2: 23

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COCHISE**

MARY ELLEN DUNLAP
CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2018-008

**IN RE: INITIAL APPEARANCE TIMES FOR JUSTICE COURTS IN COCHISE
COUNTY**

Pursuant to Rule 4.1, Arizona Rules of Criminal Procedure, the undersigned hereby assures the following fixed times each weekday for conducting initial appearances in each of the County's Justice Courts:

Justice Court, Precinct One	10:00 a.m.
Justice Court, Precinct Two	8:30 a.m.
Justice Court, Precinct Three	8:30 a.m.
Justice Court, Precinct Four	10:30 a.m.
Justice Court, Precinct Five	10:30 a.m. (in person)
	11:30 a.m. (by video)
Justice Court, Precinct Six	11:00 a.m.

The initial appearance calendar on weekends and holidays shall commence at 8:00 a.m.

Each Justice of the Peace retains the authority to schedule initial appearances at times other than those set forth above, depending on the particular circumstances of each case and the availability of necessary parties. Each Justice Court shall provide law enforcement and necessary parties, including any victim, with the best notice possible under the circumstances if any initial appearance is to be conducted at a time other than the times set forth above.

IT IS ORDERED rescinding Administrative Order 2017-002.

DATED at Bisbee, Arizona, this 19th day of September, 2018.

James L. Conlogue, Presiding Judge



CRIMINAL JUDGMENT WORKSHEET

CASE NUMBER: _____ STATES ATTORNEY: _____
 STATE OF ARIZONA VS DEFENSE ATTORNEY: _____
 DEFENDANT: _____ OFFICER: _____
 DATE OF BIRTH: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____
 ADDRESS _____
 VIOLATION DATE: _____ VIOLATION TIME: _____ LOCATION: _____

CHARGES: _____

CASE DISPOSITION

- DEFENDANT DIDN'T APPEAR TRIAL IN ABSENTIA NOT GUILTY GUILTY
- PLEA AGREEMENT CHANGE OF PLEA TO: _____ GUILTY NO CONTEST
- TRIAL HELD NOT GUILTY GUILTY
- SENTENCING AND RESTITUTION HEARING SET FOR _____

SENTENCING

- BASE FINE AMOUNT: \$ _____ COURT FEES \$35.60 \$75.60 SUSPEND FINES
- IF MONTHLY PAYMENT MADE EACH AND EVERY MONTH FINE SUSPENDED TO \$ _____ PLUS FEES
- GAVE PAYMENT ORDER \$ _____ PAYMENT REQUIRED EACH AND EVERY MONTH
- PROBATION NUMBER OF PROBATION MONTHS _____
- SCREENING & COUNSELING ADVISED TO MAKE SCREENING APPOINTMENT IN 5 DAYS
- JAIL AMOUNT OF DAYS _____
- WARNING FOR NON-COMPLIANCE ADVISED OF POST CONVICTION RIGHTS (Rule 32)
- ADVISED OF APPEAL RIGHTS ADVISED OF SETTING ASIDE JUDGMENT RIGHTS

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / COMMENTS: _____

Defendant

Date

Judge Bruce E. Staggs
Benson Justice Court #3

Date



CRIMINAL JUDGMENT WORKSHEET

CASE NUMBER:

STATES ATTORNEY:

STATE OF ARIZONA
VS
DEFENDANT:

DEFENSE ATTORNEY: N/A

DATE OF BIRTH:

TROOPER: 1

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

VIOLATION DATE:

VIOLATION TIME:

LOCATION:

CHARGES:

CASE DISPOSITION

- | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT DIDN'T APPEAR | <input type="checkbox"/> TRIAL IN ABSENTIA | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT GUILTY | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILTY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLEA AGREEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> CHANGE OF PLEA TO: | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILTY | <input type="checkbox"/> NOCONTEST |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TRIAL HELD | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT GUILTY | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILTY | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SENTENCING AND RESTITUTION HEARING SET FOR _____ | | | |

SENTENCING

- | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BASE FINE AMOUNT: \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> COURT FEES | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.60 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75.60 | <input type="checkbox"/> SUSPEND FINES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IF MONTHLY PAYMENT MADE EACH AND EVERY MONTH FINE SUSPENDED TO \$ _____ PLUS FEES | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GAVE PAYMENT ORDER | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ PAYMENT REQUIRED EACH AND EVERY MONTH | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PROBATION | <input type="checkbox"/> NUMBER OF PROBATION MONTHS _____ | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SCREENING & COUNSELING | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED TO MAKE SCREENING APPOINTMENT IN 5 DAYS | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> JAIL | <input type="checkbox"/> AMOUNT OF DAYS _____ | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WARNING FOR NON-COMPLIANCE | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED OF POST CONVICTION RIGHTS (Rule 32) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED OF APPEAL RIGHTS | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED OF SETTING ASIDE JUDGMENT RIGHTS | | | |

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / COMMENTS: _____

Defendant

Date

Judge Bruce E. Staggs
Benson Justice Court #3

Date

CASE NUMBER:

OFFICER:

DEFENDANT:

DEFENSE ATTORNEY:

Exhibit 8C

VIOLATION DATE:

VIOLATION TIME:

LOCATION:

CHARGES:

- Convened Court Advised of the order of the proceedings Called case Change of plea requested to guilty
- Exhibits marked Legal counsel advisement to the Defendant Read the Complaint Maximum penalties

STATE

Witness 1:

Witness 2

Witness 3:

- Swearing in of Officer Officer examination (Date Time Location Identity Jurisdiction)
- Defense cross-examination Officer re-examination Judges questions of Officer
- Swearing in of other State's witness State's Witness testimony Defense cross-examination
- State's witness re-examination Judges questions of State's witness
- Exhibits** Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted State rests

DEFENSE

Witness 1:

Witness 2:

Witness 3

- Swearing in of Defendant Defendant testimony State cross-examination Defendant rebuttal testimony
- Judges questions of Defendant
- Swearing in of other Defendant's witness Defendant's witness testimony State cross-examination
- Defendant's witness re-examination Judges questions of Defendant's witness
- Exhibits** Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted Defense rests

CLOSING ARGUMENTS

- State closing argument Defense closing argument State last say

CONCLUSION

- Read statute/elements Guilty beyond a reasonable doubt Summarize each parties evidence Explain why

JUDGEMENT/VERDICT

- Guilty Not guilty Defendant didn't appear Trial in abstention

SENTENCING

- Base fine amount \$_____ Court fees \$35.60 \$75.60 Payment Order 3 months 6 months
- \$_____ payment required each and every month Base fine reduced to \$_____ **contingent** upon successful completion of monthly payments each and every month Suspend fine Paid fine in full

WARNING FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY

- Order To Show Cause Summons Warrant Collections License suspended MVD notified Tax intercept

ADVISEMENTS

- Appeal (14 calendar days from today) Post Conviction Relief Set Aside Judgment Questions Conclude Hearing

Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace JP-3

Date

CASE NUMBER: (

Deputy:

Exhibit 80

DEFENDANT:

DEFENSE ATTORNEY: N/A

VIOLATION DATE:

VIOLATION TIME:

LOCATION:

CHARGES:

- Convened Court Advised of the order of the proceedings Called case Change of plea requested to guilty
- Exhibits marked Legal counsel advisement to the Defendant Read the Complaint Maximum penalties

STATE

Witness 1: _____ Witness 2: _____ Witness 3: _____

- Swearing in of Officer Officer examination (Date Time Location Identity Jurisdiction)
- Defense cross-examination Officer re-examination Judges questions of Officer
- Swearing in of other State's witness State's Witness testimony Defense cross-examination
- State's witness re-examination Judges questions of State's witness
- Exhibits Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted State rests

DEFENSE

Witness 1: _____ Witness 2: _____ Witness 3: _____

- Swearing in of Defendant Defendant testimony State cross-examination Defendant rebuttal testimony
- Judges questions of Defendant
- Swearing in of other Defendant's witness Defendant's witness testimony State cross-examination
- Defendant's witness re-examination Judges questions of Defendant's witness
- Exhibits Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted Defense rests

CLOSING ARGUMENTS

- State closing argument Defense closing argument State last say

CONCLUSION

- Read statute/elements Guilty beyond a reasonable doubt Summarize each parties evidence Explain why

JUDGEMENT/VERDICT

- Guilty Not guilty Defendant didn't appear Trial in abstention

SENTENCING

- Base fine amount \$ _____ Court fees \$35.60 \$75.60 Payment Order 3 months 6 months
- \$ _____ payment required each and every month Base fine reduced to \$ _____ contingent upon successful completion of monthly payments each and every month Suspend fine Paid fine in full

WARNING FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY

- Order To Show Cause Summons Warrant Collections License suspended MVD notified Tax intercept

ADVISEMENTS

- Appeal (14 calendar days from today) Post Conviction Relief Set Aside Judgment Questions Conclude Hearing

Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace JP-3

Date



CRIMINAL JUDGMENT WORKSHEET

CASE NUMBER: _____ STATES ATTORNEY: I
STATE OF ARIZONA _____ DEFENSE ATTORNEY: .
VS
DEFENDANT _____ OFFICER: .
DATE OF BIRTH: _____ PHONE NUMBER: |
ADDRESS: _____
VIOLATION DATE: _____ VIOLATION TIME: _____ LOCATION: _____

CHARGES: _____

CASE DISPOSITION

- DEFENDANT DIDN'T APPEAR TRIAL IN ABSENTIA NOT GUILTY GUILTY
 PLEA AGREEMENT CHANGE OF PLEA TO: _____ GUILTY NOCONTEST
 TRIAL HELD NOT GUILTY GUILTY
 SENTENCING AND RESTITUTION HEARING SET FOR _____

SENTENCING

- BASE FINE AMOUNT: \$ _____ COURT FEES \$35.60 \$75.60 SUSPEND FINES
 IF MONTHLY PAYMENT MADE EACH AND EVERY MONTH FINE SUSPENDED TO \$ _____ PLUS FEES
 GAVE PAYMENT ORDER \$ _____ PAYMENT REQUIRED EACH AND EVERY MONTH
 PROBATION NUMBER OF PROBATION MONTHS _____
 SCREENING & COUNSELING ADVISED TO MAKE SCREENING APPOINTMENT IN 5 DAYS
 JAIL AMOUNT OF DAYS _____
 WARNING FOR NON-COMPLIANCE ADVISED OF POST CONVICTION RIGHTS (Rule 32)
 ADVISED OF APPEAL RIGHTS ADVISED OF SETTING ASIDE JUDGMENT RIGHTS

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / COMMENTS: _____

Defendant

Date

Judge Bruce E. Staggs
Benson Justice Court #3

Date



CRIMINAL JUDGMENT WORKSHEET

CASE NUMBER: ' _____

STATES ATTORNEY: _____

STATE OF ARIZONA
VS
DEFENDANT: _____

DEFENSE ATTORNEY: N/A

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

TROOPER: _____

ADDRESS: ??, _____

PHONE NUMBER: (_____

VIOLATION DATE: _____

VIOLATION TIME: _____

LOCATION: _____

CHARGES: A _____

CASE DISPOSITION

- | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT DIDN'T APPEAR | <input type="checkbox"/> TRIAL IN ABSENTIA | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT GUILTY | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILTY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLEA AGREEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> CHANGE OF PLEA TO: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILTY | <input type="checkbox"/> NOCONTEST |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TRIAL HELD | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT GUILTY | <input type="checkbox"/> GUILTY | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SENTENCING AND RESTITUTION HEARING SET FOR _____ | | | |

SENTENCING

- | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BASE FINE AMOUNT: \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> COURT FEES | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.60 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75.60 | <input type="checkbox"/> SUSPEND FINES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IF MONTHLY PAYMENT MADE EACH AND EVERY MONTH FINE SUSPENDED TO \$ _____ PLUS FEES | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GAVE PAYMENT ORDER | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ PAYMENT REQUIRED EACH AND EVERY MONTH | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PROBATION | <input type="checkbox"/> NUMBER OF PROBATION MONTHS _____ | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SCREENING & COUNSELING | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED TO MAKE SCREENING APPOINTMENT IN 5 DAYS | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> JAIL | <input type="checkbox"/> AMOUNT OF DAYS _____ | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WARNING FOR NON-COMPLIANCE | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED OF POST CONVICTION RIGHTS (Rule 32) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED OF APPEAL RIGHTS | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVISED OF SETTING ASIDE JUDGMENT RIGHTS | | | |

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / COMMENTS: _____

Defendant

Date

Judge Bruce E. Staggs
Benson Justice Court #3

Date

CASE NUMBER

OFFICER

DEFENDANT

DEFENSE ATTORNEY:

Exhibit 86

VIOLATION DATE

VIOLATION TIME:

LOCATION:

CHARGES:

- Convened Court
- Advised of the order of the proceedings
- Called case
- Change of plea requested to guilty
- Exhibits marked
- Legal counsel advisement to the Defendant
- Read the Complaint
- Maximum penalties

STATE

Witness 1:

Witness 2

Witness 3:

- Swearing in of Officer
- Officer examination (Date Time Location Identity Jurisdiction)
- Defense cross-examination
- Officer re-examination
- Judges questions of Officer
- Swearing in of other State's witness
- State's Witness testimony
- Defense cross-examination
- State's witness re-examination
- Judges questions of State's witness

Exhibits Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted State rests

DEFENSE

Witness 1:

Witness 2:

Witness 3

- Swearing in of Defendant
- Defendant testimony
- State cross-examination
- Defendant rebuttal testimony
- Judges questions of Defendant
- Swearing in of other Defendant's witness
- Defendant's witness testimony
- State cross-examination
- Defendant's witness re-examination
- Judges questions of Defendant's witness

Exhibits Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted Defense rests

CLOSING ARGUMENTS

- State closing argument
- Defense closing argument
- State last say

CONCLUSION

- Read statute/elements
- Guilty beyond a reasonable doubt
- Summarize each parties evidence
- Explain why

JUDGEMENT/VERDICT

- Guilty
- Not guilty
- Defendant didn't appear
- Trial in abstention

SENTENCING

- Base fine amount \$_____
- Court fees \$35.60 \$75.60
- Payment Order 3 months 6 months
- \$_____ payment required each and every month
- Base fine reduced to \$_____ **contingent** upon successful completion of monthly payments each and every month
- Suspend fine
- Paid fine in full

WARNING FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY

- Order To Show Cause Summons
- Warrant
- Collections
- License suspended
- MVD notified
- Tax intercept

ADVISEMENTS

- Appeal (14 calendar days from today)
- Post Conviction Relief
- Set Aside Judgment
- Questions
- Conclude Hearing

Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace JP-3

Date

CASE NUMBER:

TROOPER:]

Exhibit B/H

DEFENDANT:]

DEFENSE ATTORNEY: N/A

VIOLATION DATE: (

VIOLATION TIME:

LOCATION:]

CHARGES: _____

- Convened Court
- Advised of the order of the proceedings
- Called case
- Change of plea requested to guilty
- Exhibits marked
- Legal counsel advisement to the Defendant
- Read the Complaint
- Maximum penalties

STATE

Witness 1:] Witness 2: _____ Witness 3: _____

- Swearing in of Officer
- Officer examination (Date Time Location Identity Jurisdiction)
- Defense cross-examination
- Officer re-examination
- Judges questions of Officer
- Swearing in of other State's witness
- State's Witness testimony
- Defense cross-examination
- State's witness re-examination
- Judges questions of State's witness
- Exhibits** Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted State rests

DEFENSE

Witness 1: _____ Witness 2: _____ Witness 3: _____

- Swearing in of Defendant
- Defendant testimony
- State cross-examination
- Defendant rebuttal testimony
- Judges questions of Defendant
- Swearing in of other Defendant's witness
- Defendant's witness testimony
- State cross-examination
- Defendant's witness re-examination
- Judges questions of Defendant's witness
- Exhibits** Non Offered Offered Objection Admitted Not admitted Defense rests

CLOSING ARGUMENTS

- State closing argument
- Defense closing argument
- State last say

CONCLUSION

- Read statute/elements
- Guilty beyond a reasonable doubt
- Summarize each parties evidence
- Explain why

JUDGEMENT/VERDICT

- Guilty
- Not guilty
- Defendant didn't appear
- Trial in abstention

SENTENCING

- Base fine amount \$ _____
- Court fees \$35.60 \$75.60
- Payment Order 3 months 6 months
- \$ _____ payment required each and every month
- Base fine reduced to \$ _____ contingent upon successful completion of monthly payments each and every month
- Suspend fine
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WARNING FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY

- Order To Show Cause Summons
- Warrant
- Collections
- License suspended
- MVD notified
- Tax intercept

ADVISEMENTS

- Appeal (14 calendar days from today)
- Post Conviction Relief
- Set Aside Judgment
- Questions
- Conclude Hearing

Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace JP-3

Date

Staggs, Bruce

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 12:27 PM
To: Samantha Reno (@courts.az.gov)
Subject: Responsibilities
Attachments: Hand Written Judges Worksheets.pdf

Samantha,

I have informed you previously that your primary duty, as Court Manager, is keeping up with the financial reports and the daily financial responsibilities of the Court. This has **always** been your primary duty. You do your reports exceptionally well and have them caught up

I have previously informed you that until clerks are hired to full fill the criminal responsibilities, your secondary duty is to performing all the duties normally assigned to a criminal clerk. As you know we are very behind in criminal and need to focus the majority of our efforts here.

