



Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct 2019 Annual Report

This is the annual report of the Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct (“Commission”) for calendar year 2019.

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMISSION

Judicial conduct commissions exist in every state and serve a vital role in promoting public confidence in the independence, impartiality, integrity, and competence of the judicial branch of government.

The Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct was created in 1970, when voters approved Article 6.1 of the Arizona Constitution. Article 6.1 was amended in 1988, establishing the Commission as an independent state agency responsible for investigating complaints against judicial officers serving on the supreme court, court of appeals, superior court, justice courts, and municipal courts.

The Commission does not have jurisdiction over federal judges, tribal judges, or administrative law judges. Judicial officers who are subject to the Commission’s jurisdiction must comply with the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct (“Code”) adopted by the Arizona Supreme Court.

COMMISSION PROCEDURES

The Commission’s rules, which are promulgated by the Arizona Supreme Court, prescribe the procedures for investigating and resolving complaints of judicial misconduct. The rules are available on the Commission’s website at

<http://www.azcourts.gov/portals/137/rules/Arizona%20Code%20of%20Judicial%20Conduct.pdf>.

Anyone who believes that a judge has violated the Code by engaging in ethical misconduct may submit a complaint to the Commission. The Commission may also open an investigation on its own initiative. Complaint forms are available on the Commission's website, by mail, and at the Commission's office.

Unless unavailable due to a conflict of interest or other commitment, all eleven Commission members review every docketed complaint. If the Commission concludes there is no clear and convincing evidence of ethical misconduct, the complaint is dismissed, and the complainant and judge(s) named in the complaint are notified in writing of that decision.

Example: A defendant in an injunction against harassment proceeding alleges that a justice of the peace was rude and condescending. Commission staff obtains the audio/video recording of the proceeding and prepares a written report that all Commission members review, along with the written complaint. The recording establishes that the justice of the peace was not rude, did not raise her voice, and gave both sides an opportunity to be heard. The Commission concludes the complaint has not been substantiated and votes to dismiss it.

If a complaint identifies issues that warrant further investigation, Commission staff will obtain relevant additional information, which may include a response from the judge, court records, recordings and transcripts, and witness interviews. The Commission's staff attorneys then prepare a report for members of the Commission. After reviewing the report, along with the complaint, any response received from the judge, available recordings, court documents and other relevant information, the Commission determines the appropriate disposition. The Commission may dismiss a complaint, issue a public reprimand, impose terms such as counseling or educational programming, or direct that disciplinary counsel file formal charges.

Example: A litigant alleges that a superior court judge yelled during a hearing, was extremely impatient, and gave her a disproportionately short period of time to present her case in comparison to the time allotted the adverse party. Commission staff obtains the recording of the proceeding, requests a response from the judge, and prepares a written report. After reviewing the report, the complaint, the judge's response, and the recording, the Commission members conclude the judge did not comply with Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct Rule 2.6 (ensuring the right to be heard) and Rule 2.8(B) (requiring judges to be patient, dignified, and courteous). After considering relevant aggravating and mitigating

circumstances, the Commission publicly reprimands the judge. The reprimand is posted to the Commission's website, where the record in that matter is available for public review.

