



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

December 16, 2025

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Resignation of Town Justice in Yates County Charged with Bias, Discourtesy and Lack of Legal Competence

Todd C. Whitford, a Justice of the Jerusalem Town Court – who was charged with misconduct by the Commission on Judicial Conduct for engaging in biased and discourteous behavior, and for demonstrating a significant misunderstanding of legal procedures – has resigned from office and agreed to never return.¹

In September 2025, Judge Whitford was served with a Formal Written Complaint containing four charges, alleging as follows:

- During a preliminary hearing involving charges related to alleged violations of an order of protection, Judge Whitford demeaned the alleged victim, exhibited bias against women, expressed disdain for law enforcement, mishandled evidentiary procedures, relied on materials that had not been admitted into evidence, and demonstrated a lack of legal competence with respect to orders of protection;
- During a sentencing hearing for a serious traffic incident, Judge Whitford made inappropriate remarks about both the prosecutor and defense attorney,

¹ A resignation stipulation was executed on December 5, 2025. The Commission issued an order accepting it on December 11, 2025. The judge's resignation was effective December 10, 2025.

expressed sympathy for the defendant – including stating “I hope you’re not mad at me” for imposing the sentence as required – questioned the defendant’s culpability for the dangerous conduct to which he had pled guilty, and used vulgar language;

- While presiding over a suppression hearing, Judge Whitford laughed at the prosecutor, made derogatory comments about his legal abilities, improperly pressured him to act as a witness, and mockingly commented on one of the objections he made; and
- While accepting a guilty plea in a DWI case, Judge Whitford criticized the law mandating incarceration for defendants convicted of two misdemeanor DWIs within a five-year period, characterizing the statute as “disgusting” and “wrong,” and expressed remorse that the defendant was going to jail.

Judge Whitford waived the statutory provision of confidentiality applicable to Commission proceedings, to the limited extent that the stipulation and the Commission’s order accepting it would be public.

Judge Whitford, who is not an attorney, had served as a Justice of the Jerusalem Town Court since 2018. His current term would have expired on December 31, 2026.

The stipulation 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.

“A judge is required to maintain professional competence in the law, and to act in a fair, unbiased and respectful manner toward all who appear in court. Judge Whitford’s resignation, after being charged with misconduct for having failed in all of these areas, is an appropriate resolution to this case.”

Statistics Relating to Prior Commission Decisions

The Commission has accepted 159 such permanent resignation stipulations since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

Since 1978, the Commission has also issued 290 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State, 358 determinations of censure and 185 determinations of removal.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 102 Commission determinations. The results are available on the Commission’s website at “[Appealed Decisions](#).”

Counsel

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Whitford represented himself.

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator John J. Postel, Senior Attorney David M. Duguay and Senior Investigator Vanessa Managn.

Background Information on Judge Whitford

First took office:	2018
Current term expires:	December 31, 2026

Members of the Commission

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

The Public File

The stipulation and order are attached.

*December 16, 2025**Page 4***MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2028
Taa Grays, Esq., Vice Chair	Senate President Pro Tem Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2027
Hon. Fernando M. Camacho	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2028
Stefano Cambareri, Esq.	Assembly Minority Leader William A. Barclay	March 31, 2029
Brian C. Doyle, Esq.	Senate Minority Leader Robert G. Ort	March 31, 2028
Hon. John A. Falk	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2029
Robin Chappelle Golston	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2029
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2026
Nina M. Moore, Ph.D.	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2027
Hon. Peter H. Moulton	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2026
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2026