



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Two Judges Resign After Pleading Guilty to Felonies

Two New York judges who pled guilty to felonies last year and were suspended without pay, but had not resigned from judicial office, have now resigned.

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct announced that District Court Judge Robert Cicale (Suffolk County) and Lewisboro Town Court Justice Marc A. Seedorf (Westchester County) resigned after being apprised by the Commission on February 14, 2020, that removal proceedings would be commenced against them.

That both judges had officially remained in office meant there was no vacancy, preventing their respective communities from replacing them.

The Commission authorized formal disciplinary charges against both judges on March 12, 2020, based on their felony pleas. Judge Seedorf resigned from office effective March 12, 2020, and Judge Cicale resigned effective March 16, 2020. Both judges agreed never to seek or accept judicial office at any time in the future. The Commission accepted stipulations to that effect signed by the judges and the Commission's Administrator and closed its formal proceedings.¹

¹ The Stipulations were signed on March 31, 2020 (Cicale) and April 1, 2020 (Seedorf). The Commission accepted them and issued orders closing the matters on April 2, 2020.

Judge Cicale and Judge Seedorf waived the statutory provision of confidentiality applicable to Commission proceedings, to the limited extent that the stipulation and Commission's order accepting it and closing the case would be public.

Judge Cicale had been a Judge of the District Court, Suffolk County, since 2016. His current term would have expired on December 31, 2020. He pled guilty in September 2019 to attempted burglary and was suspended without pay by the Court of Appeals, New York State's highest court. He was sentenced to probation.

Judge Seedorf had been a Justice of the Lewisboro Town Court, Westchester County since 1997. His current term would have expired on December 31, 2021. He pled guilty in December 2019 to tax evasion and was suspended without pay by the Court of Appeals. He has not been sentenced.

The stipulations and the Commission's orders closing the matters can be found on the Commission's website: www.cjc.ny.gov.

Statement by Commission Administrator

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

"The public cannot respect and the electorate cannot replace a judge who pleads guilty to a felony but holds on to office, despite being suspended without pay. Therefore, the Commission acted to rectify this regrettable situation. With the resignations of these two judges, there are now official vacancies that may be filled by their respective communities."

Statistics Relating to Prior Commission Decisions

The Commission has accepted 92 such stipulations since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

Since 1978, the Commission has issued 272 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State, 331 determinations of censure and 175 determinations of removal.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 99 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission's sanctions in 83 cases (74 of which were removals, six were censures and three were admonitions). Of the remaining 16 cases, two sanctions were increased from censure to removal, and 13 were reduced: nine removal determinations were modified to censure, one removal was modified to admonition, two censures

were modified to admonition, and one censure was rejected and the charges dismissed. The Court remitted one matter to the Commission for further proceedings. Two requests for review are pending.

Counsel

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Cicale was represented by Vincent Messina of Sinnreich Kosakoff & Messina, LLP, 267 Carleton Avenue, Suite 301, Central Islip, NY 11722, (631) 650-1200.

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Seedorf was represented by Stewart Orden, Esq., 2 Overhill Road, Suite 400, Scarsdale, New York, 10583, (914) 393-9450.

In both cases the Commission was represented by Robert H. Tembeckjian, Administrator and Counsel to the Commission; Mark Levine, Deputy Administrator in Charge of the New York City office; and Principal Attorney Brenda Correa. Investigator Andrew Zagami was assigned to the Cicale case and Investigator Andy Fenwick was assigned to the Seedorf case.

Background Information on Judge Cicale

First Took Office:	2016
Current Term Expires:	December 31, 2020
First Suspended by Court of Appeals, With Pay:	April 2, 2018
Continuation of Suspension by Court of Appeals, With Pay:	May 8, 2018
Pleaded Guilty to One Count of Attempted Burglary in the 2 nd Degree:	September 13, 2019
Suspended Without Pay by the Court of Appeals:	September 27, 2019

Background Information on Judge Seedorf

First Took Office:	1997
Current Term Expires:	December 31, 2021
Pleaded Guilty to One Count of Tax Evasion:	December 6, 2019
Suspended Without Pay by Court of Appeals:	December 20, 2019

Members of the Commission

The Commission members serve four-year terms. A list of members is appended.

The Public Files

The stipulations and orders are attached. They are also available for inspection during regular business hours at the Commission's three offices:

61 Broadway Suite 1200 New York, New York 10006	Corning Tower, Suite 2301 Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12223	400 Andrews Street Suite 700 Rochester, New York 14604
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MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2020
Paul B. Harding, Esq., Vice Chair	Former Assembly Minority Leader Brian M. Kolb	March 31, 2021
Jodie Corngold	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2023
Taa Grays, Esq.	Senate President Pro Tem Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2023
Hon. John A. Falk	Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2021
Hon. Leslie G. Leach	Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2024
Hon. Angela M. Mazzarelli	Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2022
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2022
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2022
Ronald J. Rosenberg, Esq.	Senate Minority Leader John J. Flanagan	March 31, 2024
Akosua Garcia Yeboah	Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2021