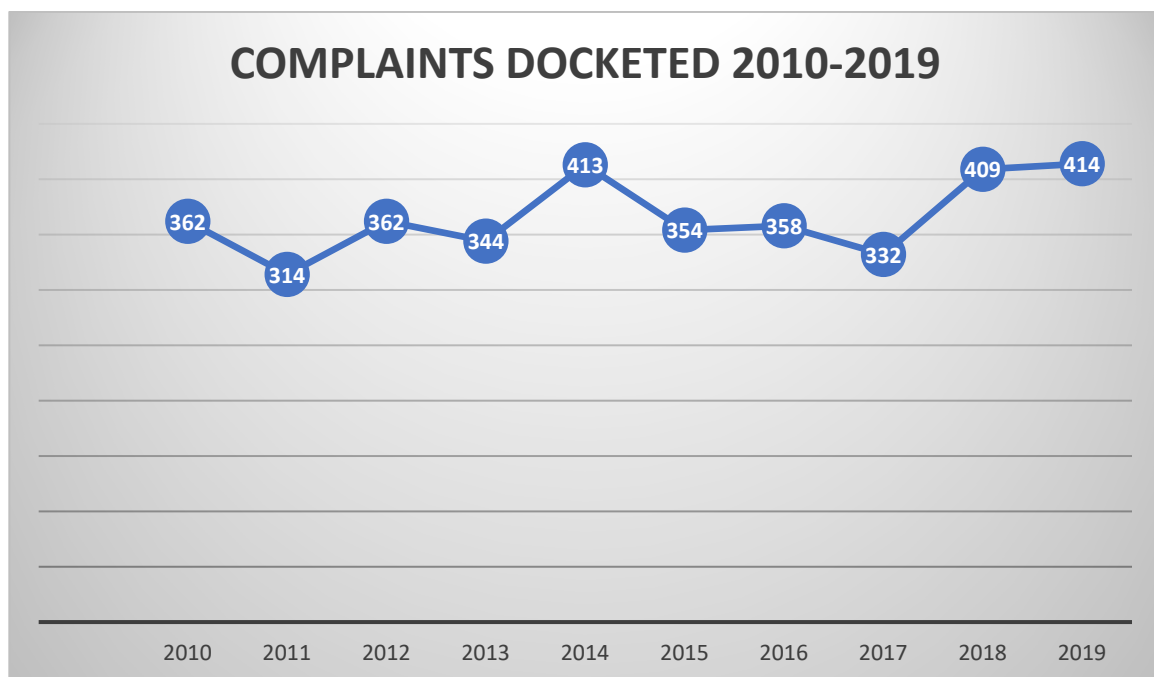
If investigation of a complaint suggests that a judge's conduct warrants a sanction greater than a public reprimand - i.e., censure, suspension, or removal -- the Commission's chairperson may appoint an investigative panel comprised of three Commission members (one judge, one lawyer, and one public member) to determine whether reasonable cause exists to believe the judge has engaged in misconduct. If the investigative panel makes such a finding, disciplinary counsel files formal charges against the judge, and the matter proceeds to an evidentiary hearing. Based on the record developed in the formal proceeding, the hearing panel -- comprised of Commission members who did not serve on the investigative panel -- issues written findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a recommendation regarding the appropriate disposition. The final decision in a formal proceeding rests with the Arizona Supreme Court.

Complainants are not parties to Commission proceedings. Although complainants may be asked to provide information during investigations or to testify at formal hearings, the only parties to the proceedings are the judge and the Commission. The judge may be represented by counsel at his or her own expense. The judge and the Commission may conduct discovery and subpoena witnesses to testify at hearings.

FILING TRENDS

In 2019, the Commission docketed 414 new complaints, which is a slight increase over 2018 and a ten-year high. As of January 31, 2020, the Commission had resolved most of the complaints filed in 2019, with the remainder under review.

The following chart depicts complaint filings over a ten-year period:



2019 DISPOSITIONS

The dispositions of all complaints filed with the Commission since 2006 are posted on the Commission's website -- www.azcourts.gov/azcjc. In 2019, the following dispositions occurred (all rule references are to the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct):

Reprimands (8)

