

IN THE ALABAMA COURT OF THE JUDICIARY

IN THE MATTER OF:

JOHN RANDALL "RANDY" JINKS
PROBATE JUDGE
TALLADEGA COUNTY

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CASE NO. 57

FILED

APR 28 2021

COURT OF THE JUDICIARY
Rebecca C. Oates
Secretary

ANSWER AND DENIAL

Comes now, John Randall "Randy" Jinks, Respondent, and answers the complaint filed by the Judicial Inquiry Commission as follows:

This Complaint does not contain a grievance or allegation of the Respondent's disregard for the rights of litigants or their attorneys. There is no complaint or allegation of the Respondent's arbitrary and capricious course of conduct in the handling of cases. There is no complaint or allegation of an oppressive and improper use of the power of the court. This complaint is full of highly inflammatory allegations calculated to mislead this Court due to complaints made by a few employees who seek to have the Respondent removed from his duly elected office. This complaint contains comments, speculation, opinions, alleged quotes, and other hearsay and is not conducive to the orderly

process of judicial determination. It contains flagrant, false, vague and subjective accusations against the Respondent, which are calculated to generate antagonism to sway this Court in advance of hearing material evidence relevant to the proper standard of law which applies to Judge Jinks. Each of the one hundred and twenty-eight (128) allegations are addressed in order:

1. The Respondent admits taking office as Probate Judge in Talladega County, Alabama on or about January 15, 2019 and continued to serve in that capacity through and until on or about March 3, 2021.
2. The Respondent admits he was a direct supervisor of: then-Chief Clerk Ms. Lawana Patterson, until her retirement on December 1, 2020; an indirect supervisor of Deputy Chief Clerk Tess Daniel (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Charlotte Baker (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Ms. Jessica Gaither (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Ms. Elaine

Griffith (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Ms. Susan Smith (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Ms. Althia White (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Ms. Lisa Townsend (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor); an indirect supervisor of Mr. Darrius Pearson (Ms. Patterson being his direct supervisor); and an indirect supervisor of Ms. Brandie Martin (Ms. Patterson being her direct supervisor), until Ms. Patterson terminated her employment on or about May 15, 2020. The Respondent questions the need to include the age of Ms. Baker, as it is completely irrelevant to this Complaint and further implies that the age of an individual has some sort of bearing on the validity of his or her alleged observations. The Respondent further states that the Complaint fails to include additional employees supervised, indirectly, by the Respondent, including: Deputy Chief Clerk, Juanita English, employed for approximately one year during Judge Jinks'

tenure; Becky Hagan, and Michael Waller, Chief Clerk beginning December, 1, 2020.

3. The Respondent denies the allegation in the Complaint that numerous comments and/or actions and/or demeanor in the probate-court office or in execution of the duties of his role as Probate Judge has exhibited grossly inappropriate demeanor that has created a difficult, unprofessional, and inappropriate atmosphere during the ordinary workday in that office and has injured respect for the judiciary. The Respondent demands strict proof of each and every allegation set forth in said Complaint.
4. The Respondent denies directing any inappropriate demeanor at certain employees. Further, the Respondent denies the speculative allegation made against him based on persons not named in the Complaint. The Respondent has no knowledge of any grievance made by any visitor of the Probate Court.
5. The Respondent denies the allegation and demands strict

proof thereof.

6. The Respondent denies any and all allegations of unlawful harassment and demands strict proof thereof.
7. The Respondent denies this allegation. This allegation is vague, speculative and highly subjective and calculated to portray Judge Jinks in a negative light which is difficult to disprove given the nature of the allegation.
8. The Respondent admits to denying certain accusations and allegations made against him. The Respondent not only has a right to deny false allegations made against him, but a duty and obligation to be honest and forthcoming in his response to the Commission. The Respondents denial of the making of certain comments or exhibiting certain conduct is not a failure to accept responsibly, rather a fundamental right to defend oneself and an obligation to be truthful. The Respondent denies laying blame on his staff.
9. The Respondent vehemently denies the allegation, made by the Deputy Chief Clerk Daniel, that he has mouthed a racial

slur and further states that this allegation is made for the sole purpose of misleading and tainting the views of the Judicial Inquiry Commission, the Court of Judiciary, and the public.

