

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaint 25-584

Judge:

Complainant:

ORDER

March 3, 2026

The Complainant alleged a superior court judge failed to disqualify herself in a family law case.

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 does not have jurisdiction to overturn, amend, or remand a judicial officer's legal rulings. 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 3, 2026.

2025-584

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.

A chronology of events demonstrating the grounds for disqualification is detailed herein:
: Petitioner filed a formal Objection and Request for Recusal after Judge made false statements of fact in a ruling and denied a motion to correct them which was filed timely as a motion to alter or amend. Petitioner explicitly stated he could no longer receive a fair trial before Judge . (Exhibit A). Petitioner had originally filed a motion to alter or amend a judgement because of the false statements that judge woods made and gave Judge the benefit of the doubt to correct them as a simple mistake. However Judge refused to correct her false statements and thus the Petitioner filed the objection.
: Petitioner filed a lawsuit against Judge in County Justice Court for abuse of discretion, creating a direct, personal conflict between the presiding judge and a litigant. (Exhibit B)
: Despite the active, personal litigation against her, Judge assumed jurisdiction over and presided at a contested Order of Protection hearing involving Petitioner.
: Judge dismissed Petitioner's Order of Protection without stating a legal basis for the ruling. (Exhibit C).
: Judge denied Petitioner's Notice of Change of Judge as a Matter of Right, thereby ensuring she remained assigned to the case. (Exhibit D). This is one of multiple examples where Judge orders have contained material errors. For instance, in the ruling of , the Court made statements not supported by the record, which Petitioner challenged through a Motion to Alter or Amend Judgment. More recently, in the Mediation Order issued on , the Court stated: " .” This was factually incorrect, as the Petition was filed by the Petitioner, not the Respondent. Such repeated misstatements in official rulings raise reasonable concerns about accuracy, impartiality, and whether Petitioner can receive fair consideration of the evidence.

III. LEGAL GROUNDS
The aforementioned facts establish grounds for disqualification under A.R.S. § 12-409(A), including that Judge is a party to related litigation against Petitioner, is otherwise interested in the action, and that her impartiality might reasonably be questioned. Her refusal to recuse herself despite a clear conflict and a pattern of rulings against Petitioner despite contradictory clear and obvious evidence confirms the ongoing bias.

Petitioner filed a motion for change of judge for cause and On Hon alleged that the Petitioners claim of judicial bias was only in regards to judge participation in the case when in fact the Petitioners claim is based on the abuse of discretion in which Judge is openly Failing to consider relevant factors or considering irrelevant ones.
Making an error of law.
Failing to apply the law correctly.
Weighing all proper factors but committing a clear error of judgment.

These abuses of discretion by judge are ONLY occurring to the petitioner and in favor of Respondent.

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On _____ Judge _____ issued an order stating ‘ _____

Petitioner then filed a ‘PETITIONER’S OBJECTION TO THE COURT’S _____, ORDER FOR CHILD INTERVIEW AND MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION’ in which states:

I, _____, respectfully objects to the Court’s Order for a Rule 12 Interview entered _____, and moves for reconsideration. The Order is based on a clear error of law and fact, fails to comply with mandatory procedural safeguards, and ignores evidence that the interview process has been fundamentally tainted.

I. THE COURT’S FINDING OF “SUITABLE AGE AND MATURITY” IS CLEARLY ERRONEOUS AND UNSUPPORTED BY EVIDENCE.

The Court’s Order hinges on a single, conclusory finding: “ _____.” This finding is not supported by any evidence in the record.

No Evidentiary Basis: The Court received no psychological evaluations, teacher affidavits, or other neutral evidence concerning the child’s emotional or cognitive maturity. The only “evidence” before the Court was Respondent’s self-serving assertion in a legal motion that the child is “ _____.” Academic aptitude is not synonymous with the emotional maturity required to navigate the profound stress of a custody dispute. To base this weighty finding on nothing more than an attorney’s argument is a clear error of law. *See A.R.S. § 25-403(P)* (requiring the court to consider all relevant factors, not just one).

The Finding Ignores the Inherent Harm: A finding of “suitable maturity” must account for the specific context—being interviewed about choosing between one’s parents. A _____-year-old, regardless of academic standing, is developmentally vulnerable to feelings of guilt, responsibility, and fear of betraying a parent. The Court’s finding completely ignores this established psychological harm, rendering it an abuse of discretion.