- Justice of the Peace Keith D. Barth was reprimanded in case numbers 18-260 and 18-261 for improper judicial campaign activity. While Judge Barth was serving as a full-time justice of the peace in Santa Cruz County, a Facebook page went live promoting him as a candidate for Santa Cruz County Sheriff in 2020. By publicly disclosing his candidacy for sheriff, Judge Barth violated the "resign-to-run" requirement of Rule 4.5(A), as well as Rule 4.1(A)(5), which prohibits judges from actively taking part in a political campaign other than their own campaign for judicial office. Additionally, by publicly announcing his candidacy for sheriff at a time when he was presiding over matters involving the sheriff's office, Judge Barth violated Rules 1.2, 2.2, and 2.11.
- Superior Court Judge Howard Fell was reprimanded in case number 19-098. During a drug court hearing, a female participant seemed confused about where to sit or stand when her case was called. Judge Fell told her, "sit on my lap if you want," but immediately retracted that statement, then reported his conduct to his presiding judge and the Commission. Judge Fell was disciplined by his appointing authority, including a three-week suspension without pay, was required to take sensitivity training, and was removed from presiding over drug court. The Commission concluded that Judge Fell's conduct violated Rules 1.2, 2.3(B), and 2.8(B).
- Justice of the Peace Juan M. Guerrero was reprimanded in case number 18-298 for engaging in improper political activity, hearing a matter on which he had previously recused, engaging in improper ex parte communication, and abusing the prestige of judicial office, in violation of Rules 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.5(A), 2.6(A), 2.9, 2.10(A), and 2.11(A).
- Superior Court Judge Lee Jantzen was reprimanded in case numbers 18-389, 18-398, and 18-404, which all dealt with the same conduct. The Commission found that Judge Jantzen engaged in improper ex parte communications and handled matters in which he had previously recused, in violation of Rules 1.2, 2.6(A), and 2.9.

- Judge Adeline Martinez, formerly of the Winkelman Municipal Court, was reprimanded in case number 19-118 after an operational review of her court by the Arizona Supreme Court's Administrative Office of the Courts revealed numerous deficiencies. While the Commission's investigation was pending, Judge Martinez retired. The Commission concluded that Judge Martinez' conduct amounted to a dereliction of duty, in violation of Rules 1.1, 1.2, and 2.5(A), as well as Article 6.1, Section 4 of the Arizona Constitution.
- Justice of the Peace C. Steven McMurry was reprimanded in case number 19-176. The Commission concluded that Judge McMurry spoke to a litigant in a condescending and mocking tone and assumed the role of an advocate, in violation of Rules 1.2, 2.2, 2.3(A), and 2.8(B).
- Special Master Andi Paus was reprimanded in case number 19-192 for appointing her significant other/domestic partner as a paid third-party neutral in a high-conflict divorce case without disclosing their relationship, in violation of Rules 1.2 and 2.13(A)(2).
- Justice of the Peace Jay Yellowhorse was reprimanded in Case No. 17-227 for operating an unauthorized diversion program that permitted defendants to have their charges dismissed in exchange for donations to charities of the judge's choosing. The Commission concluded that Judge Yellowhorse violated Rules 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 3.7(A).

Warnings and Advisories

When the Commission dismisses a complaint, it may choose to include warning or advisory language. The Commission may include advisory language when a judge has not technically violated the Code but members believe the judge could benefit from advice about a particular Code-based issue. Warnings are generally issued when the Commission believes a judge either came close to violating the Code or when an actual violation has occurred, but members conclude that mitigating circumstances dictate against issuance of a public sanction.

The Commission issued 15 warnings and 14 advisories in 2019, which are summarized as follows:

Warnings

- The Commission warned a justice of the peace for endorsing and participating in another judicial candidate's campaign and for publishing campaign materials that implied she already held judicial office, in violation of Rules 1.2, 4.1(A)(3), 4.1(A)(5), 4.3(C), and 4.3(D).

