

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Disposition of Complaint 26-062

Judge:

Complainant:

ORDER

April 21, 2026

The Complainant alleged a justice of the peace issued an improper search warrant and improperly seized her cat.

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 member Delia R. Neal did not participate in the consideration of this matter.

Copies of this order were distributed to all appropriate persons on April 21, 2026.

CONFIDENTIAL

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

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

2026-062

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 _____, Judge _____, acting as a magistrate, signed a search warrant authorizing law enforcement and _____ County Animal Care Center (_____) to forcibly enter my residence and seize animals deemed to be in distress.

The affidavit in support of the warrant relied primarily on evidence and allegations arising from a separate criminal investigation involving injuries to a different animal (_____) that occurred months earlier, in _____. The affidavit did not allege that my cat _____ had been injured, neglected, or was in current distress at the time the warrant was sought. No veterinary findings, welfare inspection, or contemporaneous observations regarding _____ were included in the affidavit.

The warrant authorized seizure of "_____" without individualized findings as to _____, despite the absence of allegations that she was harmed or endangered. The warrant was executed by forced entry, resulting in damage to my home and the seizure of _____.

Following the seizure, Judge _____ presided over the subsequent animal forfeiture proceedings involving _____. During those proceedings, the court was aware that:

1. The defendant associated with the earlier criminal investigation was barred from my home;
2. _____ had not been injured or neglected while in my care;
3. No independent welfare investigation of _____ had been conducted prior to or after her seizure.

On _____, Judge _____ issued a ruling ordering forfeiture of _____ to _____. The ruling did not include findings that _____ had been abused or neglected, but instead relied on speculative conclusions about possible future exposure and my beliefs regarding responsibility for injuries to a different animal.

My concern is not based on disagreement with the outcome of the forfeiture ruling, but on the sequence of judicial actions and the appearance of partiality created by them.

Specifically, the same judicial officer:

1. Authorized a broad search and seizure based on non-particularized allegations and evidence from a separate criminal investigation, without findings of current danger to the animal seized; and
2. Subsequently presided over and ruled against me in forfeiture proceedings arising directly from that seizure, despite the absence of individualized welfare findings regarding _____.

I am concerned that this sequence compromised the appearance of impartiality and denied meaningful due process, as the court relied on evidence unrelated to _____ condition and did not independently assess her welfare before authorizing seizure or forfeiture.

I respectfully submit this complaint so the Commission may review whether the conduct described above complies with the standards of judicial ethics and impartiality.

I can provide copies of court documents upon request.

COVER SHEET FOR THE RETURN OF A SEARCH WARRANT	
Court Issuing the Warrant: <i>County Justice Court</i>	Name of Law Enforcement Agency:
Search Warrant Number:	Agency Incident Report Number:
Search Address (if applicable):	Name of Officer Signing This Form:

Criminal Rule 2.6(e) requires an officer or affiant to complete this cover sheet when submitting a return on a search warrant. The definition of "structure" is at the bottom of the page.

Was the search warrant issued for the purpose of obtaining a blood sample from a suspect in a DUI case?

☐ Yes

☒ No

If the answer is "yes," just date and sign below.

Did an officer enter a structure to execute the warrant?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If the answer is "no," just date and sign below.

• If the answer to the question about a structure is "yes," check only **ONE** of the following:

☐ 1. The warrant authorized an unannounced entry and was executed by an unannounced entry.

☐ 2. The warrant authorized an unannounced entry but was executed by knocking and announcing before entry.

☒ 3. The warrant did not authorize an unannounced entry and was executed by knocking and announcing before entry.

☐ 4. The warrant did not authorize an unannounced entry but was executed by an unannounced entry.

• If the answer to the question about a structure is "yes," check any of the following that apply:

☐ 1. The warrant authorized nighttime service.

☐ 2. The warrant was executed at night.

Officer's Signature

Date

Definitions:

(1) "Night" means the period from 10:00 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.

(2) "Structure" means any building, place, or vehicle with sides, a door, and a floor, which a reasonable person would believe is used for permanent or temporary lodging or for a business.

SW#: _____

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF SEARCH WARRANT
IN THE JUSTICE COURT
COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ARIZONA**

County

Vs.

Jane/John Doe, Unidentified Squatters

Officer _____ personally appeared before me on this _____ day of _____ who on oath, makes complaint, and deposes and says that he/she has just, probable and reasonable cause to believe that there is now in the possession of **Jane/John Doe, Unidentified Squatters** on the premises located at _____ **1Z** **main residence and all detached buildings, structures, and curtilage on this property**, which premises is described as **a tan stucco building with a brown door and brown trim. There is a brown and white placard with the unit number " " clearly marked on it to the left of the door. The property is located on the north side of _____ and east of _____**

Property, to wit:

Any animals (living, dead, or unborn, both above and below ground) deemed to be in distress, danger, or in violation of _____ County Code 6.04.110. Any physical evidence pertaining to violations of _____ County Code 6.04.050.

Your Affiant states the following facts of the case: **A25-370813**

That based upon the above, your Affiant requests that a search warrant be issued with respect to the above location for the seizure of said property, and that the same be brought before a magistrate or held under Arizona Revised Statute 13-3920 and disposed of according to the law.