You were not present in the court this morning . The experience was very stressful and chaotic. As the Court Manager is my belief that you should have assigned your duties to other staff members, i.e. to check on prisoners and who was going to take your place in the court during trials. This wasn't done.

At 8:30 AM, following no information regarding prisoners, I inquired about them. No one had **even** checked the jails to see if we had prisoners. It turned out we had two prisoners. This caused a lot of stress an confusion as our mandated time to see prisoners is at 8:30 AM, and criminal trials were set to begin at 9:00 AM.

I am very concerned, having verbally informed you of your secondary duties of the criminal clerk, that there was no preparation on your part for the criminal trials today. Had I not inquired yesterday about the Criminal Judgment Worksheet's being prepared, I would have had to type them up when I prepared for trial. As it was I **did** have to type them up because you had filled them out long hand, instead of typing them. The Criminal Judgment Worksheet is a charging document and should appear as professional as possible. This is the 1st time I've had a Criminal Judgment Worksheet submitted that was handwritten. Because I had to type them out I was late starting court today.

Due to staff not following policy and having the court calendar on my desk, I have previously given you personal responsibility as the Court Manager, to have the court calendar on my desk by 12:00 noon the day prior. I have instructed all staff that any files, excluding files for Pre-Trial Conferences, are to be on my desk by 12:00 noon the day prior, so I can prepare for hearings. This instruction is not being followed the majority of the time. I **want** it followed in the future.

In the future make sure that everything is prepared to go to trial.

In the future, should you not be in the court, you are required to assign clerks to full fill your duties.

We will discuss this when you return.

Judge



Judge Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace, JP-3
Magistrate, City of Benson
126 W. 5th Street, Suite #1
Benson, Arizona 85602
(520) 586-8100
(520) 586-8117 fax

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Staggs, Bruce

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 2:05 PM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Responsibilities

Judge,

I did inform D that she would be taking care of those responsibilities so the statement that I did not have that taken care of is false. Also I am new to criminal as well as anyone else I am not completely sure of all the paperwork you require so I am doing the best that I can. I can work a case properly in AJACS as far as what you require in court I am still learning as I have only been in court with you a hand full of times, and never been in for trials. I nor any of the other two clerks that were here had the worksheets saved to our computers to fill out the sheets. I went through many files to find those forms so that they can be filled out. I am sorry that it was not to your standards but I did my best with what I had and put in every effort to ensure the cases were ready to go. I am accustomed to trials being prepared and ready when being set after pre-trials so I guess that it was my fault that I assumed the former criminal clerk would have them ready. I hope you know that as a whole all clerks to include myself are working very hard to keep the court up to standards. With the pandemic and the schedule that has brought these are hard times. Now throw in being two clerks down and keeping up seems next to impossible but I know I can speak for our staff and myself when I say we are all doing our best! I will continue to improve and learn all responsibilities of the court. Please bare with us all.

Samantha Reno :)
Court Manager
Benson Justice Court #3

FUTURE GOALS:

Summarize the positive traits and/or strengths this employee contributes to the organization and his/her notable professional accomplishments for the rating period. In addition, note any areas this employee can improve in and/or goals and objectives you would like him/her to pursue (these shall be documented in more specific detail in a goal-setting session at the beginning of the performance period.)

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	HOW THE GOAL WILL BE REACHED
1. Developmental growth	Obtain training or classes that will assist with developmental growth in your role as the court manager. This will allow you to enhance your Supervisory skills and oversight of day to day functions for the court, judge and staff. Enforce court policies and lead by example.	Communicate with Judge on employee and court matters. Communication is key and certain employee matters and/or conversations with Judge should not be shared with staff. Enroll and attend trainings or classes that will help with the supervisory role. Learn and understand court policies and inform staff of the policies. Work with the Judge to update policies as needed.
2. Staff Development	Support staff in day to day operations as needed. Provide staff with goals and expectations and provide cross training. Meet with staff throughout probationary period and provide communication of areas of concern or where they are doing well.	Identify areas of training that will help staff with self-growth. Support staff by assisting when on caseloads when they are behind, attending to customers, answering phones and so forth.
Attendance	Provide leave in advance to obtain the proper approval and staffing coverage. Support staff when closing for the day and complete the end of day duties. Be present in the office and with staff.	Provide advanced leave to the Judge for approval. Have staff coverage ready and notify staff of the absence for coverage purposes. Communicate with staff when you will be in and out of the office as feasible. Assist staff when closing for the day to help them complete their day on time, prior to leaving for the day.

Employee Comments (Optional): Attach additional sheets, if necessary. Information must be submitted within five business days.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COCHISE**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2018-010

**IN RE: ADOPTION OF POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AND
HARASSMENT**

Pursuant to Supreme Court Administrative Order 2018-65, the court has revised its existing
Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

IT IS ORDERED:

The attached Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment is adopted.

Administrative Order 1993-008 is hereby rescinded.

DATED at Bisbee, Arizona, this 18th day of October, 2018.

JAMES L. CONLOGUE
Presiding Judge

Attachment

POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

A. Policy. This policy applies to all judges, elected officials, employees and volunteers of the superior court, justice of the peace courts, probation department, superior court divisions, court administration and clerk of the superior court in Cochise County. This document shall be provided to, or made readily available to, all judges, employees and volunteers covered by this policy to include posting in areas highly visible to employees, publication on the court website and inclusion in employee orientation materials and education materials on this subject.

Discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, in the workplace are prohibited. Employment discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, genetic information or veteran status are forbidden. Such conduct is grounds for discipline of judicial branch employees, up to and including dismissal; grounds for discipline of judges by the Commission on Judicial Conduct; and grounds for termination of vendor contracts when the conduct is by a vendor employee.

Every judge and judicial branch employee must strive to create a work environment free of discrimination and harassment. As required by the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees, all judges and judicial branch employees must avoid bias, prejudice and harassment in the performance of their duties, treat other judicial branch and county employees, court users, and the public with dignity and respect, and comply with this policy.

Sexual harassment is sex discrimination that violates individual rights and state and federal law. Sexual harassment is also a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and of the court itself. All judges and judicial branch employees must be able to work in an environment that is free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures and innuendo. Sexual harassment debilitates morale and interferes with productivity. Therefore, sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct in the workplace.

B. Definitions. In this section, the following definitions apply:

“Discrimination” is differing treatment of an individual, involving any term or condition of employment, based on that individual's race, color, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, genetic information or veteran status. Discrimination based on these protected classes is prohibited by state and federal law. Courts have held discrimination against an individual because of sexual orientation or because of gender identity, including transgender status, is discrimination because of sex in violation of Title VII.

“Harassment” is verbal or physical conduct or any form of communication that is directed at an individual because of his or her race, color, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, genetic information or veteran status and that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent to have the purpose or effect of creating a hostile environment. Courts have held harassment of an individual

because of sexual orientation or because of gender identity, including transgender status, is harassment.

“Sexual harassment” includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact, other verbal or physical conduct or any other form of communication of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to that conduct or communication is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of obtaining or continuing employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in employment decisions affecting the individual.
3. The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may involve relationships of unequal power. Such situations might contain elements of coercion, such as when compliance with requests for sexual favors becomes a criterion for granting or denying privileges or for favorable or unfavorable treatment on the job; however, sexual harassment also might involve relationships among peers, such as when repeated unwelcome advances or unwelcome sexual comments by one co-worker toward another co-worker has a harmful effect on the latter's ability to perform his or her job. Sexual harassment also might involve employee behavior directed at non-employees or non-employee behavior directed at employees. Sexual harassment may occur when it is directed at members of the opposite gender or when it is directed at members of the same gender.

Examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexually suggestive calendars, posters, and cartoons;
- Sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks, threats;
- Requests for any type of sexual favor, including repeated, unwelcome requests for dates;
- Verbal abuse or “kidding” that is oriented toward a prohibited form of harassment, including that which is sexually oriented and considered unwelcome;
- Suggestive or insulting sounds;
- Leering, staring, whistling, or using obscene gestures;
- Content in letters and notes, facsimiles (faxes, e-mails, text messages, social networking, and other content that is sexual in nature; or,
- Unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including but not limited to: touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, forced sexual activity or assault.

“Workplace” is any location where a judge or judicial employee is present due to court employment; including locations outside the courthouse or court office, travel to and from those locations, and court sponsored events.

“Retaliation” is an adverse action (e.g., termination, denial of promotion, refusal to hire, unjustified discipline or evaluation, etc.) taken against an individual to deter protected activity or for engaging in protected activity. Protected activity consists of: (1) opposing conduct reasonably believed to constitute discrimination, including harassment, which violates a nondiscrimination statute, this code section, or court policy; (2) reporting such conduct; or (3) testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in an investigation or other proceeding related to a discrimination complaint.

C. Duty to Report/Retaliation. Employees, applicants, and other persons discriminated against or harassed or who have personal knowledge of discrimination or harassment by judges or judicial branch employees in the course of their duties or by anyone in court facilities are responsible for promptly reporting such conduct in accordance with the procedures set forth herein. Each employee has an affirmative duty to maintain a workplace free of discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. Any form of retaliation against an individual for reporting discrimination or harassment truthfully to the best of that person’s knowledge is prohibited and shall be grounds for disciplinary action, which may include termination. A false and malicious report of harassment, discrimination or retaliation (as opposed to a report that, even if erroneous, is made in good faith) will be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

D. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination or Harassment. Complaints or reports of discrimination or harassment shall be made to: any judicial branch supervisor; the court administrator; or the judicial human resources director. However, a judicial branch supervisor or the court administrator receiving a report must forward the report to the judicial human resources director. If the judicial human resources director is the subject of the complaint or report, that report shall be forwarded to the court administrator.

- a. If an employee is the recipient of any unwelcome gesture or remark, they are asked to speak up. It is traditionally best to resolve issues directly with the harasser by making it clear that such conduct is offensive and unwelcome. The employee should clearly state they want the offensive conduct to cease;
- b. If the employee is unable to confront the harasser or feels unsafe in doing so, they can contact their immediate supervisor or manager; or,
- c. An employee may submit a complaint, either verbally or in writing at any time.

A verbal report of discrimination or harassment must be reduced to writing by either the complainant or the person receiving the report. If the complainant does not write the report, the writer of the report shall verify the accuracy of the report with the complainant.

A complaint against a judge shall be made to the Commission on Judicial Conduct, 1501 W. Washington, Suite 229, Phoenix, AZ 85007. Complaint forms and procedure are available at

www.azcourt.gov/ascjc. The Commission's telephone number is (602) 452-3200 and email address is cjc@courts.az.gov.

E. Investigation. The judicial human resources director shall evaluate any report or complaint of discrimination or harassment. However, any complaint of discrimination or harassment by a judge shall be investigated by the Commission on Judicial Conduct. The judicial human resources director shall conduct, oversee or assist with the investigation of any complaint of discrimination or harassment by any other judicial branch employee. If the judicial human resources director is the subject of the report or complaint, or cannot otherwise act as an impartial investigator, the court administrator shall conduct the investigation. Trained investigators may be employed to assist the court administrator in any such investigation.

All reported complaints that potentially violate this policy shall be investigated. The complainant does not have the option to request no investigation be conducted.

All judges and judicial branch employees are directed to cooperate with any investigation of discrimination or harassment. Any information gathered as part of an investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent possible consistent with thorough and impartial investigative and disciplinary processes.

The judicial human resources director shall submit a written report to the court administrator upon conclusion of the investigation. The report shall contain specific findings regarding the alleged acts of discrimination and/or harassment and may contain recommendations to resolve the complaint. The court administrator shall take any necessary actions to address any substantiated findings of discrimination or harassment. If discipline is imposed, the employee may appeal the action pursuant to the judicial merit rules, if applicable.

The court administrator shall complete a final report of the resolution of the complaint including the actions taken to resolve the complaint. The written report, or a summary thereof if deemed appropriate, shall be communicated to all concerned parties, redacted as necessary to preserve confidentiality consistent with this policy.

F. Other rights and remedies. Employees and other persons have legal rights and remedies available under state and federal law regarding discrimination and harassment. This policy does not affect those rights or remedies. An employee or other person who believes they have been the victim of discrimination and/or harassment is responsible for taking any necessary actions to protect their rights under state and federal law. This policy does not extend any deadlines under state or federal law.

October, 2018

Policy Title: Discrimination & Harassment Reporting

Adopted: October 22, 2018

Superior Court Administrative Order 2018-10, signed by Judge Conlogue states:

D. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination or Harassment. *Complaints or reports of discrimination or harassment shall be made to: any judicial branch supervisor; the court administrator; or judicial human resources director. However, a judicial branch supervisor or court administrator receiving the report must forward the report to the judicial human resources director. If the judicial human resources director is the subject of the complaint report, that report shall be forwarded to the court administrator.*

- a. If an employee is a recipient of any unwelcome gesture or remark, they are all asked to speak up. It is traditionally best to resolve issues directly with the harasser by making it clear that such conduct is offensive and unwelcome. The employee should clearly state they want the offensive conduct to cease;*
- b. If the employee is unable to confront the harasser for feels unsafe in doing so, they can contact their immediate supervisor or manager; or,*
- c. An employee may submit a complaint, either verbally or in writing at any time.*

A verbal report of discrimination and harassment must be reduced to writing by either the complainant or the person receiving the report. If the complainant does not write the report, the writer of the report shall verify the accuracy of the report with the complainant.

A complaint against a judge shall be made to the Commission on Judicial Conduct, 1501 Washington, Suite 229, Phoenix, AZ 85007. Complaint forms and procedure are available at www.azcourts.gov/ascjc/s. The Commission's telephone number is (602) 452-3200 and email address is cjc@once.az.gov.

The policy of Benson Justice Court #3 is the same as the Superior Court Administrative Order 2018-10. However, should any employee have a complaint/challenge with any other employee they are encouraged to go and talk it out first with that staff member to resolve the issue, as this is the professional thing to do.

It is requested that the employees, should they have an issue with another employee, that they follow chain of command to resolve said issue. The chain of command is as follows:

1. Go talk to the person the employee had the issue with.
2. If the issue can't be resolved, go to the Court manager.
3. If the issue can't be resolved, go to Judge Staggs.
4. If the issue can't be resolved, go to Cochise County Human Resources
5. If the issue can't be resolved, go to the Commission on Judicial Conduct

While it is encouraged that issues be resolved through the chain of command, any employee can go to either Cochise County Human Resources or the Commission on Judicial Conduct, **AT ANY TIME**, to make a complaint.

Staff Meeting May 15, 2020

Documents order in a criminal file policy

Judge Staggs went over the policy for the documents order in a criminal file.

Right Side: The order of documents on the left side of the file remains the same except if the Judge has to make a history of the case for a Financial Review hearing this should be placed on the top of the left side.

Left Side: The order remains the same however the new policy specifically details the to the forms of the left side. The policy also added there should be no loose documents in the file. Group discussion was held, and all staff members committed to the policy.