10. The Respondent emphatically denies making any statement to Ms. Martin, or any other person or persons, regarding the race or ethnicity of any customer or visitor in the Probate Office.
11. The Respondent denies making any statement to the Deputy Chief Clerk Daniel, or any other person or persons, regarding the race or ethnicity of any customer or visitor in the Probate Office.
12. The Respondent categorically, emphatically, and passionately denies this allegation. He has never made such statement, and he has never believed such thing. He believes instead, and has told friends, attorneys, and colleagues, that George Floyd was murdered by the police officer. The Respondent denies making any derogatory comment, to any

persons, which would in any way justify the killing of George Floyd. The Respondent believes, and has communicated his beliefs many times, to many people, both in private and personal conversations while in the Probate Office, in conversations with employees within the Probate Office, and in his personal life outside the Probate Office, that there exists no excuse for the killing of George Floyd, that watching the video is sickening, unconscionable, inhumane and horrifying. The Respondent is so disturbed with the video that he has yet to watch the full-length and has stated that repeatedly. The Respondent is dumbfounded as to why any person would make such an utterly absurd, unfounded, fabricated allegation.

13. The Respondent admits, while on a personal and private phone conversation in his office, recalling and repeating a cartoon. The Respondent had no reason to believe that any person in his office was listening to or recording his private and personal phone conversations. The Respondent admits

that the paraphrasing of this cartoon, albeit during a private and personal conversation, should not have been overheard in the workplace.

14. The Respondent admits viewing videos and news reports of the riots concerning police brutality and racial injustice. The Respondent admits to watching the news, as well as videos, while in his office, and on rare occasion, will turn up the volume to hear what is being said. However, the Respondent denies the speculative allegation made against him that the videos were heard by customers at the front office. This allegation is not only based on persons not named in the Complaint, but the Respondent has no knowledge of any grievance made by any visitor of the Probate Court.
15. The Respondent admits this allegation. However, the Respondent denies any innuendo or inference that his statement was race related.
16. The Respondent admits asking Mr. Pearson if he was marching with his alumni, Talladega College, in support of

the Black Lives Matter movement, which was going through town when Mr. Pearson returned to the Probate Office. The Respondent admits Mr. Pearson stated he was not participating, but had instead been to the post office. The Respondent adamantly denies any communication, implied or expressed, that Mr. Pearson should not participate in any way with the Black Lives Matter march or the like. The Respondent further states that the Respondent conversed with Ms. Patterson in March of 2020 regarding continued employment of Mr. Pearson and implored Ms. Patterson to refrain from terminating Mr. Pearson's employment, as Ms. Patterson sought to do. During that time, Ms. Patterson asked Mr. Pearson if he had been working on school work during working hours, and, according to Ms. Patterson, Mr. Pearson denied doing such and further denied attending school. Ms. Patterson proceeded to have his computer searched by IT, called Mr. Pearson's school, and learned that Mr. Pearson was dishonest in his report to her,

therefore Ms. Patterson sought to terminate his employment. The Respondent requested Ms. Patterson not terminate his employment, but rather discuss his dishonesty and continue his employment. The Respondent has not, in any way, threatened the employment of Mr. Pearson, instead persisted with his supervisor so that he could continue his employment.

17. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false. The Respondent further states that Ms. Baker emphatically denies this allegation as being false and has not been asked about the validity of this claim by any person other than undersigned counsel. Further, this allegation is based on unverified, unsubstantiated hearsay alleged by an unidentified, undisclosed person and the Respondent demands strict proof thereof.
18. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false. Further, this allegation is based on unverified, unsubstantiated hearsay alleged by an unidentified,

undisclosed person and the Respondent demands strict proof thereof.

19. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false, and known by Ms. Daniel to be false. This allegation is intentionally highly inflammatory and made for the purpose of portraying Judge Jinks in a negative light.
20. The Respondent admits offering to take Ms. Gaither home from work when she needed transportation to her home. The Respondent denies any innuendo or allusion that is now being alleged that Ms. Gaither was coerced or pressured to accept the Respondent's offer to carry her home. The Respondent further denies Ms. Gaither complained about the quality of work being done and further denies making a racist, derogatory response. This allegation is intentionally highly inflammatory and made for the purpose of portraying Judge Jinks in a negative light.
21. The Respondent denies this unfounded, baseless allegation and demands strict proof thereof.

22. The Respondent denies any inappropriate demeanor regarding African Americans. This false allegation is intentionally highly inflammatory and made for the purpose of portraying Judge Jinks in a negative light.
23. The Respondent denies this allegation, as being based on casual office banter, now exaggerated to cast Judge Jinks in a negative light.
24. The Respondent denies the allegation of frequent inappropriate demeanor regarding women. The Respondent further denies the speculative allegation that such frequent inappropriate demeanor regarding women has occurred in the presence of non-employees. This allegation is not only based on persons not named in the Complaint, but the Respondent has no knowledge of any grievance made by any non-employee of the Probate Office.
25. The Respondent denies inappropriate demeanor regarding women.
26. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict

proof thereof.

27. The Respondent admits the first two statements, and each and every statement thereafter the Respondent denies as being false and known by Mr. Pearson to be false. Mr. Pearson watched the short clipped video without hesitation, protest or any indication of being offended. The Respondent does not insinuate or impose any obligation on the part of Mr. Pearson to have told the Respondent he did not wish to view the video, however, the Respondent is fully and truthfully answering the allegation and, in doing so, the Respondent is denying each and every averment that Mr. Pearson objected in any manner whatsoever, both during and after the viewing of the short-clipped video. Looking at and sharing the video amounted to a lapse in judgment, the significance of which has been exaggerated.
28. The Respondent admits stating, to multiple individuals, both inside the Probate Office and outside the Probate Office, that: Rebecca Tanner was a waitress at Huddle House, that

he liked his sausage cooked a particular way, and that she always made sure his sausage was burnt. The Respondent finds it incomprehensible that his statement of how “he likes the way she burnt his sausage” (referencing a female waitress at Huddle House where sausage is well-known to be on the menu) has been converted to having a sexual undertone and to the extent of appearing in a Complaint filed with the Court of Judiciary, under the subtitle “Sexually Inappropriate Demeanor and/or Other Inappropriate Comments to and/or About Women”. This allegation is overblown and distorted in a manner to cast Judge Jinks in an unfavorable light.

29. The Respondent admits he sought out temporary housing for Ms. Tanner upon her release from jail, and the Respondent admits he sought employment for Ms. Tanner upon her release from jail. The Respondent admits it is likely he did say, while discussing the circumstances of coming to know Ms. Tanner, that, “he likes the way she burnt his sausage.”

The rest of the allegation is exaggerated and overblown to make a casual frivolous comment into a sexually explicit remark and this is vehemently denied.

30. The Respondent denies this allegation, in part. The Respondent admits Ms. Tanner was released from incarceration on or about Friday, April 3, 2020. The Respondent admits picking Ms. Tanner up from jail upon her release. The Respondent denies sneaking Ms. Tanner into his residence for several days and further denies having ever stated the same. The Respondent admits Ms. Tanner stayed in his home, in a separate bedroom, for two nights, (Friday and Saturday) because the camper he had purchased was not yet livable. The Respondent admits taking Ms. Tanner to Pelham, Alabama for a visit with her daughter. The Respondent denies making the alleged statement with regard to her dress and actions.
31. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.