- A superior court commissioner received a warning letter after he self-reported delayed rulings on several post-conviction matters, in violation of Rules 1.1, 1.2, and 2.5(A).
- A superior court commissioner was warned about Rule 2.8(B)'s requirement that judicial officers remain patient, dignified, and courteous.
- The Commission warned a justice of the peace about the duty to remain patient during court proceedings and to appropriately supervise judicial staff.
- A superior court judge was warned that his conduct during a settlement conference could objectively be viewed as undignified, detracting from public confidence in the judiciary.
- The Commission warned a superior court judge of the need to recuse when the judge's impartiality could reasonably be questioned and of the duty to allow parties and counsel to confer outside the presence of the judge and court staff after making a disclosure pursuant to Rule 2.11(C).
- A superior court judge was warned about the obligation to rule within sixty days of a matter's submission.
- The Commission warned a superior court judge about the restrictions on fundraising activities set forth in Rule 3.7(A).
- After a superior court judge pro tem self-reported a delayed ruling, the Commission issued a warning letter regarding the need to properly calendar matters under advisement.
- The Commission warned a superior court judge to avoid making comments that are not dignified and courteous and that could create an appearance of impropriety.
- A superior court judge was warned about making gratuitous negative comments about a litigant in a family court matter that could give the impression of having prejudged future issues.
- The Commission warned a superior court judge about a delayed ruling and the need to have administrative procedures in place to ensure timely rulings.
- A municipal court judge was warned about using his judicial title when promoting his candidacy for non-judicial elective office.

- The Commission warned a pro tem justice of the peace about making comments that gave the impression of favoring one party and of prejudging matters not yet presented for determination.
- A superior court judge received a warning letter reminding him of his obligation to be patient, dignified, and courteous in court proceedings and to conduct himself in a manner that promotes public confidence in the judiciary.

Advisories

- In two related matters, the Commission reminded a justice of the peace to ensure that parties and other witnesses are placed under oath before providing testimony in order to comply with Rules 1.1 and 1.2.
- A justice of the peace was advised to avoid the appearance of impropriety arising under Rule 1.2 due to his failure to pay fines imposed against him – particularly because he imposes and enforces fine payments as a judicial officer.
- A justice of the peace received an advisory letter reminding him to be mindful of how the public may perceive his judicial campaign materials and of his duty to maintain the dignity of the court.
- The Commission issued an advisory letter to a justice of the peace, reminding him to ensure that all judicial campaign materials comply with the Code.
- In two related matters, the Commission reminded a justice of the peace of the requirements of Rule 2.11(A) regarding recusal/disqualification.
- The Commission sent a justice of the peace an advisory letter reminding her of the duty to oversee judicial staff's compliance with the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees and to ensure that responses submitted to the Commission are accurate and complete.
- A superior court commissioner was reminded of Rules 1.2 and 2.3, which require judicial officers to conduct their duties without creating an appearance of bias, prejudice, or impropriety.
- A superior court judge received an advisory letter suggesting enhanced calendaring practices to ensure timely rulings.
- A superior court judge was reminded in two separate matters regarding the obligation imposed by Rule 2.11(C) to afford litigants and their counsel an

opportunity for discussion outside the presence of the court after disclosing a potential basis for disqualification.

- A superior court judge was advised to avoid making comments that could be perceived as biased against law enforcement.
- The Commission reminded a superior court judge of his duty under Rule 2.8 to maintain decorum in the courtroom and to require attorneys appearing before him to behave in a courteous fashion.
- A superior court judge was advised to avoid conduct that could reasonably be perceived as chilling a litigant's right to be heard.

Dismissals

Most docketed complaints are dismissed because the alleged misconduct cannot be substantiated by clear and convincing evidence or because the conduct at issue is not an ethical violation. Many complainants, for example, assert that a judge ruled against them because the judge was biased, inattentive, or incompetent. But absent a pattern of error or intentional disregard of the law, an erroneous legal ruling is not grounds for judicial discipline. Litigants who are aggrieved by legal rulings must instead pursue their appellate remedies.

Under the Commission's rules, after a complaint is dismissed, the names of the complainant and the judge, as well as other identifying information, are redacted from the public record. The redacted complaint and the Commission's dispositional order are available for public review and are posted on the Commission's website.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Arizona Constitution dictates the Commission's membership, which consists of eleven individuals serving six-year terms. Six judges are appointed by the Arizona Supreme Court: two from the court of appeals, two from the superior court, one from a justice court, and one from a municipal court. Two attorney members are appointed by the State Bar of Arizona. Three public members, who cannot be attorneys or active or retired judges, are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate.