Registration fine reduction policy

Judge Staggs went over the Arizona State Revised Statutes of what charges the clerks in the office could either dismiss the charge or reduce the fine for. Previously, should the Defendant have resolved the reason they got a citation for, clerks were allowed to reduce the fine at the counter. The new policy requires that the Defendant make a motion to the Judge. Group discussion was held, and all staff members committed to the policy.

Emptying work bins policy

Judge Staggs advised the staff of a new policy regarding emptying work bins within a 24-hour period. He stated he has seen files present in the Clerks work bins for as much as 4-5 days after he had signed motions/orders. Staff are now required to remove these files in their work bins each day and do their best to process these documents within 24-hour period. Judge Staggs referenced The Arizona Code of Conduct for Employees, Rule 2.5 that states:

RULE 2.5

Competence, Diligence, and Cooperation

- (A) A judicial employee shall perform court duties competently, diligently, and promptly
- (B) A judicial employee shall reasonably cooperate with other judicial employees, judges and court officials in the conduct of court business.
- (C) A judicial employee shall comply with judicial education requirements and maintain any licensing or certification required for the judicial employee's position.
- (D) A judicial employee, when authorized, shall furnish accurate, timely information and shall provide access to public court proceedings and records according to established procedures.

Comment

1. Competence in the performance of court duties requires the knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation reasonably necessary to perform the duties of the judicial employee's position.
2. Court managers should seek the necessary court staff, expertise, training, and resources to enable court employees to perform their responsibilities.
3. Prompt disposition of the court's business requires judicial employees to be punctual in attending to their duties and cooperative with co-workers, judges, and litigants and their lawyers. Article 2, § 11 of the Arizona Constitution requires that "Justice in all cases shall be administered openly, and without unnecessary delay." Rule 123(f)(2) of the Rules of the Supreme Court require the custodian to "promptly respond orally or in writing concerning the availability of the records, and provide the records in a reasonable time..."

Judge Staggs also referenced the comment in Rule 2.8 that states:

Comment

The duty to interact and behave with patience and courtesy is not inconsistent with the duty imposed in Rule 2.5 to handle matters diligently and promptly

Group discussion was held, and all staff members committed to the policy.

Eating at work stations policy

Judge Staggs advised the staff of a new policy regarding not eating at workstations. He feels that should the public either see a plate of food at a clerk's workstation, or see a clerk eating at their workstation, it's unprofessional. Judge Staggs related that he feels that some staff members have taken advantage of not having a policy when they punch out, go on their lunch hour, and when they return they eat their entire meal at their workstation. Judge Staggs related that he feels that some staff members have taken advantage of not having a policy when a clerk has worked through their lunch hour, and then left the court an hour early, without punching out for the amount of time it took to eat their meal at their desk. Judge Staggs advised the clerks that N F stated that it is Cochise County policy and State law that a staff have to take some time each day for a lunch hour. Group discussion was held, and all staff members committed to the policy.

Duties as assigned policy

Judge Staggs advised the staff of the previous oral policy regarding duties as assigned which has now been reduced to writing. Judge Staggs advised the staff that any duty that was assigned by a manager, needed to be to be complied with by staff. He made clear that even though each staff has regularly assigned duties, if a manager asked a staff member to do a duty in another area of the court, they needed to accept that duty willingly. A long group discussion was held regarding this policy. Staff questioned what should happen should they feel they were not properly trained for a newly assigned duty or if they might have some type of physical limitation in performing a duty. Discussion was held regarding if any staff member felt that they, or any other staff member, was assigned more duties or work assignments, than any other staff member. All staff members committed to the policy.

Use foul language in the court

Judge Staggs asked every staff member present if they had ever heard him swear or use foul language in the court. All staff members answered no. Judge Staggs stated that he had recently been made aware that foul language was being used in the court when he was gone, which even included using the "F-bomb". Two staff members mentioned that they had previously heard, on multiple occasions, the Criminal Clerk was using foul language when the Judge was not present. Judge Staggs stated that at no time would foul language be tolerated at the court, that was totally unprofessional. Judge Staggs referenced The Arizona Code of Conduct for Employees, Rule 2.8 that states:

RULE 2.8

Professionalism

Judicial employees shall be patient, respectful, and courteous with litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, co-workers, and others who work in the court or contact the court.

Comment

The duty to interact and behave with patience and courtesy is not inconsistent with the duty imposed in Rule 2.5 to handle matters diligently and promptly

Group discussion was held, and all staff members committed to the policy.

Staff Duties Assignments

Judge Staggs stated that Nancy F and Courtney N had recently reorganized the entire staff at JP-6 and wanted to redistribute duties here at JP-3. These duties entailed rotation of staff duties so not only would all clerks be cross-trained but by switching duties, on a regular basis, will allow all staff to be competent in all areas of the court, at all times. Lengthy group discussion was held regarding these duty assignments. It was determined that, due to multiple staff being on FMLA and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that duties would not be reassigned at this time.

Upcoming cell phone policy

Judge Staggs discussed that he would be putting out a cell phone policy that would require that staff not be allowed to be on their cell phones, at any time while they are at their workstations. He feels that should the public see a clerk on their cell phone at their workstation, it is unprofessional. Judge Staggs related that he feels that some staff members have taken total advantage of not having a policy by being on cell phones when they should be working. When the policy comes out staff members will only be allowed to use their cell phones when they are in the court, during their lunch hour and during their morning or afternoon break.

A long group discussion was held, and all staff members saw the value and necessity of the policy.

Following up on hostile work environment discussion from last staff meeting

Judge Staggs wanted a follow-up on the previous discussion held at the last staff meeting regarding a hostile work environment that had been present in the office. All staff members present felt that the previous hostile work environment, that was precipitated by the perceived belief that the Criminal Clerk was being given preferential treatment by the Court Manager and by the perceived belief of the Court Manager that the rest of the staff disliked her and resented her authority. All staff present felt that this was a very productive meeting. All staff present felt that the previous discussion held was very productive and the consensus was that there was no longer a hostile work environment between the Court Manager and staff.

Judge Staggs went over, once again, the Administrative Order 2018-10 from Judge Conlogue. Judge Staggs read section D. of Judge Conlogue's Administrative Order which states:

D. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination or Harassment. Complaints or reports of discrimination or harassment shall be made to: any judicial branch supervisor; the court administrator; or the judicial human resources director. However, a judicial branch supervisor or the court administrator receiving the report must forward the report to the judicial human resources director. If the judicial human resources director is the subject of the complaint or report, that report shall be forwarded to the court administrator.

- a. If an employee is a recipient of any unwelcome gesture or remark, they are all asked to speak up. It is traditionally best to resolve issues directly with the harasser by making it clear that such conduct is offensive and unwelcome. The employee should clearly state they want the offensive conduct to cease;
- b. If the employee is unable to confront the harasser or feels unsafe in doing so, they can contact their immediate supervisor or manager; or,
- c. An employee may submit a complaint, either verbally or in writing at any time.

A verbal report of discrimination and harassment must be reduced to writing by either the complainant or the person receiving the report. If the complainant does not write the report, the writer of the report shall verify the accuracy of the report with the complainant.

A complaint against a judge shall be made to the Commission on Judicial Conduct, 1501 Washington, Suite 229, Phoenix, AZ 85007. Complaint forms and procedure are available at www.azcourts.gov/ascjc's. The Commission's telephone number is (602) 452-3200 and email address is cjc@once.az.gov.

Judge Staggs stated that he wanted to make it very clear that the office policy of JP-3, is the same as the Administrative Order 2018-10. Should any staff member have a complaint/challenge with any other staff member, they are encouraged to go and talk it out first with that staff member.

Discussion was held on this and the entire staff present felt that this was the professional thing to do. They all agreed that should any staff member have a problem with any other staff member they should make an attempt to resolve the issue with that staff member first.

The chain of command was discussed, and it was encouraged that if any staff member had a complaint/challenge against another staff member, to proceed through the chain of command as follows:

1. Go talk to the person the staff member had the problem with
2. Go go to the Court manager
3. Go to Judge Staggs
4. Go to Cochise County Human Resources

Judge Staggs made it very clear that, while it was encouraged that staff members proceed through the chain of command, any staff person could go to Cochise County Human Resources, at any time, to make a complaint.

A staff member stated that she was informed that another staff member had recently made a hostile work complaint and was surprised about it, as she felt that everything had been resolved at the last staff meeting.

Another staff member surmised it was probably against her and she had previously had multiple confrontations with that staff member.

Judge Staggs asked the entire staff present the following questions:

1. If any staff member felt that the previous hostile work environment was in anyway precipitated or caused by him.
2. If any staff member felt that he had belittled them or talked down to them.
3. If he had ever raised his voice or shouted at them.
4. If he had ever acted in an unprofessional manner towards them.

All staff members present stated no to the above questions.

Judge Staggs once again made it very clear that should any staff member have a complaint against another staff member they were encouraged to follow the chain of command however had every right to immediately go to Cochise County Human Resources.

Judge Staggs also made it very clear that should the staff member have a complaint against him he would hope that they would come and talk to him however they had every right to be in the go to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.



COCHISE COUNTY JUDICIAL EMPLOYEE SELF-ASSESSMENT (TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO SUPERVISOR'S ASSESSMENT)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Employee Name:	Position:	Department:
<u>SAMANTHA RENO</u>	<u>COURT MANAGER</u>	<u>BENSON JUSTICE COURT</u>
Date of Review:	Review Period Start Date:	Review Period End Date:
<u>08/24/2020</u>	<u>September 1, 2019</u>	<u>June 30, 2020</u>

SIGNATURE

Employee Signature _____ Date: _____

This employee assessment has been created as an extension of our mission and vision.

MISSION OF THE COCHISE COUNTY COURTS

We provide fair, impartial, and timely justice in all matters brought before the Courts.

VISION OF THE COCHISE COUNTY COURTS

Our vision is to enhance the public's trust and confidence in the court by providing the highest quality of service

CORE VALUES - WE ARE:

*Honest – Innovative – Collaborative
Efficient and Effective
Courteous and Service Oriented*

SECTION ONE:

Please rate how often I display behaviors consistent with the following descriptions of the Cochise County Courts Core Values	Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Points)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
<p>HONEST: Holds self and others accountable for integrity and trustworthiness in all activities; adheres to the Judicial Code of Conduct; admits mistakes and expresses true feelings and opinions.</p>		5		
<p>INNOVATIVE: Explores and implements new skills, technologies and/or advances in their field to improve quality and efficiency; proactively initiates resource savings and expense reductions; demonstrates responsible fiscal management and creates a service-minded culture through innovative solutions.</p>		5		
<p>COLLABORATIVE: Works with others to achieve optimum results; shows initiative by routinely seeking to improve relationships with constituents and colleagues; consistently solicits feedback from supervisor, colleagues and/or supervisees to improve individual performance.</p>			2	
<p>EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE: Is extremely efficient, work productivity rate is at the highest level; produces high quality work that is recognized beyond the department and/or the institution; shows mastery of skills and expertise and has ability to instruct others; demonstrates continuous improvement in self and inspires others toward it.</p>		5		
<p>COURTEOUS AND SERVICE ORIENTED: Identifies those requiring assistance and initiates needed assistance in a prompt, positive and helpful manner; pursues resolution of the issue presented; identifies the issue as either specific or systemic and initiates a resolution; understands the culture and history of constituents and anticipates future needs.</p>			2	
SUB TOTAL:		15	4	
<p>COMMENTS:</p>				

SECTION TWO:

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
CANON 1 A judicial employee shall uphold and promote the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.	5	
CANON 2 A judicial employee shall perform the duties of judicial employment impartially, competently and diligently.	5	
CANON 3 A judicial employee shall conduct activities outside of judicial employment to minimize the risk of conflict with the obligations of judicial employment.	5	
CANON 4 A judicial employee or candidate for judicial department office shall not engage in political or campaign activity that is inconsistent with the independence, integrity, or impartiality of the judiciary.	5	
SUB TOTAL:	20	

LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

The employee's performance shall be rated in one of the following categories:

EXCEEDS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: An evaluation resulting from overall performance which is **significantly above** the performance standards of the position.

ACHIEVES PERFORMANCE STANDARDS – PROFICIENT: an evaluation resulting from overall performance which **fully meets** the performance standards of the position.

ACHIEVES PERFORMANCE STANDARDS – DEVELOPMENTAL: An evaluation resulting from overall performance which **barely meets** the performance standards of the position.

BELOW PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: An evaluation resulting from performance which **fails to meet** the minimum performance standards of the position. The supervisor must contact the Judicial Human Resources Director to initiate a Performance Improvement Plan, which must be completed jointly by the employee and the supervisor.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS

Please rate how often the employee displays behaviors consistent with the following:	Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Points)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
JOB KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES: Consider comprehension of duties, responsibilities, methods, technical skills and procedures inherent in the job and employee's skills and abilities.		5		
QUALITY OF WORK: Consider workmanship, accuracy, thoroughness, consistency and how job knowledge is applied in the work environment.		5		
QUANTITY OF WORK: Consider courthouse productivity by willingness to be involved in daily tasks.		5		
INITIATIVE: Consider degree to which I am a self-starter, exhibits creativity, resourcefulness in performing job duties, and takes advantage of training opportunities.		5		
TIMELINESS: Consider my dependability to accomplish work on schedule.		5		
CONDUCT AND ATTITUDE: Consider my adaptability to change, willingness to learn, and to accept supervision and responsibility.			2	
PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION: Consider my ability to organize work, set goals, establish priorities, and effectiveness in achieving them.		5		
COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Consider my oral and written skills and employee's ability in dealing with others, report writing, how i interact with the public, co-workers, etc.			2	
JUDGMENT: Consider my ability to make logical, informed decisions.		5		
ADHERENCE TO PROCEDURES: Consider whether I comply with applicable Judicial, County, and Departmental policies and procedures.			2	
ATTENDANCE: consider my ability to be at work and punctual on a regular basis.			2	
APPEARANCE: Exhibits good hygiene and professional attire to promote professionalism and public confidence.		5		
OTHER DUTIES: I seek and accept new and additional duties.		5		
SUB TOTAL:		45	8	

SUPERVISOR ABILITY (IF APPLICABLE): Consider my ability to effectively organize, plan, train, delegate and control the work of subordinates.

2

SUB TOTAL:

2

COMMENTS:

Over the last year I have learned a lot in my newer role of court manager. I believe that I have strong work performance, I am self-starter, and I am outstanding in meeting my deadlines and completing my work. I have had some learning curves with becoming supervisor and learning the best way of handling situations with other employees. I have learned a lot in that area and know that my next year will improve tremendously. This year's attendance has been far from what I would have hoped due to medical and Covid-19 related issues but I again know this next year will be much improved.

SECTION THREE:

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES, PRIMARY DUTIES

In this section, rate your overall performance of the following position specific job duties.	Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Point)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
1. (Insert primary duties from job description): Manage employees			2	

COMMENTS:

I have learned a lot and have come far in this field I strongly believe this next year will be much better

2. (Insert primary duties from job description): Monthly statistics		5		
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COMMENTS:

I HAVE KEPT UP ON ALL STATISTICAL REPORTS AND MEET MY DEADLINE

3. (Insert primary duties from job description): Monthly Revenue and Reporting		5		
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COMMENTS:

I have been faced with many difficulties with the jp3 revenue and reports but have excelled in overcoming those issues and meeting my deadlines

SUB TOTAL:

10

2

TOTAL SECTIONS ONE, TWO AND THREE:

106

FUTURE GOALS:

Summarize the positive traits and/or strengths you contribute to the organization and your notable professional accomplishments for the rating period. In addition, note any areas you can improve in and/or goals and objectives you would like to pursue (these shall be documented in more specific detail in a goal-setting session at the beginning of the performance period.)