32. The Respondent denies this allegation in part, in that, the allegation is based on incomplete information and partial truths.
33. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that, the allegation is based on incomplete information and partial truths.
34. Respondent does not have any recollection of this allegation.
35. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false, baseless, unfounded, and unsubstantiated and demands strict proof thereof. Further, this allegation is based upon unsupported hearsay of individuals not named in this complaint. It does not include any name of any female customer or attorney to which this allegation is said to have been directed, and the Respondent has no knowledge of any female attorney or customer who has ever made any complaint or filed any grievance against the Respondent for any reason. Again, this allegation is vague, speculative and highly subjective and calculated to portray Judge Jinks in a

negative light which is difficult to disprove given the nature of the allegation.

36. The Respondent strongly denies this allegation as being false and demands strict proof thereof. Further, after Ms. Patterson fired Ms. Martin, Ms. Martin voluntarily reached out to the Respondent asking for his assistance in receiving unemployment benefits she had not received but believed she was entitled. The Respondent did assist her and she did receive the claimed benefits. The Respondent is utterly dismayed at the false allegations contained herein.
37. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false, outrageous, and baseless, and demands strict proof thereof.
38. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false, baseless, erroneous, and presumptuous and demands strict proof thereof.
39. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false, erroneous, presumptuous, unwarranted, speculative, and misguided and demands strict proof thereof.

40. The Respondent does not deny this allegation.
41. The Respondent does not deny this allegation. This bit of office humor has been overblown and in a manner to exaggerate the significance of such an occurrence.
42. The Respondent admits occasionally singing while walking through the office. The Respondent is a singer and has recorded music, including a 10-song CD of Dean Martin songs. The Respondent further admits: he often listens to a Dean Martin song, titled “Everybody Loves Somebody Sometimes”, and he has listened to Dean Martin using humor while singing his song by singing his lyrics as “everybody wants my body sometimes”. He very well may have sung either and/or both of the lyrics while walking and/or working at his desk. The Respondent has never received any complaint, comment, suggestion or notice that his singing of any song was offensive. The Respondent does not aver it is incumbent upon an employee to give him notice that the employee disapproves of any sexist or inappropriate

comment, however, the Respondent, albeit a Judge, cannot reasonably be expected to believe that the occasional singing of this Dean Martin song while walking through the office would be so offensive and inappropriate as to result in a complaint to the Judicial Inquiry Commission.

43. The Respondent denies this allegation, which includes unsupported hearsay, references individuals not named in this Complaint, and the Respondent has no knowledge of any female poll worker or any other citizen who has ever made any complaint or filed any grievance against the Respondent. This allegation is highly inflammatory and made for the purpose of portraying Judge Jinks in a negative light.
44. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
45. The Respondent admits this allegation, in that, he did state in a personal and private cell phone conversation in his office, that the female dancers in the Super Bowl's halftime

show were so provocative that he sent a text to his pastor after the halftime show and told him it was the most sexually inappropriate halftime show he had ever seen. The Respondent admits that, during this personal and private conversation in his office, he had jokingly told his pastor that he was not having the purest of thoughts as he watched the show and that his pastor had suggested scheduling a visit for confession. However, this allegation references individuals not named in this Complaint, and the Respondent has no knowledge of any office visitor or any other citizen who has ever made any complaint or filed any grievance against the Respondent. The Respondent denies the allegation of calling the dancers “whores” as being false and demands strict proof thereof.

46. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that, the allegation is based on incomplete information and partial truths. Further, this allegation references individuals not named in this Complaint, and the Respondent has no

knowledge of any office visitor or any other citizen who has ever made any complaint or filed any grievance against the Respondent.

47. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that, the allegation is based on incomplete information and partial truths. The Respondent did state, in a conversation with Ms. Gaiter: that his wife retired in February 2019 and cared for her mother for the next 14 months until her mother passed away, and that his wife now finds herself bored, meaning she needed to find something to do. The Respondent denies telling Ms. Gaither she would become bored with her husband, and the Respondent denies telling Ms. Gaither he wants a younger woman. Further, the Respondent fervently denies ever having grabbed the arm of Ms. Gaither and demands strict proof thereof.
48. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
49. The Respondent strongly denies this allegation as being

patently false and demands strict proof thereof.

