

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION**

IN RE THE MATTER OF:

**SANDRA L. McLAUGHLIN, DISTRICT JUDGE
30TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

AGREED ORDER OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

Sandra L. McLaughlin is District Judge, 3rd Division, for Kentucky's 30th Judicial District consisting of Jefferson County. Judge McLaughlin has waived formal proceedings and has agreed to the disposition made in this order.

The Commission received information during a preliminary investigation that in the course of her judicial duties Judge McLaughlin made inappropriate comments from the bench. The comments were unnecessary, undignified and inconsistent with the presumption of innocence which applied in the proceedings. These comments brought Judge McLaughlin's impartiality into question. In agreeing to entry of this order, Judge McLaughlin acknowledges that she made the inappropriate comments.

Supreme Court Rule 4.300, the Kentucky Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 3B(4) provides:

A judge shall be patient, dignified and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity, and shall require similar conduct of lawyers, and of staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control.

Canon 3B(5), provides:

A judge shall perform judicial duties without bias or prejudice. A judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, including but not limited to bias or prejudice based upon race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status, and in proceedings before the judge, shall not permit staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control to do so.

The Commentary to Canon 3B(5) includes:

A judge must perform judicial duties impartially and fairly. A judge who manifests bias on any basis in a proceeding impairs the fairness of the proceeding and brings the judiciary into disrepute. Facial expression and body language, in addition to oral communication, can give to parties or lawyers in the proceeding, jurors, the media and others an appearance of judicial bias. A judge must be alert to avoid behavior that may be perceived as prejudicial.

The Commission concludes that by her inappropriate comments Judge McLaughlin violated Canon 3(B)(4)'s requirement that a judge be dignified and courteous to litigants, and Canon 3(B)(5)'s prohibition of words or conduct manifesting bias or prejudice.

Therefore, for the foregoing violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct, Judge McLaughlin is hereby publicly reprimanded. In making the disposition in this order, the Commission duly considered that Judge McLaughlin fully cooperated in the investigation and that she had no prior infractions.

This order is issued on December 29, 2014.

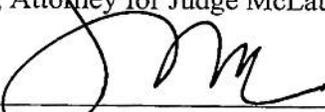


Stephen D. Wolnitzek, Chair

Agreed to:



Brian Butler, Attorney for Judge McLaughlin



Sandra L. McLaughlin

Judge David Bowles recused from any consideration of this matter.