Affiant

SUBSCRIBED and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____,

(JUDGE, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, MAGISTRATE)

STATEMENT OF AFFIANT: Officer _____

On _____ approximately _____ hours Investigator _____ received a call to her county cellphone from Detective _____ with _____ County Sheriff's Department (_____. He stated:

- That he had received a case earlier that day that had been called in the night prior.
- That the night prior, _____ Animal Hospital called 911 to report an animal that had been brought in to them.
- That a female, _____, (_____), brought in her pet cat because the cat was not eating.
- That when they examined the cat, they found a severe injury to its jaw, hemorrhaging in the whites of its eyes, and missing claws on its back paw.
- That they took radiographs of the cat.
- That the owner told the vet she had been out of town and was unsure what had happened to the cat.
- That the cat had urinated on the bed and then injured her boyfriend's arms when he tried to clean the cat.
- That _____ deputies went to talk to the owner, and she was extremely uncooperative and would not give a statement or information about her boyfriend.
- That that there was a German Shepherd Dog on scene when deputies arrived at _____ address.

Investigator _____ advised that she would speak with Chief _____ regarding the case and disconnected the call. She then made contact with Chief _____ via county cellphone. Investigator _____ advised her of the call, and she stated that, with the current information, she did not have probable cause for a warrant or to bond the cat. That she would need to set up a call for response to further investigate.

Investigator _____ then made contact with _____ Animal Hospital via desk line _____ and requested the records for the cat, identified in the records as _____. She received the records via county email. On the records she observed:

- That the cat's pain level was listed as 3 – Moderate Pain.
- That the cat's breathing was described as Tachypneic.
- That the owner had told them that 2 days prior, the cat had urinated on the bed and left deep lacerations on the boyfriend's arms when he tried to clean it.
- That there was bruising around the base of the cat's left ear.
- That there was separation of the cat's lower jaw.
- That there was significant bruising throughout the cat's mouth, with the left side of the mouth having more apparent bruising than the right.
- That the cat was missing 3 toenails and had bleeding and swelling at the base of the nail beds.
- That a Complete Blood Count (CBC) panel and radiographs were performed.
- That the cat had wire placed to restabilize the jaw.
- That the cat was sent home with pain medications.
- That the cat needed to be rechecked in 5 days, and needed the wire removed within 6-8 weeks.

On _____ at approximately _____ hours Investigator _____ observed that a secondary individual by the name of _____ was listed on the vet paperwork for _____. She searched _____ and located _____ (_____) with a German Shepherd Dog linked to him (_____. The email listed in his P-ID was _____. In _____ P-ID I observed a note that stated that _____ had submitted a request for temporary housing for his dog, _____ due to him

believing he would be going to jail. She sent an email to _____ listed email address advising that she had received his request for temporary housing and needed his phone number to contact him. _____ responded by advising that he had not submitted an application for _____ and to call him at _____

Investigator _____ made contact with _____ on desk line _____ at _____. She advised that she worked with _____ and was calling about the safety net application he had submitted. He stated:

- That he had not submitted a safety net application.
- That he believed his ex-girlfriend, _____ made the report.
- That he had a restraining order against _____
- That no one else had had custody of his dog recently.
- That his dog had been with him.
- That his current address was _____ a house located in _____

She thanked him for his time and disconnected the call. She located _____ profile, _____ The profile photo for the account was of a man with a large German Shepherd Dog. She located his _____ account, _____ with the same profile photo as the _____ account. _____ place of residence was listed as _____, Arizona.

Investigator _____ then located _____ Account, _____ She observed through her following list that she was following _____ account. She also observed on her _____ account a link to her _____ profile, _____ On her _____ account Investigator _____ observed a cat that matched the description and photo of _____ a Calico DMH ear tipped cat.

Investigator _____ took the vet records to _____ clinic where _____ reviewed them. She advised that the injuries were consistent with some form of trauma. That if a dog had attacked the animal, there would be tooth punctures or some other form of laceration, which there were none listed. That the injuries indicated more that the cat was forcefully removed off of something, ripping the claws out, and being smashed into a solid object like a wall or floor.

Investigator _____ sent an email to _____ Center (_____) [now know as _____ Center (_____)] requesting any further information on _____ and _____

On _____ at approximately _____ hours Investigator _____ received the following email from _____

"For _____ I found a _____ License with OLN of _____ and DOB of _____ Our sources show she may of moved to the address on _____ on _____ Possible phone numbers are (_____) _____, (_____) _____, (_____) _____ I'm not seeing any contacts locally with her.

**THE COMMISSION'S POLICY IS
TO POST ONLY THE FIRST FIVE
PAGES OF ANY DISMISSED
COMPLAINT ON ITS WEBSITE.**

**FOR ACCESS TO THE
REMAINDER OF THE
COMPLAINT IN THIS MATTER,
PLEASE MAKE YOUR REQUEST
IN WRITING TO THE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL
CONDUCT AND REFERENCE
THE COMMISSION CASE
NUMBER IN YOUR REQUEST.**