Members are not compensated but receive reimbursement for actual expenses incurred in serving on the Commission. The Commission meets periodically throughout the year and is supported by staff located in the State Courts Building in Phoenix.

During 2019, the Commission's members were:

Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One

Diane M. Johnsen (Commission Vice-Chair) is a judge on Division One of the Arizona Court of Appeals, located in Phoenix. Judge Johnsen, who grew up in Arizona's Copper Basin, graduated from the University of Arizona and then worked as a reporter at the Arizona Daily Star in Tucson for five years before deciding to pursue a career in law. She received her J.D. degree from Stanford University and then served as a law clerk for Judge Ben C. Duniway on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. Upon returning to Arizona, she practiced commercial litigation at Osborn Maledon in Phoenix before being appointed to the court of appeals in 2006 by Governor Janet Napolitano. In 2015, she earned a Masters of Laws in Judicial Studies from Duke University. Judge Johnsen has served as Chief Judge of Division One and is a member of the American Law Institute. She lives in Scottsdale; she and her husband have three grown children.

Arizona Court of Appeals, Division Two

Christopher P. Staring graduated from the University of California at Davis in 1983, with a B.A. He received his law degree from Tulane University Law School in 1986.

Judge Staring practiced from 1986 to 2010 with the law firm of Fennemore Craig, P.C. In 2010, he was appointed to the Pima County Superior Court, where he served in civil, juvenile and probate bench assignments. In 2015, he was appointed to the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division Two.

Judge Staring has served on the Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct since 2019. He served on the Arizona Commission on Judicial Performance Review, 2012-2019. Judge Staring currently serves on the Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Mental Health and the Justice System, and the Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Courts.

Arizona Superior Court, Maricopa County

George H. Foster, Jr. is a Judge of the Maricopa County Superior Court. He is a graduate of Boston College Law School and obtained his undergraduate degree at The City University of New York, where he graduated *magna cum laude*. He was a law clerk for Judge David S. Nelson of the Federal District Court in Boston.

Judge Foster practiced with O'Connor, Cavanagh, Anderson, Westover Killingsworth & Beshears from 1983 to 1990. His practice began in commercial real-estate transactions and finance and progressed into banking, bankruptcy, securities, land use

and zoning law. In 1990, he joined Allen, Kimerer & LaVelle, where he continued a commercial practice and also became involved in civil rights, securities, and general commercial litigation. In 1993, he joined Wilenchik & Bartness, where he was managing attorney from 1996 through 1999.

Judge Foster began his judicial career in 1999 as a commissioner for the Maricopa County Superior Court. He was appointed as a judge of that court by Governor Janet Napolitano in 2003. Judge Foster has served in the family, civil, juvenile, and criminal divisions. He has served as an adjunct professor at The Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University, where he taught a course in Advanced Real Estate Transactions. He has served as President of the Thurgood Marshall Inn of Court, as a member of the State Bar Civil Practice and Procedure Committee and Rules of Professional Conduct Committee, and as chair of the Maricopa County Superior Court Family Court Division Rules Committee. He has also served on the Arizona Supreme Court's Committee on Superior Court and as a pro tem judge on the Arizona Court of Appeals. Judge Foster is a member of the Commission on Judicial Performance Review.

Arizona Superior Court, Pima County

Gustavo Aragón is a native of Tucson, Arizona. He graduated from Tucson High School, the University of Arizona, and the University of Arizona College of Law. He is admitted to practice law in Arizona state court, the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Judge Aragón began his professional career with the United States Treasury in 1977 as an estate and gift tax attorney. Thereafter, he worked as a prosecutor with the Pima County Attorney's Office from 1979 through 1985. He then joined Kimble, Gothreau and Nelson, defending personal injury claims from 1985 to April 1988. He next practiced at Haralson, Miller, Pitt, Feldman & McAnally, representing plaintiffs in personal injury cases. He became a partner in the firm in 1993, where he remained until his appointment to the Arizona Superior Court in 2006. He has served in the criminal, juvenile, and civil divisions of the superior court.

