



STATE OF NEW YORK
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

801 SECOND AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10017
(212) 949-8860

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February 12, 1985

George Sassower, Esq.
2125 Mill Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11234

Dear Mr. Sassower:

This is to acknowledge receipt by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct of your complaint dated February 5, 1985.

Your complaint will be presented to the Commission, which will decide whether or not to inquire into it. We will be in touch with you after the Commission has had the opportunity to review the matter.

For your information, we have enclosed some background material about the Commission, its jurisdiction and its limitations.

Very truly yours,

Lee Kiklier

Administrative Assistant

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Enclosure

THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION

The State Commission on Judicial Conduct receives and reviews written complaints of misconduct against judges in the state unified court system. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Commission decides whether to investigate or dismiss it.

The types of complaints that may be investigated by the Commission include improper demeanor, conflicts of interest, intoxication, bias, prejudice, favoritism, corruption, prohibited business or political activity, serious financial and records mismanagement and other misconduct on or off the bench. Physical or mental disability may also be investigated.

The Commission does not act as an appellate court. It does not review the merits of a judge's rulings. It does not review alleged errors of law. The Commission does not have the authority, for example, to raise or reduce the amount of bail or change the sentence imposed on a guilty defendant.

The Commission does not issue advisory opinions, give legal advice or represent litigants.

The Commission's jurisdiction is limited to judges. Complaints against other court personnel or lawyers are not investigated. When appropriate, the Commission refers complaints or complainants to other agencies.

The Commission may decide not to investigate a complaint that alleges misconduct if the matter appears to be minimal.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If a complaint is investigated and the allegations are not substantiated, the Commission will dismiss the complaint. If the allegations appear to have merit, the Commission may direct that a formal hearing be held.

After a formal hearing, the Commission may dismiss the complaint or caution the judge privately about the matter. The Commission may also make a determination that the judge be admonished publicly, censured publicly or removed from office. If a judge is physically or mentally disabled,

the Commission may determine that the judge be retired. Determinations to admonish, censure, remove or retire are subject to review by the Court of Appeals at the request of the judge. The Court of Appeals is the highest court in the state. If a judge requests review, the Court, after considering the record before the Commission, may dismiss the complaint or admonish, censure, remove or retire the judge from office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Commission proceedings are confidential by law. A matter becomes public only if the Commission has determined that the judge be admonished, censured, removed or retired.

The Commission is required to notify the complainant of the disposition of the complaint, and to notify the judge if the judge had been asked to respond to the complaint in the course of the investigation.