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	HOW THE GOAL WILL BE REACHED
1. To become a better supervisor	To learn how to mold to all personalities to best supervise each employee	Hopeful for some training. Getting to know each employee and understanding them as a person to better supervise them in the future
2. To learn the procedures of the court based on specific location	To review all policies in place by the judge	Take my knowledge of case processing and the requests of the judge to combine and perfect my ability to navigate cases to best fit jp3
3. Become more familiar with budget and finances	To learn to navigate new world better and learn the budget GL's better	To spend more time on new world to learn the extent of the what it has to offer. To work with county such as Niltza to better know the budget and line items to better complete my yearly and monthly duties with less assistance than in the prior years

Employee Comments (Optional):

I have spent much of this past year learning and adapting. I would like to continue fine tuning my ability to manage each employee. I am new to a supervisor role and have had to learn what comes with the role as any new supervisor would. I have high hopes and goals for this upcoming year and the improvement of my abilities. I want to continue learning my financial and report resources to better assist me in my financial obligations.



COCHISE COUNTY JUDICIAL EMPLOYEE ASSESSMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Employee Name:	Position:	Department:
SAMANTHA RENO	COURT MANAGER	BENSON JUSTICE COURT 3
Date of Review:	Review Period Start Date:	Review Period End Date:
09/30/2020	September 1, 2019	June 30, 2020

SIGNATURES AND APPROVAL

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director Signature: _____ Date: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

By signing here, the employee acknowledges that he/she participated in the completion of this assessment, reviewed the Code of Conduct with his/her supervisor and participated in an assessment discussion with the supervisor named above. The employee further acknowledges they have received a copy of the completed assessment. Signing does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the supervisor's final assessment

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Efficient and Effective
Courteous and Service Oriented*



COCHISE COUNTY JUDICIAL EMPLOYEE ASSESSMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Employee Name: SAMANTHA RENO	Position: COURT MANAGER	Department: BENSON JUSTICE COURT 3
Date of Review: October 1, 2020	Review Period Start Date: September 1, 2019	Review Period End Date: June 30, 2020

SIGNATURES AND APPROVAL

Supervisor Signature: _____	Date: _____
Director Signature: _____	Date: _____
Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____

By signing here, the employee acknowledges that he/she participated in the completion of this assessment, reviewed the Code of Conduct with his/her supervisor and participated in an assessment discussion with the supervisor named above. The employee further acknowledges they have received a copy of the completed assessment. Signing does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the supervisor's final assessment

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SECTION ONE:

Please rate how often the employee displays behaviors consistent with the following descriptions of the Cochise County Courts Core Values	Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Points)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
<p>HONEST: Holds self and others accountable for integrity and trustworthiness in all activities; adheres to the Judicial Code of Conduct; admits mistakes and expresses true feelings and opinions.</p>			2	
<p>INNOVATIVE: Explores and implements new skills, technologies and/or advances in their field to improve quality and efficiency; proactively initiates resource savings and expense reductions; demonstrates responsible fiscal management and creates a service-minded culture through innovative solutions.</p>		5		
<p>COLLABORATIVE: Works with others to achieve optimum results; shows initiative by routinely seeking to improve relationships with constituents and colleagues; consistently solicits feedback from supervisor, colleagues and/or supervisees to improve individual performance.</p>			2	
<p>EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE: Is extremely efficient, work productivity rate is at the highest level; produces high quality work that is recognized beyond the department and/or the institution; shows mastery of skills and expertise and has ability to instruct others; demonstrates continuous improvement in self and inspires others toward it.</p>			2	
<p>COURTEOUS AND SERVICE ORIENTED: Identifies those requiring assistance and initiates needed assistance in a prompt, positive and helpful manner; pursues resolution of the issue presented; identifies the issue as either specific or systemic and initiates a resolution; understands the culture and history of constituents and anticipates future needs.</p>	7			
SUB TOTAL:	7	5	6	

COMMENTS:
Ms. Reno is a young Court Manager who has a lot of potential to develop in the future. Judge Staggs has seen greatly increased leadership in Ms. Reno in the last 3 months and looks forward to even greater leadership the future.

SECTION TWO:

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
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CANON 1 A judicial employee shall uphold and promote the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.	5	
CANON 2 A judicial employee shall perform the duties of judicial employment impartially, competently and diligently.	5	
CANON 3 A judicial employee shall conduct activities outside of judicial employment to minimize the risk of conflict with the obligations of judicial employment.	5	
CANON 4 A judicial employee or candidate for judicial department office shall not engage in political or campaign activity that is inconsistent with the independence, integrity, or impartiality of the judiciary.	5	
SUB TOTAL:	20	

LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

The employee's performance shall be rated in one of the following categories:

EXCEEDS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: An evaluation resulting from overall performance which is **significantly above** the performance standards of the position.

ACHIEVES PERFORMANCE STANDARDS – PROFICIENT: an evaluation resulting from overall performance which **fully meets** the performance standards of the position.

ACHIEVES PERFORMANCE STANDARDS – DEVELOPMENTAL: An evaluation resulting from overall performance which **barely meets** the performance standards of the position.

BELOW PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: An evaluation resulting from performance which **fails to meet** the minimum performance standards of the position. The supervisor must contact the Judicial Human Resources Director to initiate a Performance Improvement Plan, which must be completed jointly by the employee and the supervisor.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS

Please rate how often the employee displays behaviors consistent with the following:	Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Points)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)

JOB KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES: Consider comprehension of duties, responsibilities, methods, technical skills and procedures inherent in the job and employee's skills and abilities.		5		
QUALITY OF WORK: Consider workmanship, accuracy, thoroughness, consistency and how job knowledge is applied in the work environment.		5		
QUANTITY OF WORK: Consider courthouse productivity by willingness to be involved in daily tasks.		5		
INITIATIVE: Consider degree to which employee is a self-starter, exhibits creativity, resourcefulness in performing job duties, and takes advantage of training opportunities.		5		
TIMELINESS: Consider the dependability of employee to accomplish work on schedule.		5		
CONDUCT AND ATTITUDE: Consider employee's adaptability to change, willingness to learn, and to accept supervision and responsibility.			2	
PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION: Consider employee's ability to organize work, set goals, establish priorities, and effectiveness in achieving them.		5		
COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Consider employee's oral and written skills and employee's ability in dealing with others, report writing, how employee interacts with the public, co-workers, etc.			2	
JUDGMENT: Consider employee's ability to make logical, informed decisions.	7			
ADHERENCE TO PROCEDURES: Consider whether employee complies with applicable Judicial, County, and Departmental policies and procedures.			2	
ATTENDANCE: consider employee's ability to be at work and punctual on a regular basis.			2	
APPEARANCE: Exhibits good hygiene and professional attire to promote professionalism and public confidence.			2	
OTHER DUTIES: Employee seeks and accepts new and additional duties.		5		
SUB TOTAL:	7	35	10	
SUPERVISOR ABILITY (IF APPLICABLE): Consider the employee's ability to effectively organize, plan, train, delegate and control the work of subordinates.			2	
SUB TOTAL:			2	

COMMENTS:

A Court Manager needs to lead by example to be effective. It's essential that all court policies are followed explicitly. If Leadership does not follow policy, they cannot expect employees to follow policy. This means that the Court Manager should have the greatest attendance percentage, be the first to arrive each day and the last to leave each day, dressed the most professional, have the best attitude and have the most willingness to follow policy.

SECTION THREE:

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES, PRIMARY DUTIES

In this section, rate the employee's overall performance of the following position specific job duties.	Exceeds Standards (Seven Points)	Achieves Standards - Proficient (Five Points)	Achieves Standards - Developmental (Two Point)	Unacceptable (Zero Points)
1. Manage Employees			2	

COMMENTS:

Ms. Reno has had no previous Court Manager experience and has had no formal leadership training. What Ms. Reno has learned and has come from the experience of on the job training. The growth I have seen in Ms. Reno, in the last 3 months, is more than the previous year of experience at JP-3.

2. Prepare and submit periodic and special reports; maintain financial records to include reconciliation of bank accounts, including credit cards, online payment accounts and collections accounts in accordance with the Minimum Accounting Standards (MAS) ordered by the Supreme Court Administrative Office of the Courts; maintains employee records.	7			
---	---	--	--	--

COMMENTS:

Ms. Reno has excelled in getting the reports and financial records into compliance at JP-3. The previous interim Court Manager left the reports and financial records in great disarray. Ms. Reno excels in this most important area of management.

3. Act as liaison between court and other agencies.		5		
---	--	---	--	--

COMMENTS:

SUB TOTAL:	7	5	2	
TOTAL SECTIONS ONE, TWO AND THREE:	108			

FUTURE GOALS:

Summarize the positive traits and/or strengths this employee contributes to the organization and his/her notable professional accomplishments for the rating period. In addition, note any areas this employee can improve in and/or goals and objectives you would like him/her to pursue (these shall be documented in more specific detail in a goal-setting session at the beginning of the performance period.)

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	HOW THE GOAL WILL BE REACHED
1. Developmental growth	Obtain training or classes that will assist with developmental growth in your role as the court manager. This will allow you to enhance your Supervisory skills and oversight of day to day functions for the court, judge and staff. Enforce court policies and lead by example.	Communicate with Judge on employee and court matters. Communication is key and certain employee matters and/or conversations with Judge should not be shared with staff. Enroll and attend trainings or classes that will help with the supervisory role. Learn and understand court policies and inform staff of the policies. Work with the Judge to update policies as needed.
2. Staff Development	Support staff in day to day operations as needed. Provide staff with goals and expectations and provide cross training. Meet with staff throughout probationary period and provide communication of areas of concern or where they are doing well.	Identify areas of training that will help staff with self-growth. Support staff by assisting when on caseloads when they are behind, attending to customers, answering phones and so forth.
Attendance	Provide leave in advance to obtain the proper approval and staffing coverage. Support staff when closing for the day and complete the end of day duties. Be present in the office and with staff.	Provide advanced leave to the Judge for approval. Have staff coverage ready and notify staff of the absence for coverage purposes. Communicate with staff when you will be in and out of the office as feasible. Assist staff when closing for the day to help them complete their day on time, prior to leaving for the day.

Employee Comments (Optional): Attach additional sheets, if necessary. Information must be submitted within five business days.

Exhibit #17

GONE
FOR THE
DAY BE BACK
2 4 2020



My Civil Clerk Job Duties ^{Exhibit A18} At JPY... And I had no problems _S _{Gr} ^{Job Duties} with my work

Civil and Small Claims filings and all of the case work from beginning to end including in court hearings, minute entries, and sending to arbitration

Writ of garnishment filings

Forcible Detainer filings, and all of the case work beginning to end including in court hearings
Filings for Order of Protection and Injunction Against Harassment, and all case work beginning to end including in court hearings.

Civil Traffic Trials including in court hearings, case docketing, dispositioning, closing cases, scheduling, sending notices, and subpoenas. Certified civil traffic hearing officer

Pretrial dismissals (court docket and closing)

ACCI diversion program case work (downloading to ACCI, docketing, review hearings, and closing)

Traffic School (running reports, taking t/s checks, docketing, closing out files)

FARE (running reports, taking payments, docketing, closing out case)

MVD reports (send electronic records daily to MVD and fixing any errors that come through the next morning in Batchcon)

Other court warrants (give case numbers, docketing, closing out cases)

Felony cases (closing out felonies when no complaint is filed)

Paperwork runner for arraignments as well as PTC (making copies and giving them to the defendant, and paperwork for PTC cases)

Answer phones (payments and questions)

Take over the counter payments, having a money box, credit card payments

Forfeiture of property filings, paperwork, and closeouts

Ordering all supplies and stamps for the court.

Closing out the monies for the day

Counting money and making out the deposit slip for the prior work day

Courtroom clerk for PTC

Scanning closed files into Aztec on the onbase scanner ^{Every Single Closed File!}

This was in Aztec before the ease of AJACS!

Judge Bruce E. Staggs
Justice of the Peace
Benson Justice Court #3
(520) 586-8100
Fax: (520) 586-8117



126 W. 5th Street
Suite #1
Benson, AZ 85602
BensonJusticeCourt@courts.az.gov

September 19, 2019

Re: Letter of Counsel

Judge Staggs,

After much consideration and thought into the current situation within JP3 I have decided that I will not be removing the letter of counsel from Rl file. This was not an action that was presented to HR. I do strongly believe in the role in which a supervisor is meant to hold, and I feel regardless of what the situation was I cannot accept that sort of behavior within the office. I chose to overlook the way Rl had treated S for the remainder of the day and the fact that there was so much tension because of her behavior that S had to ask C what had happened. This was not an action taken of any fault of S this was in result of R behavior. I feel that if I decide to remove the letter of counsel from the file it would be setting precedence saying that behavior is acceptable. If D were to have done that on Special Observation that would be grounds for termination. I also feel as though I cannot let your personal relationship with R excuse this behavior and remove the letter. I feel as though that would make me partial. Rl being a good person or having a good heart has never been in question. The fact remains that she violated our policies and merit rules. I also feel that though your concerns were from your heart that this has made the appearance that you do not support what I have enforced even though we had discussed the actions taken before they were taken. I fear this will cause loss of respect for the decisions I make as court manager. I intend to speak with R after a few days have passed, as well as the rest of the staff in regard to how they are feeling and try to ease their concerns. I do believe that each member of our staff should feel as they are being treated fairly. I have always treated them fairly and have never given duties to or taken them out of favoritism though the perception may be as such. I still believe there has yet to be any valid example in saying that I do. I will keep all personal interactions with all employees to a minimum due to that seeming to be the problem at hand. I know that you had stated that this is a test of my management abilities and I am sorry if my decisions fail said test. I do feel that being a good supervisor means being fair to all, and that does not exclude poor behavior. I will continue to show the clerks respect and expect the same in return as policies call for. I do appreciate you taking the time to hear this and hope to always feel comfortable with approaching you with any situation or feelings in the future.

Sincerely,

Samantha Reno

Samantha Reno
Court Manager JP 0203

Exhibit #200A

Staggs, Bruce

From: Na, D
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 5:11 PM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Hello Judge,

Yes, I reviewed the Minutes and approved.

Di N
From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:33 PM
To: Na, D <| @courts.az.gov>; f, D <| @courts.az.gov>; D, D <| @courts.az.gov>; B, R
< @courts.az.gov>
Subject: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Dear Staff,

Attached are the May 15, 2020 staff meeting minutes & office policies

Please respond if you have any corrections or additions to the minutes.

Please respond if you approve the minutes as written.

Judge



Judge Bruce Staggs

Exhibit # 20B

Staggs, Bruce

From: F , D
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:35 PM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Judge,

I approve of the minutes as written.

D:

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:33 PM
To: ; D ; < @courts.az.gov>; F , D < @courts.az.gov>; D ; < @courts.az.gov>; B ; , R
Subject: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Dear Staff,

Attached are the May 15, 2020 staff meeting minutes & office policies

Please respond if you have any corrections or additions to the minutes.

Please respond if you approve the minutes as written.

Judge



Judge Bruce Staggs

Exhibit #20C

Staggs, Bruce

From: D
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:36 PM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Dear Judge,

I have read these documents of our meeting and I approve them as I was in attendance at the meeting on 5/15/2020.

Thank you,

D 

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:33 PM
To: N, D, <@courts.az.gov>; F, D, <@courts.az.gov>; D, <@courts.az.gov>; B, R
Subject: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Dear Staff,

Attached are the May 15, 2020 staff meeting minutes & office policies

Please respond if you have any corrections or additions to the minutes.

Please respond if you approve the minutes as written.

Judge



Exhibit #200

Staggs, Bruce

From: Bruce Staggs, RI
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:58 PM
To: Bruce Staggs, Bruce
Subject: RE: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

I was in attendance of this meeting. I approve the minutes.

RI

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 3:33 PM
To: 'Nancy D. Staggs' <ndstagg@courts.az.gov>; 'Freddy D. Staggs' <fddstagg@courts.az.gov>; 'D. Staggs' <dstaggs@courts.az.gov>; 'D. Staggs' <dstaggs@courts.az.gov>; 'B. Staggs' <bstaggs@courts.az.gov>; 'R. Staggs' <rstaggs@courts.az.gov>
Subject: Staff Meeting of 05-15-2020

Dear Staff,

Attached are the May 15, 2020 staff meeting minutes & office policies

Please respond if you have any corrections or additions to the minutes.

Please respond if you approve the minutes as written.

Judge



**Judge Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace, JP-3
Magistrate, City of Benson**

March 2, 2021

Commission On Judicial Conduct

To whom it may concern,

I, R B have read the notes of the meeting between Judge Staggs, Ms. Samantha Reno and myself. I am stating that it is true and correct to my recollection.

