



NEW YORK STATE
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Town Justice in Rockland County Resigns Under Investigation for Not Disclosing a Conflict and for Prohibited Political Activity

Scott B. Ugell, a Justice of the Clarkstown Town Court, Rockland County, resigned while under investigation by the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

In March 2023, the Commission apprised Judge Ugell it was investigating a complaint that he presided over a landlord/tenant case without disclosing that an attorney in the case had personally represented him in an unrelated matter, and for not affording the opposing party an opportunity to be heard.

In April 2023, the Commission advised Judge Ugell it was investigating a second complaint, alleging that he became a candidate for Clarkstown Town Supervisor without resigning from his position as Clarkstown Town Justice.

In May 2023, the Commission advised Judge Ugell it was investigating a third complaint, alleging that he testified falsely in a lawsuit claiming he was ineligible to run for town supervisor.¹

Judge Ugell agreed to resign from office effective June 30, 2023, and never to seek or accept judicial office at any time in the future. The Commission accepted a

¹ *King and Sweet v Ugell and Garvey and the Rockland County Board of Elections.*

stipulation to that effect signed by the judge, his attorney, and the Commission's Administrator.²

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

Judge Ugell, who is an attorney, had been a Justice of the Clarkstown Town Court since 1991. His current term would have expired on December 31, 2025.

The stipulation and the Commission's order 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.

“Public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the courts requires a judge to step aside in cases where there is a conflict, or disclose the conflict so the parties may request a new judge. It also requires separating politics from the bench, meaning a judge must resign upon becoming a candidate for non-judicial office. And it should go without saying that, when called as a witness, a judge must always testify truthfully.”

Statistics Relating to Prior Commission Decisions

The Commission has accepted 127 such permanent resignation stipulations since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

Since 1978, the Commission has also issued 281 determinations of admonition against judges in New York State, 348 determinations of censure and 179 determinations of removal.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 101 Commission determinations. The Court accepted the Commission's sanctions in 85 cases (76 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

² The Stipulation was signed on May 26, 2023. The Commission issued an order accepting it on June 1, 2023.

rejected and the charges dismissed. The Court remitted one matter to the Commission for further proceedings. One request for review is pending.

Counsel

Judge Ugell was represented by Deborah A. Scalise, of Scalise & Hamilton, P.C., 111 Brook Street, Suite 202, Scarsdale, NY 10583, (914) 725-2801

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator Mark Levine, Principal Attorney Jennifer L. Lowry, and Investigator Kieran Rock.

Background Information on Judge Ugell

First Took Office:	1991
Current Term Expires:	December 31, 2025
Year Admitted to NYS Bar:	1986

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.

MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2024
Taa Grays, Esq., Vice Chair	Senate President Pro Tem Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2027
Hon. Fernando M. Camacho	Former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2024
Hon. John A. Falk	Former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore	March 31, 2025
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2026
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2026
Ronald J. Rosenberg, Esq.	Former Senate Minority Leader John J. Flanagan	March 31, 2024
Graham B. Seiter, Esq.	Assembly Minority Leader William A. Barclay	March 31, 2025
Hon. Anil C. Singh	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2026
Akosua Garcia Yeboah	Former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo	March 31, 2025
Vacant	Governor	March 31, 2027