50. The Respondent admits making the following alleged comments about women: “She is cute”; “She is pretty”; “She looks nice”. However, this allegation references an individual not named in this Complaint, and the Respondent has no knowledge of any attorney or any other citizen who has ever made any complaint or filed any grievance against the Respondent.
51. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
52. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
53. The Respondent admits this allegation in part, in that:
during a personal and private conversation in his office, he reported to a friend what he had earlier told his pastor: that he had a conference coming up in Orange Beach and would be sitting on the beach where women would be running around in swim suits and he would be humming that old

song, "Precious Memories". This allegation is denied, in part, due to the allegation being based on partial truth and incorrect information.

54. The Respondent denies the allegation of inappropriate demeanor through derogatory comments about the appearance of women. The Respondent has no knowledge of any grievance made by any non-employee of the Probate Office.
55. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that, the allegation is based on incomplete information and partial truths.
56. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false and demands strict proof thereof.
57. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false, groundless, baseless, and speculative and demands strict proof thereof.
58. The Respondent denies this allegation as being patently false, and further states that the Respondent was invited to

and attended the wedding of Ms. Gaither in or around March of 2019.

59. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false and demands strict proof thereof.
60. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that, the allegation is false, based on incomplete information and partial truths. The Respondent denies making any derogatory remark about Ms. Gaither and specifically denies making any comment regarding her weight or weight gain while looking at or referencing her senior portrait or at any other time to any individual.
61. The Respondent does not deny this allegation, in that, he did tell Ms. Gaither she looks different now than she did in her senior portrait. This is not believed to constitute a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
62. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
63. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict

proof thereof. Further while being deposed under oath by the Judicial Inquiry Commission, Ms. Smith denied any knowledge or recollection of this alleged conversation. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.

64. The Respondent denies any comments to Ms. Gaither which would imply he had or has any opinion or belief that she is disgusting, ugly, and/or overweight.
65. The Respondent denies this allegation as being false. The Respondent further states that Ms. Baker emphatically denies this allegation as being false and she has not been asked about the validity of this claim by any person other than undersigned counsel. Further, this allegation is based on unverified, unsubstantiated hearsay alleged by an unidentified, undisclosed person and the Respondent demands strict proof thereof.
66. The Respondent denies this allegation in part, in that, when

Ms. White was hired, the Respondent had no knowledge of Ms. White's pregnancy and would not have made the remark alleged during the early weeks of her employment. The Respondent admits, however, he did comment, later in her pregnancy, that she was getting bigger. The Respondent denies that his comments were disrespectful or demeaning. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.

67. The Respondent admits this allegation, in that, it is likely he made this comment. The Respondent states that, if he did make this comment, it was lighthearted and quite obviously not meant to have been taken literally. The Respondent denies this statement to have been demeaning or derogatory.
68. The Respondent does not deny this allegation, in that, it is likely a comment he could have made, although this allegation is based on persons not named and the Respondent has no recollection of making this statement. Respondent denies this comment, if made, to be offensive,

derogatory, or demeaning and demands strict proof thereof.

69. The Respondent denies this allegation which is based upon unsupported hearsay of a persons not named in the Complaint and denies strict proof thereof.

70. No comment.

71. The Respondent denies this allegation as stated in the Complaint and demands strict proof thereof.

72. The Respondent denies this allegation to the extent he could have any knowledge of this allegation. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent. Ms. Baker flatly denies making the statement attributed to her in this allegation.

73. The Respondent denies this allegation, in part, as being based on incomplete information and partial truth. The Respondent assisted Mr. Pearson in carrying leftover pans of food Mr. Pearson's car. The Respondent had no reason to believe Mr. Pearson threw his food away and never had any suspicion that Mr. Pearson was the person believed to have

taken his food. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.

