

State of Arizona
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT
1501 W. Washington St., Suite 229
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
April 8, 2010

Press Release

CHARGES FILED AGAINST JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

PHOENIX. The Commission on Judicial Conduct announced today that it has filed formal charges against Judge Patty Nolan of the Globe Justice Court. Nolan has served as a justice of the peace since September 1998.

The commission charged the judge with five counts of judicial misconduct involving, among other things, delays in issuing warrants and decisions, repeatedly filing false affidavits certifying that she had no matters pending beyond 60 days as required by law, and failing to diligently administer the court. In her response, the judge admitted that delays occurred but denied that her conduct was repeated or deliberate.

Judge Nolan is represented by Mel McDonald, a Phoenix attorney, and Jennifer Perkins will act as disciplinary counsel for the commission during the proceedings. No date has been set for the formal hearing.

The commencement of formal proceedings against a judge does not mean that the charges are true; it only means that the commission has found reasonable cause to file charges, which still must be proven in an evidentiary hearing. Charges that are proven by clear and convincing evidence could result in findings that the judge violated the Code of Judicial Conduct or applicable sections of the state constitution governing judicial conduct. Charges that are not proven are dismissed.

If the commission finds that a judge is guilty of judicial misconduct, it can recommend to the Arizona Supreme Court—the final authority in all matters involving judicial discipline—that the judge be censured, suspended without pay, or removed from office for judicial misconduct.

The commission is an independent state agency composed of six judges, two attorneys, and three public members. Its office is located in the Arizona State Courts Building at the State Capitol complex in Phoenix.

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For immediate release.

For more information, contact
Keith Stott, Executive Director
Telephone: (602) 452-3200