

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaints 25-380 and 25-405

Judge:

Complainants:

ORDER

The Commission initiated a complaint based on a news article that a superior court judge delayed a ruling. A concerned citizen also sent the Commission the same news article expressing concern over the delay.

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 Commission approved sending the judge an advisory letter reminding him of the duty to issue rulings timely under Rules 1.1 and 2.5(A) of the Code of Judicial Conduct, along with Art. 2, §11, and Art. 6, §21 of the Arizona Constitution. Both complaints are therefore dismissed pursuant to Commission Rules 16(b) and 23(a).

Commission member Roger D. Barton did not participate in the consideration of this matter.

Dated: January 28, 2026

FOR THE COMMISSION

/s/ Christopher P. Staring
Hon. Christopher P. Staring
Commission Chair

Copies of this order were distributed to all appropriate persons on January 28, 2026.

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ALERT FEATURED TOP STORY BREAKING

Comp

25-380

Judge has missed deadline to rule in

By

1 of 2



Gift this article

A County superior court judge who appears to have violated the Arizona Constitution by not issuing a timely ruling has continued to be paid despite a state

law that bars such judges from receiving a paycheck without the blessing of the Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court for a delayed ruling.

Judges like Judge _____ of the _____ County Superior Court have 60 days to issue rulings on motions, according to state law. They must also certify each pay period to having no outstanding matters beyond 60 days unless the delay has been presented to and signed off by the chief justice.

Yet court records show _____ has now gone _____ without ruling on a motion by the _____ of _____ to dismiss a lawsuit involving a _____. The judge's delay even prompted a rare filing earlier this month by one of the attorneys in an effort to prod the judge's attention to the outstanding matter.

As reported by the _____ and _____ were _____ when one or two _____ escaped from a _____ in _____ A male relative of the _____ also had his arm amputated due to injuries while trying to

_____ were shot and killed at the scene by the _____ Police Department. The owners, _____ and _____ later pleaded guilty to negligent homicide. Each served a six-month jail term and were placed on probation with a court order that they cannot _____ in the future.

It was revealed during the police investigation of _____ death that the city's _____ staff were familiar with the _____ following a similar escape and attack a few months earlier. A passerby and _____ were saved from serious injury in that _____ incident when a neighbor intervened with a shovel.

The _____ were quarantined and subsequently released by city staff back to the owners.

Attorneys for the city of _____ rejected a \$ _____ demand by _____ survivors after which attorney _____ sued the _____ the city, and two city workers on behalf of the family in

The wrongful lawsuit contains two claims against the owners and three claims against the city defendants. Attorneys with _____ based _____ Group, which is representing

the city, filed a motion to dismiss the claims against the city.

The dismissal motion's main argument is that the _____ were 100 percent responsible under Arizona law for _____ conduct that day in _____. Any issue with how city staff may have handled _____ after the earlier attack is irrelevant, the city's attorneys argue, while also insisting nothing remiss occurred.

_____ was the fifth of _____ County's six superior court judges assigned the case. The assignment order was issued _____ at which time the parties had been waiting for a ruling on the city's motion to dismiss since mid-_____.

Assuming the 60-day constitutional clock was reset upon reassignment of the case to _____ the deadline for a ruling on the outstanding motion expired back in _____.

The _____ has confirmed the case management system used by _____ County's superior court allows each judge and his/her administrative assistant to review and print a list of the open cases currently assigned to a judge.

Salaries for superior court judges are split 50/50 between the county they serve and the Arizona Supreme Court. State law requires a salary certification by each superior court judge every pay period in order for the judge to lawfully claim a paycheck.

Arizona Revised Statute 12-128.01 states a judge "shall not receive" his or her salary without first certifying no cause "remains pending and undetermined" for 60 days unless the chief justice finds "good and sufficient cause exists" for the delay.

Further, ARS 12-128.01C states it can be a class 3 misdemeanor offense for a person to issue or cause to be issued a payment to a judge knowing that such judge should not receive his or her salary.

The 60-day issue was addressed last _____ in a public reprimand of Judge _____ who is _____ County's presiding judge. _____ was the subject of a complaint initiated by the Arizona Supreme Court's Commission on Judicial Conduct over his own delayed ruling.

_____ request for a status conference has not been ruled on as of press time.