74. The Respondent does not deny this allegation, generally. However, the Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
75. The Respondent denies this allegation. The Respondent did not say to Ms. Gaither what is alleged. However, when asked by Ms. Gaither whether or not he had cooled down, the Respondent did say, “hell no, I’m still pissed, but I don’t think we need to talk about it anymore” or words to that effect.
76. The Respondent does not deny that his conduct in this allegation involved a display of anger and may not be considered appropriate. However, the Respondent has no knowledge of any grievance made by any customer or any non-employee of the Probate Office.

77. The Respondent admits this allegation, in part. The Respondent admits he was likely agitated for an hour, the Respondent admits he was pacing, however, the Respondent denies yelling during this time and demands strict proof thereof. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
78. The Respondent does not deny this allegation.
79. The Respondent admits this allegation. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
80. The Respondent denies this allegation as being unsupported hearsay, and the Respondent has no knowledge of this alleged comment by Ms. White. The Respondent has no knowledge of any complaint or grievance made by any customer.
81. The Respondent denies this allegation as being broad, overstated, exaggerated, and non-specific and demands

strict proof thereof. Further, there is no complaint or allegation that the Respondent has used profanity and/or yelling at litigants, attorneys, customers, or any persons other than the complaints of disgruntled employees.

82. The Respondent admits this allegation in part, in that, on one occasion, the Respondent said, in reference to the County Administrator, “she is a bitch.” The Respondent said this in a private conversation with Ms. Patterson while Ms. Patterson was expressing her many frustrations with the County Administrator (frustrations the Respondent has shared). During this exchange, Ms. Patterson responded by rolling her eyes and exclaiming, “she is something else!” The Respondent denies stating this multiple times as alleged; the Respondent denies calling her “stupid bitch” as alleged; the Respondent denies stating she is “nothing but a damn bitch” as alleged. Although Ms. Patterson did not tell the Respondent she felt this statement during their conversation was inappropriate under the circumstances, she instead

included it in the JIC complaint she filed.

83. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
84. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
85. The Respondent denies this allegation as it is based on incomplete information and partial truths and demands strict proof thereof. The Respondent denies, even jokingly, ever asking any employee whether he/she wanted his/her temperature checked from behind.
86. The Respondent does not deny this allegation. The Respondent admits occasionally playing music in his office while processing documents. The Respondent has no knowledge of any customer who has made any complaint or grievance against the Respondent for any reason, and specifically for his music being played too loudly. Further, the Respondent has not been made aware by any person, including staff, that his playing of music was a disturbance.

The Respondent, had he been made aware, would have respected that others may not want to hear music being played in the office, and closed his office door. The Respondent, once being made aware that one or more employees did not want music to be heard from his office (learned only upon the reading of the employee's Complaint to the JIC), the Respondent began closing his office door.

87. These allegations pre-date the Respondent being duly elected by the citizens of Talladega County, have no relevancy, and should be stricken from the record. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
88. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof. This allegation is vague, speculative and highly subjective and difficult to disprove given the nature of the allegation.
89. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.

90. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
91. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof. This allegation is vague, speculative and highly subjective and difficult to disprove given the nature of the allegation. The Respondent denies that this allegation constitutes a violation of any rule applicable to the Respondent.
92. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that, the Judicial Inquiry Commission has failed and/or refused to consider the totality of the circumstances, source of the claims and allegations, and has failed and/or refused to conduct a full, complete and thorough investigation.
93. The Respondent denies this allegation in that, the Respondent will not assume responsibility for accusations that are blatantly false, which is true of many of the allegations put forth in this Complaint. The Respondent should not be chastised for his refusal to admit to false

accusations, which make up the vast majority of this Complaint.

94. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof. This allegation is vague, speculative and highly subjective and is difficult to disprove given the nature of the allegation.
95. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof. The employees collaborated and colluded over an extended period of time: compiling information, recording private conversations in a judicial office, and jointly filed a Judicial Inquiry complaint against the Respondent.
96. The Respondent denies this allegation and demands strict proof thereof.
97. The Respondent states as follows: Ms. Patterson admits two employees brought complaints to her in July of 2020. Ms. Patterson filed the complaint with the Judicial Inquiry Commission in September of 2020. During that time, Ms. Patterson failed and/or refused to give any notice, any

information, any advice, any suggestions, or the like to the Respondent regarding any alleged behavior or concerns.

