

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION**

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:**

**REBECCA S. WARD, DISTRICT JUDGE  
55<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

**AGREED ORDER OF SUSPENSION**

Rebecca S. Ward is district judge for Kentucky's 55<sup>th</sup> Judicial District consisting of Bullitt County. Judge Ward has waived formal proceedings and has agreed to entry of this order.

During a preliminary investigation resulting from complaints, the Commission received information that indicated Judge Ward engaged in the following conduct. In a number of cases, Judge Ward permitted ex parte communications from attorneys as to whether defendants would be arrested under warrants or summoned to appear in court. Prosecutors were not privy to these communications. Judge Ward entered orders in some cases in which she had a conflict of interest because of her acquaintance with a party. In some cases Judge Ward addressed parties in court in an undignified and discourteous manner. Judge Ward threatened the sheriff and his deputies with contempt and jail time in an attempt to influence the assignment of deputies as bailiffs in her court. In two cases Judge Ward ordered, without legal basis, individuals held for U.S. immigration and customs enforcement. In agreeing to this order, Judge Ward acknowledges that she engaged in the foregoing conduct.

The Commission also received information that Judge Ward had other issues that may have affected the performance of her duties. During the period of the Commission's investigation, Judge Ward enrolled in an intensive counseling program. Her counselor has certified Judge Ward's successful completion of that program.

The Commission concludes that by the conduct described above, Judge Ward violated SCR 4.300, the Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 2D by lending the prestige of her office to influence the assignment of bailiffs in her court, Canon 3B(2) by failing to be faithful to the law, Canon 3B(4) by undignified and discourteous treatment of persons she dealt with in her official capacity, Canon 3B(7) by permitting and considering ex parte communications with attorneys having business before her court, and Canon 3E by failing to disqualify herself in proceedings in which she had a personal bias or prejudice concerning a party.

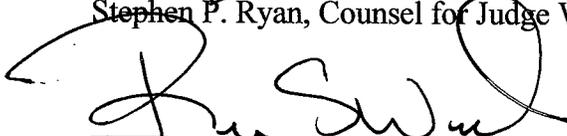
Therefore, for the foregoing conduct, Judge Ward is hereby suspended from her duties without pay for a period of 30 days beginning July 17 2014 and ending August 15 2014. In entering this order with the agreement of Judge Ward, the Commission has duly considered that she fully cooperated in the Commission's investigation, that she had no prior infractions, that she completed an intensive counseling program and that she has altered her manner of adjudication so that the offending conduct will not be repeated.

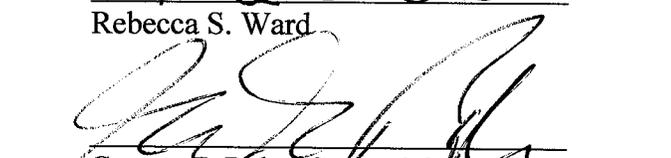
Date: 5-12-14

  
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J. David Boswell, Acting Chair

Agreed to:

  
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Stephen P. Ryan, Counsel for Judge Ward

  
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Rebecca S. Ward

  
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George F. Rabe, Counsel for the Commission