

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaint 23-149

Judge:

Complainant:

ORDER

March 21, 2024

The Complainant alleged a justice of peace demonstrated bias against a particular religion when conducting court business.

The role of the Commission on Judicial Conduct is to impartially determine whether a judicial officer has engaged in conduct that violates the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct or Article 6.1 of the Arizona Constitution. There must be clear and convincing evidence of such a violation in order for the Commission to take disciplinary action against a judicial officer.

The Commission reviewed all relevant available information and concluded there was not clear and convincing evidence of ethical misconduct in this matter. The complaint is therefore dismissed pursuant to Commission Rules 16(a) and 23(a).

Commission members Regina L. Nassen and Christopher P. Staring did not participate in the consideration of this matter.

Copies of this order were distributed to all appropriate persons on March 21, 2024.

CONFIDENTIAL

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

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

2023-149

COMPLAINT AGAINST A JUDGE

Name: Judge's Name:

Instructions: Use this form or plain paper of the same size to file a complaint. Describe in your own words what you believe the judge did that constitutes judicial misconduct. Be specific and list all of the names, dates, times, and places that will help the commission understand your concerns. Additional pages may be attached along with copies (not originals) of relevant court documents. Please complete one side of the paper only, and keep a copy of the complaint for your records.

On _____ a meeting was held with all the Judges in _____ County Justice Court regarding the selection and appointment of Pro-Tem Judges. During the discussion Judge _____ told all the Judge's present that Attorney _____ practiced witchcraft, was a worlock and there had been news stories about _____ and his religious beliefs. Judge _____ urged the other Judges to keep in mind a person religious beleifs could reflect poorly on the Court if litigants or members of the public found out about it. She was told by another Judge that the Civil Rights Act specifically forbids anyone to consider a person's religious beliefs in the hiring practice. Even after she was advised of this Judge _____ reinterated her previous coments about how a person's public outspokenness of their religious practices could reflect upon our Court.

This is a clear violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct. Furthermore and more concerning is there is now a presumption, if not a true reality, that Judge _____ applies these same principles to litigant's in her Courtroom. This goes to the core of the fairness and impartiality a Judge must have with parties and litigants in their Courtroom.