I would like to reiterate that I believe Ms. Reno to be the cause of a hostile work environment while S W was employed with the Benson Justice Court. Ms. Reno refused to listen to concerns brought to her attention concerning Ms. W. Ms. Reno expected strict time management from the older staff members, while she allowed Ms. to be in her office every morning for discussion of personal business. Ms. Reno spent a lot of time on the phone, discussing personal matters with her husband and family. Sometimes this was hours a day. She actually spent an entire day on company time on the phone purchasing a different vehicle when her original purchase fell through. This constant phone use became such an issue that Judge Staggs had to create a phone policy that we could only use our personal phones in the break room, while we were on break. Her behavior was less than professional most of the time. I put my resignation in to be able to have my last day of work end before Ms. Reno returned from her leave. I did not want to have to deal with any repercussions from Ms. Reno due to her obvious dislike of me.

R E

March 9, 2021

RE: Request of Services by Judge Staggs

To whom it may concern,

I work in Facility Maintenance for Cochise County and am at the Benson Center Cochise County Complex in Benson, AZ frequently to do maintenance.

I met Judge Bruce Staggs before he became a judge. Judge Staggs requested for me to do some work at his home after hours for electrical problems with a photocell. I agreed to come out to his home and give him an estimate however since this was a non emergency repair I told him due to my very busy schedule and moving to a new home it would be awhile before I could come out.

Judge Staggs has informed me that a complaint has been made against him for abusing his power as a judge to force me to do work for him by raising his voice to me while a meeting was taking place. While Judge Staggs has asked me on occasion at the court what my schedule is he has never threaten me, raised his voice to me nor has abused his power as a judge. I don't recall him ever interrupting an open meeting to address me.

I still plan on doing an estimate for Judge Staggs in the future when my schedule allows me to get make an appointment with him.

Respectfully,

J. W.

R. d C1

10/3/20

- F requested mtg w/ Med C...
wants to resign & put date as of July 2nd.
* Medical reason due to stress.

S disrespectful to the office, judge, &
attitude & snaps at ppl.
* Rude / Roll eyes / bad language / Moody etc.

This behavior has created tension & things
are not okay & things have not been
worked on.

- Doesn't like to go to work any more.

- Several mtgs w/ Sam & Judge. Doesn't
feel like her voice was heard when that
mtg occurred. Sam & S. would always
be together & would disregard R.
Sam wouldn't listen or act on the actions
that R would report.

- R mentioned she has never gone to
Judge to avoid assignments & Sam says
R undermines her.

- Financials doesn't like which I'm ()
aware plc of previous transition & assistance
omitted

6/3/20

Cont'd

The issues w/ Sam were discussed but no validation about the issues.

- R feels that many things are put on her & that she gets the blame.
 - The environment is hostile & it's not b/c of the Judge. It's b/c of Sam & E.
- R didn't want to go to T. She didn't want them to go to E.
 - T & E are friends outside of work.
 - R was the support person for D & T. T was more for management. & that's another reason & wasn't comfortable.
- E is just disrespectful where everyone to include Judge & that is wrong b/c you should respect the position.
- R was told she didn't need to be in there during prisoners. [CT. Room]
- Will do her best to do all her work prior to leaving.
- Sam mentioned to R that she spoke to E multiple times about her attitude.

06/03/2020 F (JP3) requested meeting with N. and Myself C. :

- Two week's notice effective 07/02/2020.
- Leaving for Health Reasons
- Wanted to let us know how things are in the office before leaving.

Complaints:

- Hostile work environment no longer wants to go to work and is causing her to stress out.
- S very disrespectful. Snaps at Judge, rude, rolling eyes, bad language, bad attitude. Has not been coming to work and when she does come doesn't want to do anything.
- Sl has created a lot of tension with the other ladies as well.
- Rl had several meetings with Samantha and she has done nothing to remedy the situation.
- Feels that Samantha undermines her and does nothing to S.
- Stopped going to Samantha because nothing was ever done.
- Don't know if Samantha ever spoke about the issues going on to Shannon.
- Wants to leave before Samantha comes back from leave.
- There is segregation of the office which makes it a very stressful environment.
- T and Shannon talk outside of work so R did not feel comfortable going to her to complain.
- With D's issues T was more on the management side and R was D's support but did not feel comfortable.

Final Thoughts:

- Will try and get all her work done before leaving.
- Never had any issues with the Judge.
- Didn't apply for Management Position because she didn't want to have that type of responsibility.
- Has nothing but respect for the Judge and is leaving due to her health reasons.

C. G N
Cochise County Field Trainer
Assisting Benson Justice Court as Manager is out on leave.

Staggs, Bruce

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 10:42 AM
To: Trevor Judge Ward (@courts.az.gov); F ; N (f @cochise.az.gov)
Subject: Door Open Policy

Below is the email that I sent to Samantha, her reply and my reply.

Thank you both for the assistance in addressing this matter.

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 10:40 AM
To: Reno, Samantha (@courts.az.gov)
Subject: Door Open Policy

Samantha,

While I did mention that you are responsible for court and staff oversight, I failed to mention specifically that by having your door closed you cannot hear the interactions between the staff members and also between the staff and the public. This is very important for training purposes. I keep my door open to hear these interactions and to also allow the staff access to me.

Thank you for the reply and the compliance.

Judge

From: Reno, Samantha
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 10:29 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce <
Subject: RE: Door Open Policy

I interact daily with the staff and provide guidance. I also inform them that my door may be closed but that is only due to keeping the warmth in and they are welcome in my office at any time. I do not believe that the staff perceives me to be closed off to them in anyway. I will open my door as you requested.



Samantha Reno

Court Manager

Benson Justice Court

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 10:20 AM

To: Reno, Samantha [@courts.az.gov](mailto:reno@courts.az.gov)>
Subject: Door Open Policy

Samantha,

As the Court Manager of the Benson Justice Court, you are expected to provide oversight of the court and staff. I have noticed that you have chosen to keep your office door closed majority of the time in recent weeks. Although you assist staff when needed, having the door closed majority of the time does not welcome staff or myself to enter your office or disturb you. Questions arise daily and with new staff in the office, it is my preference that your door remain open during normal business hours, with the exception for private discussions with me or with court staff, when sensitive/private issues have to be discussed.

Additionally, one is not able to successfully provide growth to their staff when they are not interacting with them or providing guidance. Having the door closed provides limitations in those areas, limiting staff to interrupt for questions or a quick conversation. Perception is key and the perception of the door being closed is that you may want to be disturbed or bothered.

I am willing to discuss the matter and understand why the door has remained closed, to work on the matter, and move forward.

Respectfully,

Judge Staggs



Judge Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace, JP-3
Magistrate, City of Benson
126 W. 5th Street, Suite #1
Benson, Arizona 85602
(520) 586-8100
(520) 586-8117 fax

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Staggs, Bruce

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Monday, October 5, 2020 4:40 PM
To: 'F', N
Subject: AD 2020-21 - Suspension of COJET Reporting 2020

N i,

Thank you for the update.

Judge Staggs

From: F, N <f.n@cochise.az.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 5, 2020 9:34 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce <staggbr@courts.az.gov>
Subject: RE: AD 2020-21 - Suspension of COJET reporting 2020

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning Judge Staggs,

That should be all and you and your staff should be in compliance.

Unless specified directly from the AOC and/or County, you and your staff should not need anything further until the new year.

Thank you,

Ni *Fl*
Associate Court Administrator

Cochise County Superior Court – Court Administration
100 Quality Hill, Bisbee, Arizona 85603
☎ 520.432.8504
✉ @cochise.az.gov

From: Staggs, Bruce <staggbr@courts.az.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 4:59 PM
To: F, N <f.n@cochise.az.gov>
Subject: AD 2020-21 - Suspension of COJET reporting 2020

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL*

N i,

Other than the Blood Borne Pathogens and the Distracted Driving courses, that Cochise County is requiring to be taken, are there any other COJET subjects that myself or staff MUST take through 1/31/2020?

Respectfully,

Judge Staggs



Judge Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace, JP-3
Magistrate, City of Benson
126 W. 5th Street, Suite #1
Benson, Arizona 85602
(520) 586-8100
(520) 586-8117 fax

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From: I , N <_ ;@cochise.az.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 3:45 PM
To:
<
<
Cc:
Subject: FW: AD 2020-21 - Suspension of COJET reporting 2020

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

FYI –

N Fl

Associate Court Administrator

Cochise County Superior Court – Court Administration
100 Quality Hill, Bisbee, Arizona 85603



✉ @cochise.az.gov

From: S R <@courts.az.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 2:25 PM
To: S R I <@courts.az.gov>
Subject: AD 2020-21 - Suspension of COJET reporting 2020

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL*

Hello everyone.

[Administrative Directive 2020-08](#) issued on April 20th suspended the general COJET requirement in 2020. A number of other Administrative Orders and Directives issued during the public health emergency have suspended or extended the timeframes of most mandatory judicial branch training into 2021.

I am writing today to share that [Administrative Directive 2020-21](#), issued today, has suspended COJET reporting to counties and Education Services for calendar year 2020 - <http://www.azcourts.gov/Portals/22/admindir/pdfs/2020/2020-21.pdf?ver=2020-10-02-114905-517>

Your court may still choose to implement local training requirements and track completed education locally as well.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,
R

R S I
Arizona Supreme Court, AOC
Education Services Division

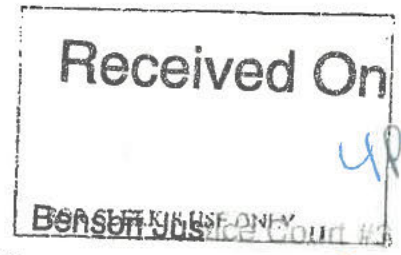
AOC Mailing Address: 1501 W. Washington * Phoenix, AZ 85007* Attn: JEC
Judicial Education Center/Office Address: 3003 N. Central, Suite 500 * Phoenix, AZ 85012

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Rokib #27

From:



Person Filing: _____
Address (if not provided): _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone: _____
Email Address: _____
Representing: Self, without lawyer or Attorney for Plaintiff OR Defendant

IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COCHISE PRECINCT #3

Plaintiff,

vs.

Case No: _____
Title: Motion and Order

(The section below must be written to explain your request. If you want the judge to order if/when grants your request (or Motion). If the judge agrees with your request, she or he will sign the Order, or she will issue an Order noting her/his decision.) Use additional paper if necessary. DO NOT write on the back of this form.

I am requesting the court for driving on a suspended license
Case # - be removed from my record, I wish to get my license back
I have been incarcerated since 1/20/20. I am attempting
to get my drivers license reinstated. I am attaching
page 1 of my judgement to show my conviction.

Exhibit # 28

Benson Justice Court #3

Received On
Benson Justice Court #3
FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

1/1/11

CD

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Fax: N/A

E-Mail: _____

by for Plaintiff OR Defendant

OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
OF COCHISE, PRECINCT #3

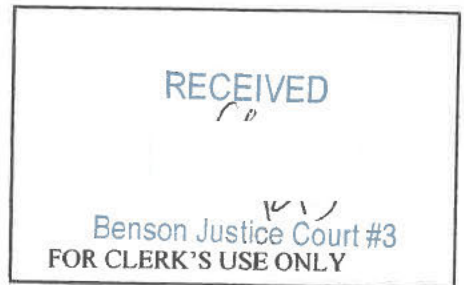
Case No.: _____

Title: Telephonic hearing

quest – what you want the Judge to order if s/he grants your
est, s/he will sign the Order, or s/he will issue an Order
ary. DO NOT write on the back of this form.

holding herein decision, see _____

my reason for not wanting to
This way to attend court is because
I live a country away and its five hour
drive.



Person Filing: [redacted]
Address (if not protected): [redacted]
City, State, Zip: [redacted]
Telephone: [redacted]
Email Address: [redacted]

Representing: Self, without lawyer or Attorney for Plaintiff OR Defendant

IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COCHISE, PRECINCT #3

State of Arizona
Plaintiff,

Case No.: _____

vs.

Title: _____

Defendant.

(The section below must be written to explain your request – what you want the Judge to order if s/he grants your request (or Motion). If the Judge agrees with your request, s/he will sign the Order, or s/he will issue an Order noting her/his decision.) Use additional paper if necessary. DO NOT write on the back of this form.

I'm requesting that the court wave my late fees and suspended license and to reinstate it. I was trying to call the court every day for about a week before my court date and couldn't get through to let them know I had covid. Even after my court date I couldn't get through and I do not use email often. I have no problem paying my speeding ticket and no endorsement ticket at all since I am guilty of that but I would like to have the other fees waived because I was sick during this time with covid and was stuck at home. I also work in regulars so I need a drivers license to get to work at the moment. And for what it is I did go get my motorcycle endorsement after I got the ticket. Thank you

RECEIVED

Exhibit #30

Person Filing

Address (if not protected):

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:
ONLY

Email Address:

Benson Justice Court #3

FOR CLERK'S USE

Representing: Self, without lawyer or Attorney for Plaintiff Defendant

IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COCHISE, PRECINCT #3

State of Arizona

Case

No.:

Plaintiff,

Title:

vs.

Defendant.

(The section below must be written to explain your request - what you want the Judge to order if s/he grants your request (or Motion). If the Judge agrees with your request, s/he will sign the Order, or s/he will issue an Order noting her/his decision.) Use additional paper if necessary. DO NOT write on the back of this form.

Dear Judge Staggs, I am writing this motion to request leniency to get my license, I need an abstract to remove the hold, I made a payment on 3/1/21 of \$50. I am doing my utmost best to keep up on them. I also need to get to work as well and I can't do things to get to certain locations without it. I would really appreciate that you can approve this motion so I can get my license together. Thank you for taking the time to read my motion. Sincerely,

Exhibit # 31

FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

Person Filing: _____
Address (if not protected): _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone: _____
Email Address: _____

Representing: Self, without lawyer or Attorney for Plaintiff OR Defendant

IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COCHISE, PRECINCT #3

Case No.: _____

Plaintiff,

vs.

ORDER

Defendant.

_____ having filed a _____ and
(Person who filed) (Name of Request)

this Court having review the request and the file,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

- Granting the request; and/or
 - Denying the Request; and/or
 - OTHER: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Date: _____ Judge's Signature: _____

(For Clerk's Use):

Copies mailed to State Plaintiff Defendant on _____ by _____
Date Clerk

08/26/2019

Staggs, Bruce

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 9:40 AM
To: Reno, Samantha
Subject: RE: Time Card

Samantha,

C has been spoken to in the past about this matter.

This needs to be addressed. If we don't N will as she monitors our time cards.

A written warning to be placed in her file.

Let's speak about this in our meeting tomorrow.

Judge

From: Reno, Samantha @courts.az.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 9:19 AM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: Time Card

Judge,
I was in correcting time for D s log in and looked at C 's time. If you get a moment to look at it please do. I count in the last 3 weeks less than a hand full of times that she was on time. This is of concern to me.

AUG 16 2021

August 13, 2021

Commission on Judicial Conduct
1501 W. Washington St., Suite 229
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Attention: April E. Elliott

Re: Complaint No. 20-318

Dear Ms. Elliott,

I have received the letter dated July 22, 2021, and truly I am appalled by the listed allegations.

I have no knowledge whatsoever of any alleged incident where I raised my hand to Ms. C. I have never in my life raised my hand in a striking manner towards a woman, much less struck a woman. To do so would be totally out of my character and against religion. This is a false slanderous allegation and a defamation of my character.

Your letter stated: "*Ms. C. stated that sometime between February and April 2021, there was an incident between you and her that took place near the copier in the office*".

