



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Town Justice in Chenango County Should Be Removed for Obstructing the Commission and Other Misconduct

The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that Jordon R. Lilley, a Justice of the Smithville Town Court, Chenango County, should be removed from office for obstructing the Commission's investigation of a complaint against him, and other serious misconduct.

The Commission found that Judge Lilley:

- Gave *ex parte* legal advice to landlords about evicting tenants without any court proceedings, which unfairly resulted in the eviction of those tenants.
- Illegally issued an *ex parte* order of protection on behalf of an alleged victim even though the case was no longer pending in his court.
- Provided false testimony under oath during an interview with the Commission, denying emails and conversations with the alleged victim despite evidence of numerous contacts, misrepresenting his relationship with the alleged victim, and falsely claiming that the District Attorney's Office had requested the order of protection.
- Deleted more than 500 judicial emails after being instructed, and agreeing, to preserve them, and refused to appear for additional testimony before the Commission.

In its removal decision, the Commission found that the judge's misconduct "renders him unfit for judicial office and warrants his removal to prevent his return to the bench."

Judge Lilley, who is not an attorney, had served as a Justice of the Smithville Town Court since 2013. The judge retired from judicial office on November 1, 2025.¹ His term would have expired on December 31, 2028.

Statement by Commission Administrator

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

"Regardless of the nature and severity of the underlying offense, obstructing a Commission investigation will result in a judge's removal from office. The public can have no confidence in a jurist who lies under oath, refuses to return for additional testimony when duly summoned, or who deletes hundreds of pertinent emails after being told and committing to preserve them."

The Commission Proceedings

Judge Lilley was served with a Formal Written Complaint dated August 27, 2025, containing four charges. He did not file an Answer.

By motion dated December 2, 2025, the Administrator moved for summary determination. The judge did not submit a response, other than to indicate that he had retired from judicial office. The motion was granted on January 29, 2026, determining that the factual allegations of the Complaint were sustained and that the judge's misconduct was established.

The Commission Determination

The Commission filed a determination dated February 17, 2026, in which 10 members concurred.²

¹ Section 47 of the Judiciary Law allows the Commission to seek removal within 120 days of a judge's resignation. Additionally, a judge who is removed from office by the Court of Appeals becomes permanently ineligible to hold any judicial office in New York State.

² Judge David Fried joined the Commission on March 3, 2026, and did not participate in the matter.

Court of Appeals Review

The Commission transmitted its determination to the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 44, subdivision 7. Judge Lilley received it on March 31, 2026, and the Commission was subsequently notified by the Court of Appeals that service was complete. Consequently, the matter is now public.

A judge may either accept the Commission's determination or, within 30 days from receipt, make a written request to the Chief Judge for a review of the determination by the Court of Appeals.

Pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 44, subdivision 7, if Judge Lilley does not request review by the Court of Appeals, the Court of Appeals will remove him in accordance with the determination.

If a Commission determination is reviewed by the Court of Appeals, the Court may accept the determined sanction, impose a different sanction including admonition, censure or removal, or impose no sanction.

Statistics Relating to Prior Determinations

Since 1978, the Commission has issued 187 determinations of removal against judges in New York State. The Commission has issued 361 determinations of censure and 292 determinations of admonition.

The Commission has accepted 163 permanent resignation stipulations, in which the judge has agreed to leave office and never seek or accept judicial office in the future, since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

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 Lilley represented himself.

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator Cathleen S. Cenci, Staff Attorney Shruti Joshi and Principal Investigator Ryan Fitzpatrick.

Background Information on Judge Lilley

First Took Office: 2013
 Current Term Expires: December 31, 2028

Members of the Commission

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

The Public File

The determination and other records are available on the Commission's website:
www.cjc.ny.gov.

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
Hon. David Fried	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2030
Robin Chappelle Golston	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2029
Nina M. Moore, Ph.D.	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2027
Hon. Peter H. Moulton	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2030
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2030