Judge Aragón enjoys participating in community activities and volunteer work. The Pima County Volunteer Lawyers Program named him Outstanding Volunteer Lawyer of the Year in 1995. He has also volunteered as an assistant scoutmaster for the Catalina Council, Boy Scouts of America, Teen Court student mentor, Courts Are Us mentor, and on the Southern Arizona Legal Aid Volunteer Lawyers Program Advisory Board. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Pima County Bar Foundation. Judge Aragón also volunteers as a mentor for the James E. Rogers College of Law

Surprise City Court

Louis Frank Dominguez (Commission Chair) is the Presiding Judge for the Surprise City Court. He was a judge on the Phoenix Municipal Court from October 1994 until March 2013, when he was appointed as the Surprise City Court Presiding Judge. Judge Dominguez received his B.A. in Psychology at Arizona State University and graduated from the A.S.U. College of Law.

Judge Dominguez is a member of the Arizona Judicial Council. He is a member of the Arizona Supreme Court Work Group on the Code of Judicial Conduct and he also served as a member of the Arizona Task Force on the Code of Judicial Conduct in 2008 and 2009. Judge Dominguez has served as faculty for the Arizona Supreme Court, the State Bar of Arizona, the American Bar Association, and other organizations on various law-related topics. He has served as Chair of the Arizona Supreme Court Limited Jurisdiction New Judge Orientation Program. Judge Dominguez is a Co-Chair of the Annual Governor's Office of Highway Safety Judicial Traffic Conference. He is a member of the Arizona Magistrates Association, Arizona Minority Judges Caucus, Los Abogados, and the Arizona Supreme Court Judicial Conference Planning Committee. In June 2003, he was presented with a "Distinguished Service Award" from the Arizona Supreme Court. In May 2010, the Arizona Supreme Court presented Judge Dominguez with a 2009 Trainer Excellence Award. This award was in recognition of his contributions to the goal of excellence in judicial education and his commitment to serving the Arizona judiciary as faculty.

Judge Dominguez is a Past Board Chair of Valley Leadership. His volunteer efforts focus on working with youth in the community and leadership development. In April 1998, Judge Dominguez received a "Distinguished Leadership Award" from the National Association of Community Leadership.

North Canyon Justice Court

Barbara J. Brown has worked for Mohave County in the North Canyon Justice Court (previously known as the Moccasin Court) and the Colorado City Magistrate Court since January of 1989. She has served as a Court Clerk, Office Supervisor, Special Master, ProTem, and now the elected Justice of the Peace and appointed Magistrate. She has taught various subjects, including judicial demeanor sessions for the Arizona Supreme Court Education Division, served as a Subject Matter Expert for mock hearings, served as a Mentor Judge for New Judge Orientation since 2015, taught at the annual Arizona Traffic conference and the National American Bar Association Traffic Conference on the issue of masking of commercial trucking violations. She was awarded the 2017 *Justice of the Peace of the year* award. She now or in the past has served on various committees and boards, including the Constable Ethics and Standard Board, the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Education and Training, the Arizona Justice of the Peace Association Board, and many subcommittees.

Lawyer Members

Denise K. Aguilar is an attorney practicing primarily in the areas of criminal defense and consumer bankruptcy. She has been in practice in Arizona since 2004. Denise serves as the Phoenix Representative for the Criminal Justice Act Panel in the United States District Court for the District of Arizona and is also a member of the CJA Committee for the District of Arizona. Denise received her B.A. in Criminal Justice from New Mexico State University and Juris Doctorate from the University of New Mexico School of Law.

J. Tyrrell Taber is a trial lawyer licensed to practice law in Arizona and California. Ty has represented plaintiffs and defendants since 1977. He is a certified specialist in Injury & Wrongful Death litigation. Ty has served on the Board of Directors for the Arizona Association of Defense Counsel and the Arizona Association for Justice. He has also served the state as a volunteer for the Town of Paradise Valley Magistrate Court and the Arizona Court Reporter Board.