Further, Ms. Patterson admits, as Chief Clerk for approximately 21 months prior to her filing the complaint, not being aware of or witness to the alleged inappropriate demeanor. The Respondent had no knowledge of any complaint or concern or of any pursuit of any administrative remedies during the time in which the allegations in this Complaint were claimed to have occurred. The Respondent demands strict proof of this allegation.

98. This allegation is denied and the Respondent demands strict proof thereof.
99. The Respondent has no recollection of any activities associated with this allegation.
100. The Respondent has no recollection of any activities associated with this allegation.
101. The Respondent admits this allegation and admits this photo was not work-related and should not have been taken

with his county-owned telephone.

102. The Respondent admits taking and deleting nine photos of himself in a swimsuit, on the county-owned cellular telephone. The Respondent admits these photos should not have been taken on his county-owned telephone, however, the inclusion of this allegation in the Complaint does not seek to preserve the integrity of the judicial system or best serve the purpose of judicial discipline, but rather, seeks to punish the Respondent by public embarrassment.
103. The Respondent admits this allegation in part, in that, the Respondent did allow Ms. Tanner to use his county-owned cellular telephone and that she did improperly use this telephone.
104. The Respondent denies this allegation to the extent that he could have any knowledge of Ms. White's actions, and demands strict proof thereof.
105. The Respondent denies this allegation, in that he does not recall looking up Cosplay Artists. He denies any recollection

of any viewing of the photos attached to this Complaint and further states that these photos were included for the sole purpose of swaying the opinion of the Judiciary and of the public and does not serve to preserve the integrity of the judiciary.

106. This allegation may be correct.
107. This allegation is denied.
108. The Respondent denies this allegation as this allegation is both subjective and vague.
109. The respondent has no personal knowledge of this allegation and neither admits nor denies.
110. The Respondent's recollection is different from that of the assistant DA, who refused to consider any early release.
111. The allegation is not denied.
112. Respondent has no knowledge of needing a waiver.
113. The Respondent admits this allegation.
114. The Respondent does not deny this allegation.
115. The Respondent admits this allegation in part, in that: The

Respondent had a casual conversation with Mr. Echols regarding various people Mr. Echols assisted and ministered to, including a female currently incarcerated at the Shelby County jail. During that conversation the Respondent told Mr. Echols about Ms. Tanner, her situation, and his efforts to help her. The Respondent may have asked Mr. Echols to consider visiting with Ms. Tanner while at the Shelby County jail visiting the other inmate. The Respondent admits telling Mr. Echols, at some point after Mr. Echols visited with Ms. Tanner, that he had spoken with other attorneys about Ms. Tanner and her situation and that those attorneys were unable to help her. The Respondent's only intent was to help a person in need, and denies any appearance of impropriety.

116. The Respondent denies that any help the Respondent sought for Ms. Tanner would result in a favor owed to any person, including Mr. Echols. The Respondent denies making any request for a favor. The Respondent has no recollection of

Mr. Echols request to appoint him and/or another attorney as co-guardians ad litem and the Respondent has not appointed Mr. Echols as guardian ad litem in any case. The Respondent and Mr. Echols had a clear understanding that any help sought and/or offered to Ms. Tanner was purely a ministry, in which no appearance of impropriety and/or expectation of judicial favor can reasonably be inferred. Further, Mr. Echols has not filed any contested adoption case in the Respondent's Court.

117. The Respondent does not deny making this statement, as it is possible he said this to Ms. Daniel after he and Mr. Echols were on a conference call with Ms. Felton and Judge Crowson.
118. The Respondent has no knowledge of this allegation.
119. The Respondent denies having knowledge of the Motion being filed at the time of filing. However, upon information and belief at this time, the Respondent admits this Motion had been filed.

