

FY05

A judge contacted a defendant's employer to verify the accuracy of a letter submitted by the defendant for sentencing purposes. The JCC found that the judge violated Canon 3B(7), which prohibits judges from initiating or considering ex parte communications concerning pending or impending proceedings, but that the judge's conduct constituted only troubling but relatively minor misbehavior for which no public sanction was warranted.

A relatively new judge, without considering the ethical ramifications, allowed his name to be included on a list of persons who publicly supported a certain political issue. When the ethical issue was brought to the judge's attention, the judge immediately recognized his error and vowed to avoid future violations. The JCC found that the judge's conduct violated Canon 5B(4) of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which prohibits judges from taking a public position on non-partisan political issues, but that the judge's conduct constituted only troubling but relatively minor misbehavior for which no public sanction was warranted.

A judge inadvertently allowed the registration on his farm vehicle to expire for an extended period of time. When the judge was cited for expired registration, he immediately paid the fine in full and brought the registration current. The JCC found that the judge's conduct violated Canons 1, 2A and 4A of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which respectively require judges to personally observe high standards of conduct, respect and comply with the law, and conduct their extra-judicial activities so that they do not demean the judicial office. The JCC found that the judge's conduct constituted only troubling but relatively minor misbehavior for which no public sanction was warranted.