Public Members

Christopher W. Ames is the President of Paragon Technology, Inc., a company he co-founded in 1983. He is a patented inventor and holds a B.S. in Computer Information Systems from Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Business. The Ames family has lived in the East Valley since 1976.

Roger Barton is the owner of Badger Roofing, a Prescott-area licensed residential and commercial roofing contractor business. Roger is a native of Arizona, with more than thirty years of experience in sales and marketing of a variety of products and services. Throughout his career, he has sought opportunities to serve within the communities he has resided in and has volunteered on a number of boards of organizations.

Colleen Concannon (Commission Secretary) is an Accountant and Project Management Professional with RCSC, LLC. She is a native Tucsonan who received her bachelor's degree from the University of Arizona, a Master of Public Administration from the University of North Texas, and a Master of Science in Accounting/IT from the University of Houston. She has worked in information technology, executive management, finance, and project management in both the public and private sectors throughout her career. She is also a dedicated community volunteer and has served as a board member for numerous public and private organizations within the State of Arizona.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Members of the Commission, as well as Commission staff, regularly participate in programs designed to educate judges, court staff, and judicial candidates about their ethical obligations and about Commission procedures. A sampling of programs that Commission members and staff participated in during 2019 includes:

- Limited Jurisdiction New Judge Orientation
- General Jurisdiction New Judge Orientation
- Maricopa County Justice of the Peace Training
- Small Claims Hearing Officer Training
- Civil Hearing Officer Training
- Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Judicial Staff Training
- Supreme Court and Court of Appeals Law Clerk Training
- Ethics Presentations at the Arizona Judicial Conference
- Maricopa County Justice Court Judge Pro Tem Training

COMMISSION FINANCES

The Commission is funded through the legislature's general fund appropriation to the Arizona judicial branch. The Commission's budget totals approximately \$500,000. Employee compensation, benefits, and rent account for more than 90% of the Commission's budget.

COMMISSION STAFF

The Commission's staff consists of an executive director, one full-time lawyer, one part-time lawyer, a commission specialist, and an administrative assistant. The Commission also has an employee who works four hours per week to support its database and related technology.

In 2019, in addition to the 414 new complaints opened, Commission staff fielded 1034 telephone inquiries, handled 12 public records requests, and docketed 62 potential cases and general inquiries.

Margaret H. Downie is Executive Director of the Commission and Staff Director of the Arizona Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee. Before assuming these roles in

November 2017, Ms. Downie was a judge on the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One, from 2008 to 2017. Prior to that, she spent 11 years on the Maricopa County Superior Court, where she was Associate Presiding Judge and Civil Presiding Judge. Ms. Downie received her J.D. from Georgetown University. She previously served as a member of the Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct and the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee. She is an active member of the State Bar of Arizona.

April Elliott has been the Commission's disciplinary counsel since October 2014. Ms. Elliott is an active member of the State Bar of Arizona and most recently served as the Public Defender in Pinal County. Her previous experience includes serving as a Pinal County family court commissioner and Pinal County Superior Court Judge.

Meredith Vivona serves as Independent Bar Counsel pursuant to Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order 2018-20. That position is supervised by the Commission's executive director and is housed in the Commission's office. Ms. Vivona investigates and resolves, through the lawyer discipline process, complaints filed against lawyers that, for conflict of interest reasons, cannot be handled by the State Bar's lawyer regulation staff. She also assists the Commission in investigating and resolving judicial conduct complaints. Ms. Vivona is an active member of the State Bar of Arizona and previously worked in private practice in Phoenix for more than 10 years.

Kimberly Welch serves as Commission Specialist - a position she has held since March of 2014. Ms. Welch has worked in the legal field for 35 years, including positions with large national law firms, where she assisted with complex civil litigation, government contracts, corporate and taxation law, and tort litigation. She is a certified small business manager.

Norma Contreras served as the Commission's administrative assistant until January 31, 2020. Ms. Contreras previously worked in the consumer protection and advocacy department of the Arizona Attorney General's office.