In response, I am attaching an architectural floor plan of the clerk work area at the court, as Exhibit #1. On Exhibit #1, it reflects staff members during the period of February through April 2021 and their work areas. I have labeled the staff positions, numbers #1 – 7, as listed below. Furthermore, I have measured the distances, in feet, from the two "XX's" labeled in front of the copier. The staff members and distances are as follows:

1. Front desk clerk: D F 13 feet
2. Front desk clerk: C L , 12 feet
3. Criminal clerk #1: D D , 8 feet
4. Criminal clerk #2: C D , 7 feet
5. Mail & records clerk: C C , 7 feet
6. Civil clerk: D N , 10 feet
7. Court manager: Samantha Reno, 27 feet

The clerk work area is completely open, with no walled partitions going floor to ceiling. There is a filing cabinet between the #3 and #4 clerk positions. There is a 5 ½' high standard office cubical partition between the clerk position #5 and the filing cabinet. There is the same 5 ½' high standard office cubical partition between #5 and #6 clerk positions. The only two offices that have walls completely floor to ceiling, are my chambers and the court manager's office. With the open floor plan the court has, all the clerks can hear and freely communicate with each other at all times. Unless conversations are held in a whisper, said conversations can all be clearly heard from

anywhere in the clerk work area. All the clerks can visually see the copier from their workstations.

in my response to the Commission on March 15, 2021, I stated that I that was going to seek the assistance of the Cochise County Superior Court Administrator, Mr. J. S. I followed through with this and Mr. S. agreed to "assist to heal the climate and culture" at JP-3. We have since met together many times. The first thing Mr. S. did was to hold an extensive interview with each clerk, except C. L., who had just begun her employment. The interviews were to help determine the environment and culture at JP-3.

Since receiving your letter dated July 22, 2021, I contacted Mr. S. and requested the dates that he held his individual interviews with staff members. Mr. S. met with the Court Manager, Samantha Reno. on April 14, 2021. On May 12, 2021, Mr. S. met with clerks, E. N., D. F., D. D., C. C., and C. D. I am attaching Exhibit #2, as proof. During these interviews, not one staff member brought this alleged incident to his attention.

I have shared the July 22, 2021 supplement allegations with Mr. S. He was taken off guard by this allegation and stated that no staff made any mention of this serious allegation whatsoever. Mr. S. even took the time when we were on the phone to refer to the extensive notes he had made of the interviews. Should you wish to confirm this, you can contact Mr. S. at [redacted]. Mr. S. also pointed out to me that the interview date of May 12, 2021, was well beyond the time period alleged of "sometime between February and April 2021". We also discussed that if he had an event of this magnitude occur, the actual date would have been recorded and a Complaint would have been made immediately. I believe that this delayed allegation is retaliation. It's well documented that Ms. Reno was very upset, as outlined in her Complaint. It's well documented that Ms. C. was very upset at being written up for tardiness and repetitive failures to update defendants contact information.

As I stated above, unless something is whispered, anything that is said in the clerk work area can be heard by anyone present because of their close proximity to each other. I am confident that the average person would believe that if Ms. C. had been threatened and made the statement "Go ahead and take a swing, but you will regret it", it would **NOT** have been said in a whisper. Neither would it have been said in a low or regular voice. The average person would believe that had Ms. C. made the statement of this nature, it would have been said in a loud voice, with tone. Had it been said, it would have been heard by the majority, if not all, of the clerks. Not one clerk ever heard it, simply because it never occurred.

I am flabbergasted at this allegation and wholly deny it.

Regarding the security officer, Mr. C H s allegation. I have no knowledge or recollection whatsoever of any alleged incident where I asked Mr. H , if he was looking at my butt and if he liked what he saw. To do so would be totally out of my character.

Mr. H and I maintain a professional relationship, meaning we don't laugh, we don't joke, and we don't talk about our weekends. I can say that this is far different than the relationship I had with my previous security officer. Long before May 12, 2021, I expressed my opinion to the Presiding Justice of the Peace, Judge Ward. to the former Chief of Security, T S , and to the current Chief of Security, R C of what my observations had been with the poor security service Mr. H provides, as compared to the previous security officer. It is my understanding that Judge Ward has also spoken to Mr. C regarding my concerns. I believe that this has resulted in animosity towards myself, by Mr. H

In my response to Complaint #18-077, on page #19, I addressed "*sexist, racial and derogatory comments to my staff*". I gave a list of 5 male individuals that I came into contact with on almost a daily basis, and requested that they be contacted to see "*... if they ever heard me swear, tell a dirty joke, make a sexual comment, or say anything racial in nature*". To my knowledge they were never contacted much less interviewed. It is ironic that Mr. H was one of these individuals. At that time I stated: "*It is my sincere feeling that if a man does not interact with other men in this manner, that same man would not act that way in front of ladies*". Again, I don't use foul language, tell dirty jokes or make inappropriate comments outside the court in my personal dealings with people, much less in a professional environment inside the court. If a person doesn't use foul language, tell dirty jokes or make inappropriate comments with associates on a personal basis outside the court, the average person would not believe that the person would do it in a professional business environment. If it is not my nature to do it in a personal setting, why would I risk doing it in a business setting, especially with the previous Complaints made against me and all the stress that has occurred at JP-3? Below are names and contact information of Judges that I have developed an association with in the last 6 ½ years outside of the court. I commonly call them and I also see them at conferences/seminars. I invite you to call any of them and ask if they ever heard me use bad language, tell a dirty joke or make inappropriate comments to them when we are together on a personal basis or together at conferences/seminars.

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Judge

Mr. H is aware of the past culture here at JP-3. He is aware of the previous Complaints and multiple allegation that have been filed against me. In addition, Mr. H has always had a close association with all clerks. Only Mr. S, myself, and the clerks knew about the upcoming interviews. I am assuming that Mr. H listened to all the chatter in the court and approached Mr. S with this allegation. Mr. S stated in his July 28, 2021 email: "CSO C asked to speak with me when I was done with the interviews and we spoke for a few minutes".

Conclusion

In my response on March 15, 2021, to the Commission on this Complaint, on page 16, I documented the bad attitude, insubordination and hostility of Ms. C that followed her write up for tardiness and repetitive failures to update defendant's contact information. On June 2, 2021, Ms. C was provided a verbal counseling letter for insubordination, by Ms. N F, Associate Court Administrator. I am attaching Exhibit #3, as proof. This counseling resulted in Ms. C immediately submitting her resignation. Again, I deny this allegation. I believe I've supplied information and documentation to support that it couldn't have, and didn't occur. I believe this allegation to be retaliatory in nature.

I have given my response to Mr. H's allegation and deny that it occurred. I can supply no conclusive documentation that it didn't occur, except to deny that it occurred. I can only supply professional character witnesses, who are judges, to attest to my conduct while in their presence outside the court. I believe Mr. H is retaliating against me for me speaking to Judge Ward and his direct supervisor, Mr. C regarding his job duties as a security officer.

I will be awaiting your response.

Respectfully,

Judge Bruce Staggs

Exhibit # 2

Staggs, Bruce

From: S. J.
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 8:16 PM
To: Staggs, Bruce
Subject: Re: Interview Dates

Good Evening Judge - I've been working on Detention issues most of the afternoon.
I interviewed Samantha Reno on April 14, 2021 and (S. J., C, D, Di and D on May 12, 2021. CSO
C asked to speak with me when I was done with the interviews and we spoke for a few minutes.

R/
J.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Staggs, Bruce
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 2:25:45 PM
To: S. J. <@courts.az.gov>
Subject: Interview Dates

J.

Thank you for speaking to me yesterday.

You started to look for the dates you interviewed my staff, and then we got busy speaking, and I didn't get the dates.

Can you supply me the dates?

Respectfully,

Judge Staggs



Judge Bruce Staggs
Justice of the Peace, JP-3
Magistrate, City of Benson
126 W. 5th Street, Suite #1
Benson, Arizona 85602
(520) 586-8100
(520) 586-8117 fax

From: Staggs, Bruce @courts.az.gov
Subject: Verbal Counseling
Date: August 13, 2021 at 1:41 PM
To:



From: F , N < @cochise.az.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 1:35 PM
To: Staggs, Bruce <
Subject: FW: Verbal counseling
Importance: High

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

FYI --

N FI
Associate Court Administrator
Cochise County Superior Court – Court Administration
100 Quality Hill, Bisbee, Arizona 85603

From: F , N
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 1:35 PM
To: C , C <
Subject: Verbal counseling
Importance: High

Good Afternoon Ms. C ,

Hope this email finds you well.

This will serve as a verbal counseling regarding the unprofessionalism that occurred on June 1, 2021.

A verbal counseling is to advise of improper performance or conduct, and identify the actions the employee should take to correct the situation. Verbal counseling is neither subject to the grievance procedure nor appealable.

During our quick meeting yesterday (Tuesday, June 1, 2021) with staff, I was discussing the process that will occur during this transition period. C Ne was also explaining her interim role and we further discussed the list of clerk duties provided to us by the former court manager (Samantha Reno). The communication was not entirely clear when C mentioned that some staff may be doing less than others. That was quickly corrected and it

mentioned that some staff may be doing less than others. That was quickly corrected and it was mentioned C. [redacted] and myself were asking questions due to the list we received from the former court manager. Throughout the duration of the meeting, I noticed several times that when I was either speaking or C. [redacted] was speaking, you began having a side conversation with C. [redacted] E. [redacted] as we continued to speak. Our goal and Codes of the Judicial Branch are to be professional and carry that not only with members of the public, but also with co-workers.

I understand that in any transition period it may be difficult to accept any change and my goal is always to continue stability of the court. Moving forward, when we are having meetings and/or discussing court matters, please let me know if you would like to discuss other matters privately away from a group setting. Furthermore, during meetings side conversations are not appropriate and can be disruptive to the person speaking or others in the meeting.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

N. J.
Associate Court Administrator

Cochise County Superior Court – Court Administration
100 Quality Hill, Bisbee, Arizona 85603

February 9, 2022

Commission On Judicial Conduct
1501 W. Washington St., Suite 229
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Case No. 20-318

Dear Commission Members,

I am in receipt of your Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022.

I am filing a Motion for Reconsideration. I believe that the Commission ruling is unjust as it has not been reached objectively. I have requested and provided a list of individuals who I asked the Commission Investigator to interview however, none of them were contacted nor interviewed. The Investigator has also cited "*collaborating*" evidence which I have not been appraised of, therefore, I was denied the ability to fully defend myself of such claims listed within this letter. The "*collaborating*" evidence provides the appearance of being crucial leading to this reprimand. That being the case, I am requesting to be appraised of information to better provide my response.

I will address each issue as they are listed in the Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022.

Requesting a County Employees Assistance with a Personal Project

The Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022, Page 1, paragraph 2, states: "*JW is a County employee who works in the same building as the Benson Justice Court. During court hours, Judge Staggs inquired if he could hire JW to perform electrical work at his residence outside his work hours*". This is **not** accurate statement. I did not contract with Mr. W , during court hours to do work on my home. As I stated in my March 15, 2021, response to the Commission, page 10, last paragraph, I have had a personal relationship with Mr. J. W for many years. I met Mr. W in 2010 when I was running for office the first time. Mr. W allowed me to put up a political yard sign on his property in 2010, in 2014 and again in 2018. Mr. W does maintenance work throughout the entire County and when he would come into the court, I would speak with him about the maintenance issues at the court, about general County issues, and also about personal matters. Knowing that he did maintenance work as a side business, and due to our personal relationship and trust that I had in him, sometime in 2020, I called Mr. W and informed him of a photocell electrical issue I was having at my home. Due to it not being emergency issue, Mr. W said he would put me on his calendar and would come to my home, when he had a break in his schedule, when he was in the area. Each time I would see Mr. W , both in the court and out of the court, I would inquire about

his schedule. Ms. Reno alleges that I interrupted an “*employee meeting*”, and “*in a raised tone*” abused my powers as a judge, which is totally false. I submitted exhibit #22 from Mr. W _____ hat clearly states:

1. I met him before I was a judge.
2. I asked him to do work at my home after hours.
3. I did not interrupt an open meeting.
4. I never threatened him.
5. I never raised my voice.
6. I never abused my powers the judge to force him to do work.

All I did in the court, was to inquire of him in a side conversation, if I was still on his schedule.

The standard in a civil case is the preponderance of the evidence, that it is more likely than not that the average person would think that the event occurred or that the law was broken. While the Commission is of the belief that Rule 1.2 was broken, I do not believe that the average person would believe, that by speaking to Mr. W _____ in the court, in a personal conversation, would discourage public confidence in the independence, integrity and impartiality of the judiciary. If the Commission continues to take the stance that this violated Rule 1.2, it is hard to comprehend that it should rise to a public reprimand, instead of a private warning.

Referring to a Complainant as “Frigid”

I deny that I ever told Ms. Reno or any court employee that they were “frigid”. I addressed this in my March 15, 2021, response to the Commission, Page 11, paragraph 6 and Page 12, paragraphs 1 and 2. The term frigid was used, however it was made by Ms. Reno, in front of multiple staff. Ms. Reno didn’t say “*The Judge said I was frigid*” when asked if she wanted a cold soda on a cold day. Ms. Reno stated: “*I don’t know, apparently I’m frigid*”. The Commission Order dated January 26, 2022 stated on Page 1, last paragraph: “*Another court employee collaborated Judge Staggs used the term “frigid” to refer to the clerk’s when they were cold*”. I believe I have the right to be advised of what this “*other collaborating evidence*” is, so I can fully exercise my constitutional rights, to defend myself. To my knowledge, all the staff members that were present during this occasion have **not** been interviewed, to get to the real truth of what was said. If I’m going to get a public reprimand, I am requesting at least a full investigation be made and all the staff that were present be interviewed regarding this matter.

Comments to Intimidate Complainant from Filing a Complaint

In my March 15, 2021, response to the Commission, Page 11, last paragraph, I explained why I asked Ms. Reno why she was going over the Code of Conduct. I believe it was a legitimate question for me, as the Judge and Department Head, to ask their Court

Manager why the Code of Judicial Conduct was being reviewed. As I stated I had previously been advised that Ms. Barney was going to be filing a Complaint against Ms. Reno for the hostile work environment that was created both by Ms. Reno and Ms. W. When Ms. Reno answered "No" it was only logical to assume she was filing one against me, because had she been preparing a write up against an employee, she would have been looking at the Employee Code of Conduct. I truly don't understand how an average person, much less the Commission, could come to the conclusion as stated in the Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022, Page 2, paragraph 4, "*Judge Staggs inquiry to the Complaint of about whether she was going to file a complaint against him recently gave the impression that he may retaliate, directly or indirectly against her*". All that I asked was the simple question, that I believe many would spontaneously ask, if she was going to be filing a Complaint against me. Again, the standard in a civil case is the preponderance of the evidence, that it is more likely than not that the average person would think that the event occurred or that the law was broken.

I am very open to the concept that an employee could believe that a Judge could give the impression that he/she may "*retaliate directly or indirectly*" with an inquiry if they were filing a Complaint, if retaliation was occurring, but retaliation wasn't occurring. I deny that ever retaliated against Ms. Reno or created a hostile work environment at any time. This is evidenced by:

1. Approving a laptop so Ms. Reno could build up comp hours. While she could have built up many hours, that Ms. Reno obtained only 10.1 comp hours.
2. Consulting with Court Administration regarding Ms. Reno's annual evaluation. Court administration assisted this evaluation and signed off on its accuracy.
3. Not filing a Complaint against Ms. Reno for creating a Hostile Work environment with Ms. R. B. that ultimately ended in Ms. Barney resigning from the court due to stress. Ms. B. came back to the court when Ms. Reno left.
4. Not going to the Cochise County Attorney's office to notify them of the time fraud that was committed by Ms. Reno, when I became aware of it.
5. Consulting with Court Administration regarding Ms. Reno not being allowed to participate in the biweekly administrative leave when she returned from pregnancy. Court Administration performed Reno's duties while she was gone and could no longer take the time to assist our Benson Justice Court #3 when she returned.
6. Allowing Ms. Reno to be included on a 4-10 flex schedule, with the rest of the staff, when it was implemented in November 2020.
7. Not pursuing time fraud when Ms. Reno admitted in writing, in her November 30, 2020 email, that she could only work less than 2 hours a day off-site while on the approved 4-10 flex schedule, when previously while undergoing a high-risk pregnancy she had 29 occasions of working over 8 hours straight with no breaks, and 26 occasions of working over 8 hours with breaks.

The Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022, Page 2, paragraph 3, stated: "*Judge Staggs has a history of questioning employees about complaints filed against him and*

soliciting letters from them to support his position. While a judge has a right to defend himself against a complaint, both this investigation and prior investigations involving Judge Staggs show that he becomes cold and hostile to those who have filed complaints against them, and those he believes may have cooperated with the complainant”.

I deny that I had ever become hostile to any employee that has filed a Complaint. Per www.dictionary.net the legal definition of a hostile work environment is: “*Unwelcome or offensive behavior in the workplace, which causes employees to feel uncomfortable, scared, or intimidated in their place of employment”.*

We as small staff, working in close confines and being together every day, all develop personal relationships beyond the usual business relationship. Every day when the staff come in, they greet each other and usually ask how their night went. I often have to ask my Court Manager to intercede when these discussions carry on too long and get in the way of productive work time. When the staff take breaks or lunch, they usually meet in the lunchroom. Talk is not about the business, but what is happening in their personal lives. I hear the staff talk about their personal lives all the time, even when they are at their workstations. They laugh and they joke together. They do it because they care about each other. I do not place myself above my staff, as some judges do, but I interact with them and I develop personal relationships with them. I also inquire about how their personal lives are going and I have developed relationships with them.

If anyone was to say that following a bad interaction with someone else, that the personal relationship would be the same, they would be lying. When employees have filed Complaints, I have dropped the personal relationship completely. I no longer interact with them on a personal basis. I shift our personal relationship to a strictly business relationship. I greet them in professionally in the morning and acknowledge their presence, but I don’t ask them how they feel, I don’t ask them how their night went, I don’t ask about their family, I don’t ask them how their day is going, etc. Perhaps they may perceive this is being cold, however is **not** hostile. It is now a strictly professional business relationship.

The Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022, Page 2, paragraph 4, stated: “*The Code places a duty on a judge being investigated by a disciplinary agency to cooperate in the investigative process, not to hinder any investigation by confronting witnesses and complainants regardless of the judge’s intent”.*

Rule 2.16, Cooperation with Disciplinary authority states:

“(A) A judge shall cooperate and be candid and honest with judicial and lawyer disciplinary agencies.

(B) A judge shall not retaliate, directly or indirectly, against a person known or suspected of assisted or cooperate with an investigation of a judge or a lawyer”.

I have cooperated in every way, for any investigation. I have been as honest as I could for any investigation. I've supplied evidence, with actual court documents, that have in many instances proved that the Complainants are not being truthful in many of their allegations. I never counseled an employee or witness to make false statements, not to cooperate with or hinder the investigation process. I don't understand how the Commission can state that I have "hindered" an investigation by seeking the truth.

I find nowhere in Code of Judicial Conduct, which states that I cannot defend myself by asking other employees if the allegations of the Complainants are false. In fact, Commission Rule 9(c) (3) states just the opposite.

On August 2, 2018, I wrote an email to Margaret Downey and asked "to receive an opinion if any Judicial Canons are broken by a Judge responding to questions from the public regarding a complaint being made against the Judge, before the Judicial Commission has ruled on it". Ms. C. E. had made a 41 count complaint that had hundreds of allegations in it. She made it public prior to the 2018 election. Ms. Downey answered back: "Only the Commission on Judicial Conduct is bound by confidentiality restrictions regarding judicial conduct complaints. Both the complainants and judges are free to discuss Judicial Complaints and Commission proceedings. Specifically Commission Rule 9(c) (3) states":

"Unless otherwise ordered by the commission, complainants, respondent judges and witnesses or other individuals involved in complaint investigations are not prohibited from disclosing the existence of proceedings or from disclosing any documents or correspondence served on or provided to those persons". See Exhibit #01 attached.

I have requested on multiple occasions to have the Commission interview multiple people including staff members, Court Administration and other Judges. To my knowledge **none** of these people have been interviewed. The only people that seem to be interviewed are the Complainant and any witnesses that the Complainant gives the Investigator. When statements are made that I know are false, and other staff members can attest they're not true, is when I've attempted to obtain statements attesting to the truth.

Raising Hand Toward C.C.

In my August 13, 2021, response to the Commission, Page 1 & 2, I addressed this issue in detail. I also provided a diagram of the office that proved the close proximity of the copier, to all the Clerks. Had this serious allegation occurred, it would definitely have been heard by all the Clerks.

I deny vehemently that I ever raised my hand to Ms. C. C. I have never raised my hand to a woman, much less hit a woman.

I brought to the attention of the Commission, in my March 15, 2021, response to the Commission, Page 19, paragraph 3, that I reached out Mr. J. S. [redacted], Cochise County Superior Court Administrator, to interview my staff and to work with me to resolve any issues at the court. On May 12, 2021, Mr. S. [redacted] interviewed not only Ms. C. [redacted], but also the other staff members that were present that day. Not one staff member brought this alleged serious allegation to his attention. Had this serious allegation occurred, it is inconceivable that Ms. C. [redacted] or another staff member, wouldn't have brought it to Mr. S. [redacted]'s attention. Mr. S. [redacted] was surprised that the allegation wasn't mentioned during his interviews. He even noted that that Ms. C. [redacted] could not even put in accurate date on which the alleged allegation occurred.

The Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022, Page 2, last paragraph, states: "*While Judge Staggs denied this incident occurred, there was other collaborating evidence*". As stated above, I believe I have the right to be advised of what this "*other collaborating evidence*" is, so I can fully exercise my constitutional rights, to defend myself.

Inappropriate Comments to Male Staff

In my August 13, 2021, response to the Commission, on Page 1 & 2, I addressed this allegation.

I deny vehemently that I ever made a sexual comment to the security guard, Mr. C. H. [redacted]. It is not in my character to make comments such as this. I have informed the Commission that I have spoken to my Presiding Justice of the Peace, Judge Trevor Ward, and also to the past and current Chiefs of Security, regarding the security service at Mr. H. [redacted] provides, as compared to previous Security Officer. For the other allegations, there are witnesses as to my conduct, however with this allegation there were no witnesses. It is my word against Mr. H. [redacted]'s word. For this reason I asked the Commission to interview other judges as to my character, and whether I make sexual comments in their presence, when I associate with them outside of court. For whatever reason the Investigator has declined to do this.

The Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022, Page 3, paragraph 4, states: "*While Judge Staggs denied this comment, there was other collaborating evidence*". As stated above, I believe I have the right to be advised of what this "*other collaborating evidence*" is, so I can fully exercise my constitutional rights, to defend myself.

Conclusion

In my August 13, 2021, response to the Commission, on Page 19, paragraph 4 & 5, I stated: "*Attempting to get assistance, I have requested to be able to address this issue with Cochise County HR. I've been instructed not to do this but to open a dialogue with*

the recently newly appointed Cochise County Court Administrator, Jim Smith for assistance with the constantly occurring drama at Benson Justice Court #3. On March 11, 2021, Mr. Smith opened the dialogue and offered, as Ms. Reno's supervisor, to intercede and to assist to heal the climate and culture at Benson Justice Court #3. I am enthusiastic for this to happen. I FULLY recognize the challenges existing at Benson Justice Court #3 are a direct result of my lack of leadership in being able to effectively communicate with my staff. I am willing to do whatever it takes to resolve any issues that staff have should they feel offended or disrespected".

I wish to advise the Commission, recognizing the above, being sincere in what I wrote, I have been in counsel and training with Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith has great communication skills. He has provided the leadership books: "It's Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy" and "The Effective Manager". He also recommended the book "The Leadership Challenge", a 679 page book, which I purchased. Mr. Smith and I began meeting, on a weekly basis, going over the books together. When my new Court Manager was hired, she was invited in on these trainings. Training has been interrupted due to health challenges in Mr. Smith's family, a Compliance Audit here at JP-3, and the recent rise in COVID-19 in Cochise County. It is our hope to begin the training sessions again in the near future. Training will continue until Mr. Smith believes the necessary lessons are taught.

On February 4, 2022, Mr. Smith presented to Benson Justice Court #3 to interview the court staff, to compare the current culture, as compared to the culture that was present when Ms. Reno was here. Prior to Mr. Smith coming, I advised the staff that that Mr. Smith would be coming to interview them. I advised the staff that I would not be appraised of any of the specifics of the interviews, nor would I even be present in the court when the interviews took place, in case a Clerk chose not interviewed.

It is my understanding that Mr. Smith is going to be presenting the results of the interview to you. Mr. Smith has informed me that the interviews went very well and that multiple clerks said there was a 100% difference in the court culture today, compared to what I was when Ms. Reno was present here. It was mentioned where previously many of the staff did not want to come to work due to the drama when Ms. Reno was present, now they look forward to coming to work.

It is my belief that is in the best interest of interest the Commission's integrity, that if the decision is made to have the Public Reprimand stand as it is now, that it be delayed until a full investigation of these allegations be made by interviewing not only my entire court staff, but court administration staff and other judges. Nowhere in the judicial system in United States of America would only the Plaintiffs witnesses be allowed to testify and not the Defendant's witnesses. It is my belief that the average person would consider this to be a tainted and biased investigation if the full truth is not sought, by interviewing all witnesses who have knowledge of the facts, here at Benson Justice Court #3.

Witnesses that have personal knowledge of what is occurring here at Benson Justice Court are as follows:

1. [redacted] S [redacted] - Cochise County Superior Court Administrator,
2. N [redacted] F [redacted] - Cochise County Associate Court Administrator,
3. C [redacted] N [redacted] - Cochise County Field Trainer,
4. Judge [redacted] [redacted] - Cochise County Presiding Justice of the Peace,

Judges

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- 9.
- 10.

Should the Commission decline to further investigate this Complaint by interviewing witnesses, nor accept the results of Mr. S [redacted] interviews of my staff, both of which I know can provide additional truth regarding these allegations, I would petition the Commission to remove the requirement of having to take the 12 hour Dale Carnegie training "How to Communicate with Diplomacy and Tact", as I have already started training. Many more than 12 hours have been invested to date and many more than this are going to be invested in the future while much more knowledge on communication will be learned.

Finally, I want to let the Commission know that Ms. Reno has made public the recent proposed Commission Order, dated January 26, 2022. She has put the proposed Commission Order on her Facebook page and has made it "public", so that not only can her "friends" read it, but anyone from the public can read it. See Exhibit #02 and 03.

Ms. S [redacted] W [redacted] has also posted the proposed Commission Order publicly on her Facebook page.

While a Complainant has every right to be able to give their input regarding any Public Reprimand, I believe that the Commission process is flawed. Should a Public Reprimand

be proposed, the Defendant should have an opportunity to make a request for "Reconsideration" prior to it being sent to the Complainant. Should the Reconsideration be honored and it is the decision of the Commission not to make a Public Reprimand, then the Defendant's rights are protected and Complainants are not allowed to retaliate, as they have done here.

Ms. Reno made this Complaint with the Commission, alleging retaliation by me. It is my belief that I have provided substantial evidence I did not commit retaliation against her. By Ms. Reno posting the proposed Commission Order, even prior to it being final, I believe this is clear evidence of her lack of character and gives great proof as to who were the employees responsible for retaliation occurring and for a hostile work environment, here at Benson Justice Court #3. It is my further belief that, by the preponderance of the evidence, the average person would believe that is more likely than not, that Ms. Reno and Ms. Wi have committed retaliation, both in the past, and now in the present.

Respectfully,

Judge Bruce Staggs 

Exhibit #01

From: Downie, Margaret
Subject: RE: Commenting On An Open Case
Date: August 7, 2018 at 4:37 PM
To: Bruce Staggs

Judge Staggs: Only the Commission on Judicial Conduct is bound by confidentiality restrictions regarding judicial conduct complaints. Both complainants and judges are free to discuss judicial complaints and Commission proceedings. Specifically, Commission rule 9(c)(3) states:

"Unless otherwise ordered by the commission, complainants, respondent judges and witnesses or other individuals involved in complaint investigations are not prohibited from disclosing the existence of proceedings or from disclosing any documents or correspondence served on or provided to those persons."

Margaret H. Downie
Staff Director
Arizona Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee

-----Original Message-----

From: Bruce Staggs <
Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2018 10:26 AM
To: Downie, Margaret
Subject: Commenting On An Open Case

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Judge Downey,

I would like to receive an opinion if any Judicial Canons are broken by a Judge responding to questions from the public regarding a complaint being made against a Judge, before the Judicial Commission has ruled on it, due to the Judicial employee complainant revealing contents of the complaint to the public.

Benson is having a JP-3 Candidate forum on 8/10/2018. I have been informed that this is going to be brought up and I want to know if I am able to respond. On another JP-3 candidates website lengthy discussion has been held to include "Judge Staggs has 42 formal complaints filed against him with the Judicial Board in Phoenix as we speak. I believe they're waiting to see who wins before they suspend or terminate him". Also on the website is my self report letter, Case No. 18-039, to the Judicial Commission.

Respectfully,

Judge Staggs

PS I am respectfully requesting that the response be made to my personal e-mail address.


Judge Staggs

Sent from my iPhone

19:58 5G

Samantha Rae Reno

Photos Life events

 **Samantha Rae Reno** 7h · 🌐

The fact that this took 2 years, the lack of follow up with witnesses and the amount of trash this man got away with is an absolute joke!!!! He was founded for committing sexual assault, retaliation, and so much more. Yet here is ANOTHER slap on the wrist. He is a cruel and awful man. He is a disgrace to that bench.

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaint 20-218

Judge: **Bruce E. Stagg**
Complainant: **Samantha Reno**

ORDER

The complainant alleged a justice of the peace violated Rules 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.11, 2.16, and 3.1 of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The allegations included, but were not limited to: that the justice of the peace discriminated against her and violated federal law, engaged in improper demeanor, and perpetuated a hostile work environment. The Commission's investigation also uncovered additional allegations of the justice of the peace making inappropriate comments to staff.

Background: County Employee's Assistance with a Personal Friend

J.M. is a county employee who works in the same building as the former Justice Court. During court hours, Judge Stagg inquired if he could have J.W. to perform clerical work at his residence outside of his work hours. This request was made either during or at the conclusion of a staff meeting of the justice court staff. J.W. acknowledged the request was made, but he denied being threatened or abused by the judge when this request was made. While there was not clear and convincing evidence that Judge Stagg violated Rule 1.3 (Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office) regarding this request, Judge Stagg's request for the performance of personal work made in front of other employees during work hours gives rise to the appearance of impropriety. Such conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

- Rule 1.2, which requires that a judge "at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety."