Confusion of Intellectual and Emotional Maturity: The Court’s finding confuses academic aptitude with the emotional and psychological maturity necessary to withstand the pressure of a judicial custody interview. A child’s placement in a gifted program speaks to her intellectual capacity, but it is not evidence of her resilience to the guilt, loyalty conflicts, and anxiety inherent in being asked to express preferences between her parents.

II. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS IS TAINTED, MAKING ANY RESULTS INHERENTLY UNRELIABLE.

Respondent’s own motion states the child “ _____.” This is an admission that the Respondent has likely engaged in the prohibited practice of discussing this litigation with the child, or worse, coaching her in anticipation of this interview.

III. THE COURT’S ORDER VIOLATES THE MANDATORY PROCEDURES OF RULE 12, ARIZONA RULES OF FAMILY LAW PROCEDURE

CONTINUED:

Undue Influence and Coaching: For a -year-old to be “ ” of a legal modification proceeding is not a neutral fact; it is a glaring indicator of undue influence. This conduct taints the interview process at its source, rendering any “wishes” the child expresses unreliable and a product of parental pressure rather than her own authentic feelings. The Court should not sanction this conduct by proceeding with an interview under these corrupted circumstances.

III. THE COURT’S ORDER VIOLATES THE MANDATORY PROCEDURES OF RULE 12, ARIZONA RULES OF FAMILY LAW PROCEDURE.

Rule 12 exists to prevent the very harm this Order creates. The Court’s directive to simply have the child “ ” fails to mandate the rule’s essential protections.

Failure to Order a Recording: Rule 12(B) requires that the interview “ ”. This is not optional. The absence of this directive in the Order is a reversible legal error, as it prevents any meaningful review of the questioning methods, the child’s demeanor, or the potential undue influence already indicated.

IV. THE ORDER CONFLICTS WITH THE COURT’S PARAMOUNT DUTY TO ACT IN THE CHILD’S BEST INTERESTS.

By forcing this interview under a cloud of potential coaching, the Court is compelling the child to participate in a process that is both emotionally harmful and legally unreliable. The Court’s duty is to protect children from the trauma of litigation and parental manipulation, not to instrumentalize them as witnesses. The potential for emotional damage and the high probability of tainted results far outweigh any minimal probative value the child’s statements may have.

WHEREFORE, Petitioner respectfully requests that the Court:

VACATE its , Order for a Rule 12 Interview.

In the alternative, issue an AMENDED ORDER that:

- a. Mandates that any interview be recorded verbatim by a certified court reporter, as required by Rule 12(B).
- b. Directs the Conciliation Court to submit its proposed questioning protocol for Court approval prior to the interview, ensuring questions are age-appropriate and designed to detect potential coaching.

own motion states the child “ ”. This is an admission that the Respondent has likely engaged in the prohibited practice of discussing this litigation with the child, or worse, coaching her in anticipation of this interview.

The Above filing has not been filed as of _____ because judge _____ is refusing to file Petitioners paperwork, a direct due process violation.

Now today on _____ Petitioner had to file a 'PETITIONER'S EMERGENCY MOTION TO COMPEL CLERK TO DOCKET PLEADING AND FOR RECUSAL' for judge _____ continued abuses of power and discretion which has now extended to the Clerk of the court. Petitioner also sent a letter to Presiding Judge _____ to force the clerk to file Petitioners paperwork. The 'PETITIONER'S EMERGENCY MOTION TO COMPEL CLERK TO DOCKET PLEADING AND FOR RECUSAL' states:

On _____, Petitioner presented for filing an "Objection to the Court's _____, Order for Child Interview and Motion for Reconsideration" with the Clerk of the Court.

The Clerk accepted the document and provided Petitioner with a file-stamped copy, confirming its submission. A true and correct copy is attached as Exhibit 1.

Despite this, the document does not appear on the official court docket for this case.

A judge does not have the authority to refuse to file a pleading. The act of filing is a ministerial, clerical function. The judicial function is to rule on the pleading once it is properly filed and before the court. See A.R.S. § 12-283.

The refusal to docket a properly submitted motion is a denial of Petitioner's fundamental right to access the courts and to petition the government for redress of grievances, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article II, Section 4 of the Arizona Constitution.

This action demonstrates a level of bias that precludes a fair hearing. If the Judge will not even allow an objection to be filed, it is clear Petitioner cannot receive a fair or impartial proceeding.

Judge _____ is clearly in violations of ARFLP Rule 6(b)(3), Local _____ County Practice, and the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct Rules 2.2 and 2.6.

Judge _____ has greatly harmed the Petitioner and daughter and all parties involved that allowed these abuses to occur are setting themselves up for a massive tort claim.