120. The Respondent admits telling Mr. Echols he intended to help Ms. Tanner after her release from jail and that assistance included allowing her to live in a travel trailer and assisting her with finding employment.
121. The Respondent, according to information and belief, believes Mr. Echols made these statements, however, Mr. Echols admits he was unaware that the using of the Respondents judicial title would cause the Respondent to be in violation of the Canons of Judicial Ethics.
122. The Respondent does not deny this allegation and further states that the Respondent proceeded with extreme caution and exercised his due diligence in determining whether or not adoption cases without venue could be filed in Talladega County. In November 2019, Mr. Echols sought to file in an adoption in Talladega County, where venue lay elsewhere. Ms. Patterson and Ms. Daniel refused to file in or begin processing the petition for adoption arguing it was illegal (neither Ms. Patterson nor Ms. Daniel are attorneys). Mr.

Echols had mentioned that many of his adoptions had been handled by now retired Probate Judge Junkins in Etowah County, when venue lay elsewhere. The Respondent, although having the authority, did not order or instruct Ms. Patterson and/or Ms. Daniel to file the adoption petition, but rather, the Respondent called his predecessor, Judge Atkinson, to see what he might advise. Judge Atkins said that Judge Junkins was a good person who would not steer the Respondent wrong, and the Respondent arranged a meeting with Judge Junkins and met with him on or about January 28, 2020. Judge Junkins told the Respondent that he saw no problem with a Probate Judge considering adoptions where venue was elsewhere; that it often made the adoption process more efficient; and that Mr. Echols was an outstanding and honorable lawyer. It was only after this meeting on January 28, 2020 that the Respondent decided he would hear adoptions filed in his court regardless of venue unless venue was challenged. Ms. Patterson was

outraged and continued to argue that venue was indeed a problem and Ms. Patterson was less than civil in her protestations, even snapping hatefully at Mr. Echols.

Although Ms. Patterson, in her complaint, has attempted to persuade the Judiciary that Mr. Echols filing of adoptions in the Respondent's Court has any relation to Ms. Tanner, it is simply false and known by Ms. Patterson to be false.

123. The Respondent denies any indication or appearance that Attorney Echols is afforded treatment different from other attorneys. However, once the Respondent determined that, under the law, adoption petitions where venue is proper elsewhere, can be filed in any county, Ms. Daniel refused to process these adoptions so these adoptions could not be screened by Ms. Daniel as all other adoptions were. The Respondent avers there exists no rational, reasonable perception of perceived bias or appearance of impropriety.
124. Respondent denies the legal substance of this allegation and believes the JIC attorney has misstated the law in this

allegation.

125. The Respondent does not deny this allegation, and further states that on one occasion he did send one letter, on his judicial stationary, to a professional office in California seeking assistance for a friend to sell his life insurance policy. The Respondent did not seek to advance the interest of himself or his family. The Respondent did, however, attempt to help a person in dire need of assistance, by writing a letter. The Respondent does not deny that this conduct was not proper and takes full responsibility.
126. The Respondent denies this allegation, and further states that there is no attorney, no private citizen, no party to any case, no customer, nor any other person or persons whom Respondent has any knowledge of any complaint or grievance made and Respondent demands strict proof thereof.
127. The Respondent denies being in violation of the Alabama Canons of Judicial Ethics and demands strict proof thereof.

128. The Respondent denies being in violation of the Alabama Canons of Judicial Ethics and demands strict proof thereof.

WHEREFORE, the Respondent requests that the Respondent be provided the opportunity to be heard and contest the allegations contained in the Complaint filed in this matter.

AMANDA HARDY LAW, LLC

/s/ Amanda Hardy
Amanda Hardy (HAR388)
Attorney for Respondent Judge
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that a copy of the foregoing has been served on: the Judicial Inquiry Commission by delivering a copy via electronic mail to: jic@jic.alabama.gov, on this April 28, 2021.

/s/ Amanda Hardy
Amanda Hardy (HAR388)