Referring to Complainant as "Friend"

Judge Stagg referred to the Complainant as "friend" claiming in part that it was due to her having a friendly and personable rapport with whom they had a dispute over court policy. Another court employee corroborated that Judge Stagg used the term "friend" to refer to the clerks when they were told. Such conduct violated the following provisions of the Code:

1. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

2. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

3. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

4. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

5. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

6. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

7. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

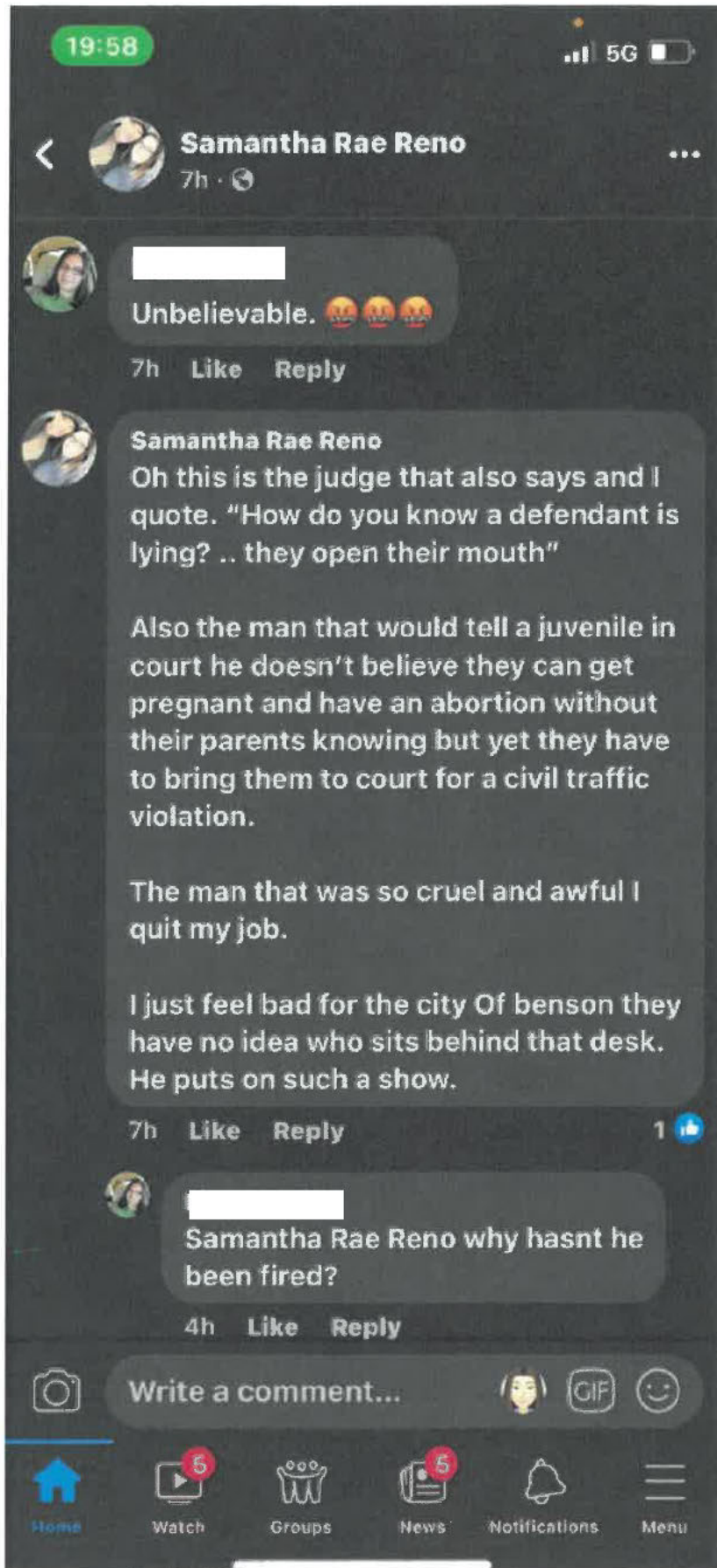
8. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

9. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

10. A judge shall not engage in any conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice or that reflects unfavorably on the judicial system.

11 5 Comments 4 Shares

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Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct
1501 West Washington Street, Suite 229
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Telephone: (602) 452-3200

STATE OF ARIZONA
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Inquiry concerning)	Case No.: 20-318
Judge Bruce E. Staggs)	
Benson Justice Court)	
Cochise County)	ORDER DIRECTING THE FILING
State of Arizona,)	OF A RESPONSE
)	
Respondent.)	

Respondent Judge Bruce E. Staggs filed a Motion for Reconsideration of the public reprimand issued on January 26, 2022.

IT IS ORDERED that Disciplinary Counsel for the Commission shall prepare and file a response to Respondent's motion by February 25, 2022. Disciplinary Counsel shall provide a copy of her Response to Respondent on or before February 25, 2022. Absent a request from the Commission, Respondent may not submit a written reply brief or any additional materials.

Dated this 14th day of February, 2022.

FOR THE COMMISSION

/s/ Louis Frank Dominguez
Hon. Louis Frank Dominguez
Commission Chair

A copy of this Order was delivered on February 14, 2022, via electronic mail, to:

Hon. Bruce E. Staggs
Benson Justice Court

Respondent

April P. Elliott

Disciplinary Counsel

By: /s/ Kim Welch
Kim Welch, Commission Clerk

April P. Elliott (Bar # 016701)
Executive Director / Acting Disciplinary Counsel
Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct
1501 West Washington Street, Suite 229
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Telephone: (602) 452-3200
Email: .

STATE OF ARIZONA
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Inquiry concerning)	
)	Case No. 20-318
Judge Bruce E. Staggs)	
Cochise County Justice Court)	RESPONSE TO JUDGE'S
Precinct 3 (Benson))	MOTION FOR
State of Arizona)	RECONSIDERATION
)	
Respondent)	

On January 26, 2022, the Commission on Judicial Conduct (Commission) publicly reprimanded Judge Bruce E. Staggs (Respondent) for violations of the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct (Code). Respondent timely filed a Motion for Reconsideration on February 10, 2022. Undersigned submits this response pursuant to Commission Rule 23(b), respectfully requesting that the Commission deny the motion.

OPTIONS FOR CHALLENGING THE REPRIMAND

Commission Rule 23(b) sets forth the options by which either a complainant or a respondent judge may seek review of an informal disposition order. Either the complainant or respondent judge may file a motion for reconsideration within fifteen days of the date of the disposition order. Rule 23(b)(1) specifically notes that “[a]bsent extraordinary circumstances, the Commission will only consider factual information and evidence provided to it before the date of the disposition order.” Additionally, Rule 23(b)(2) offers only the respondent judge the option to file for a formal hearing, consistent with Rules 24-29, which generally govern formal proceedings. At a formal

hearing, Disciplinary Counsel would be required to call witnesses and present evidence, and Respondent would be entitled to cross-examine those witnesses and present evidence in his own defense.

Respondent has specifically chosen to file a motion for reconsideration, thus waiving his right to a formal hearing, and all processes associated with a formal hearing.

SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO ISSUES RAISED BY RESPONDENT IN THE MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION

Respondent challenges the Commission's specific factual findings listed in the reprimand order. In many instances, these challenges appear to take issue with the Commission not accepting Respondent's version of a particular event. Undersigned will address each challenge.

Requesting a County Employee's Assistance with a Personal Project

The Commission found that Respondent made a request to J.W., a county employee, to assist Respondent with a personal project or a side job at his home, and that such request was made during court (or work) hours. In the motion for reconsideration, Respondent gets bogged down in semantics, but again admits that he did inquire of J.W. when he would be available to do work at his home, and that this occurred "both in the court and out of the court." In the letter provided by J.W., he acknowledged such a request being made "on occasion at the court." Undersigned believes that the Commission's concern was that the requests were made during court hours – period. Both Respondent and J.W. acknowledged this fact. Such conduct has an appearance of impropriety in violation of Rule 1.2 of the Code. Respondent also believes that such conduct, in and of itself, did not arise to the level of a public reprimand. If this were the only allegation considered by the Commission, this argument may have merit, however, the Commission did not consider the allegations individually, but rather collectively, in making its determination of an appropriate sanction. Undersigned will make further argument on this issue later in this response.

Referring to Complainant as “Frigid”

In the motion for reconsideration, Respondent denied that he ever used the term “frigid” to refer to the complainant, claiming the term was only used by the complainant. In his response to the complaint, Respondent stated:

I acknowledge that I made a comment referencing a space heater that was analogous to Ms. Reno having a totally cold personality towards me, following getting upset whenever she was advised that she was not following policy. This was said privately to her in her office . . . As I left Ms. Reno’s office, I overheard the clerks in the common area discussing going next door for soda. I made a statement something to the effect that I didn’t understand that they were always complaining of being cold, yet they were going out on a cold day, to get a cold soda. At that time Ms. Reno came out of her office and a staff member asked if she was going to get a soda with them. Ms. Reno then voluntarily stated something to the effect, “I don’t know, apparently I’m frigid.” Ms. Reno volunteered this statement, all on her own without any input from me.

In her complaint, the complainant, Ms. Reno, stated that Respondent advised her that the “freezing” temperature in her office was a “direct reflection of [her] personality.” Ms. Reno also stated that Respondent told her it was up to her to repeat to the other clerks what he had said. Ms. Reno stated, “At his point I felt obligated to repeat it.” This aligns with Respondent’s statement in his response that Ms. Reno told the clerks “I’m frigid,” implying that Respondent used that term with her. Ms. Reno also stated this exchange was witnessed by another clerk, C.D., who subsequently resigned from Respondent’s court.

The Commission is free to accept one version of an event over another. Even if one were to accept Respondent’s statement that he never uttered the term “frigid,” undersigned asserts that the finding of improper demeanor did not hinge on the actual use of that word. Rather, it was Respondent’s statement the cold temperature was a direct reflection on Ms. Reno’s personality. The Commission chose to accept the complainant’s version of the event over Respondent’s, and the finding of a violation of Rules 1.2 and 2.8(B) was supported.

Comments to Intimidate Complainant from Filing a Complaint

In his motion for reconsideration, Respondent argues that it was not plausible for the Commission to conclude that he was attempting to intimidate Ms. Reno from filing a complaint against him when he questioned Ms. Reno, his former court manager, about why she was reviewing the Code of Judicial Conduct (the same day as the “frigid” comment). This is not the first complaint against Respondent from either a current or former employee, nor is this the first allegation of retaliation and a hostile work environment. In his motion, Respondent acknowledges that when an employee has filed a complaint against him, the relationship between him and the employee changes. He claims this may be perceived as “cold,” but not “hostile.” Once again, Respondent simply appears to take issue that the Commission did not accept his stated version of an event.

Raising Hand Toward C.C. and Inappropriate Comments to Male Staff

Respondent’s statements in his motion for reconsideration on these two issues are simply disagreements with the Commission’s findings.

GOOD CAUSE EXISTS FOR THE IMPOSITION OF THE REPRIMAND

The Commission does not impose public discipline lightly. The Commission considered all relevant information and found that Respondent had violated the Code for the conduct set forth in the reprimand order. This was not a blanket adoption of all the complainant’s allegations raised in the complaint and her supplement. Respondent was afforded notice and opportunity to be heard on all allegations.

Factors Supporting a Sanction

The Scope section of the Code sets forth several factors for the Commission to consider in determining whether a sanction is appropriate in a particular case. These factors are the seriousness of the transgressions, the facts and circumstances existing at the time of the transgression, the extent of any pattern of improper activity or previous violations, and the effect of the improper activity upon the judicial system or others. On balance, these factors support the issuance of the reprimand.

The reprimand addresses Respondent's conduct with his staff. The public must have confidence in the judiciary, and a cold or hostile working environment between a judge and staff erodes that confidence. Thus, the transgressions are serious, and at the time the events occurred, dysfunctional relationships existed between Respondent and many, but not all staff members. As noted, this is not the first complaint the Commission has considered by a current or former member of Respondent's staff, and Respondent has previously been publicly reprimanded, in part, for conduct involving his staff.

The Commission is aware, through investigations of past and current complaints, that there has been significant turnover in the staff at Respondent's court. Respondent argues in his motion for reconsideration that he is actively working with Cochise County Court Administration to address leadership issues in the court. Judge Smith, the court administrator, has confirmed that Respondent has engaged in training, and he has a new court manager who is experienced. Mr. Smith also confirmed that recent interviews with court staff noted significant improvement in the environment at the court. While undersigned is optimistic about such improvement, this alone is not sufficient to change the decision to publicly reprimand Respondent. The imposition of the public reprimand protects the public "by assuring that the judge will refrain from similar acts of misconduct in the future." See Commission Rule 5 (Purpose of Judicial Discipline).

Aggravating and Mitigating Factors

Rule 19 of the Commission Rules sets forth 10 aggravating and mitigating factors for the Commission to also consider.

Nature, Extent and Frequency of the Misconduct: As previously noted, Respondent's conduct involves transgressions with his staff of a serious nature that occurred over several months. The repetitive nature of the misconduct gives more weight to this being an aggravating factor.

Judge's Experience and Length of Service on the Bench: Respondent was elected in 2014, and his first term began January 1, 2015. He has completed New Judge

Orientation, and he was previously involved with prior matters with the Commission and should be well-versed on the Code. Undersigned deems this an aggravating factor.

Whether the Conduct Occurred in the Judge's Official Capacity or Private Life: The conduct occurred in Respondent's official capacity, however, undersigned does not deem this factor applicable to his case.

Nature and Extent to Which the Acts of Misconduct Injured Other Persons or Respect for the Judiciary: The conduct affected court staff, in particular, the complainant, who ultimately resigned from her position as Respondent's court manager. Issues with staff can impact the public's perception and respect for the judiciary, and casts the judiciary in a negative light. This is an aggravating factor.

Whether and to What Extent the Judge Exploited His or Her Position for Improper Purposes: Undersigned does not deem this factor applicable.

Whether the Judge has Recognized and Acknowledged the Wrongful Nature of the Conduct and Manifested an Effort to Change or Reform the Conduct: Respondent has engaged in training with the current court administrator, J. S. , and Mr. Schow stated the staff noted an improvement in the working environment. This is a mitigating factor.

Whether There Has Been Prior Disciplinary Action Concerning the Judge, and if so, its Remoteness and Relevance to the Present Proceeding: Respondent previously received a combined public reprimand in Case Nos. 18-077 and 18-143, in part, for conduct involving court staff in violation of Rules 1.2 and 2.8(B). This is an aggravating factor.

Whether the Judge Complied with Prior Discipline or Requested and Complied with a Formal Ethics Advisory Opinion: Undersigned does not deem this factor as applicable.

Whether the Judge Cooperated Fully and Honestly with the Commission in the Proceeding: While Respondent may have a different perception of the events surrounding the allegations in the complaint, undersigned does not believe that he intentionally deceived or mislead the Commission. Undersigned believes Respondent has cooperated fully and honestly. This is a mitigating factor.

Whether the Judge was Suffering from Personal or Emotional Problems, or from Physical or Mental Disability or Impairment at the Time of the Misconduct: This was not raised as a defense by Respondent, and undersigned does not deem this factor applicable to this case.

While the aggravating factors outweigh the mitigating factors numerically, the Commission is free to assign whatever weight it chooses to the factors. Given the nature of the conduct, Respondent's experience, Respondent's prior disciplinary history, and the injury to the public perception of the judiciary, undersigned argues that the overall balance is in favor of upholding the sanction.

CONCLUSION / REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF TRAINING REQUIREMENT

As previously noted, the complainant raised multiple allegations in her complaint and supplement, and the Commission did not find clear and convincing evidence to support all of those allegations, only those noted in the reprimand order. Respondent clearly takes issue with the Commission's findings and the ultimate sanction imposed. The Commission did not view each of the aforementioned incidents in isolation, but rather viewed the violations in their totality in determining an appropriate sanction. An isolated approach would never permit the Commission to address patterns of misconduct or long-term systemic issues. The totality approach gives a better picture of the overall dysfunction of the court and lack of leadership. The Commission also considered Respondent's prior history as provided for under the Commission's Rules. For the reasons set forth above, undersigned requests the Commission affirm the imposition of the public reprimand issued on January 26, 2022.

Respondent also requested that the Commission remove the requirement that he complete a training – "How to Communicate with Diplomacy and Tact" offered through Dale Carnegie. Respondent argues that he is completing other training with J S . Undersigned believes the Commission chose this course for a particular reason, but that the overall goal was to get Respondent to address his leadership and communication issues with subordinate staff. If the Commission is inclined to remove

the Dale Carnegie course in favor of continued training with Mr. S , undersigned can work with Mr. S to ensure that his training with Respondent addresses the goals of the Dale Carnegie course as well.

Dated this 24th day of February, 2022.

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

April P. Elliott
Executive Director / Acting Disciplinary Counsel

A copy of this pleading was electronically served on February 24, 2022, upon Respondent, to:

Hon. Bruce Staggs
Benson Justice Court

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaint 20-318

Judge: Bruce E. Staggs

Complainant: Samantha Reno

**ORDER DENYING RESPONDENT JUDGE'S
MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION**

The respondent judicial officer filed a Motion for Reconsideration of the Commission's reprimand decision as set forth in its previous order. Pursuant to Commission Policy 23, disciplinary counsel was requested to file a response to the motion, and did so.

On March 11, 2022, the Commission denied the Motion for Reconsideration. As provided in Commission Policy 23, the respondent judicial officer's Motion for Reconsideration, disciplinary counsel's response, and this Order denying the Motion for Reconsideration shall be made a part of the record that is posted to the Commission's website with the other public documents (the Complaint, the judicial officer's response, and the Reprimand Order).

Commission member Barbara Brown did not participate in the consideration of this matter.

Dated: March 21, 2022

FOR THE COMMISSION

/s/ Louis Frank Dominguez
Hon. Louis Frank Dominguez
Commission Chair

Copies of this order were distributed to all appropriate persons on March 21, 2022.