

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION**

IN RE THE MATTER OF:

**ROBERT B. CONLEY, CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE
20TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

PUBLIC REPRIMAND

Robert B. Conley is a Circuit Court Judge for Kentucky's 20th Judicial Circuit consisting of Greenup and Lewis Counties. Judge Conley has waived formal proceedings and has agreed to this disposition.

The Commission conducted a preliminary investigation resulting from a complaint regarding Judge Conley's intemperate conduct during the January 2, 2020 Greenup County criminal docket.

Judge Conley presided over a revocation hearing in a flagrant non-support case styled *Comm. v. Furner*, Greenup Circuit Court, Case No. 15-CR-00035. After listening to the Defendant explain why he had not made the required payments, Judge Conley advised the Defendant that he should shut up. He continued to question the defendant as to whose responsibility it was to keep up with his payments. When the Defendant attempted to answer, Judge Conley banged his gavel and ordered the bailiff to "send him to jail." However, Judge Conley failed to conduct a hearing or make a written finding of contempt. Judge Conley then intemperately admonished everyone in the courtroom that speaking over him was contemptuous and would be treated as contempt by the Court. The defendant spent three days in jail.

On the same date, while presiding over a show cause hearing in *Comm. v. Willis*, Greenup Circuit Court, Case No. 13-CR-00126, Judge Conley strongly castigated a defendant for failing to pay restitution and for missing court dates. Speaking directly to the Defendant

in presence of counsel he repeatedly raised his voice and slammed his hands on the bench. Judge Conley subsequently recused from both *Comm. v. Furner* and *Comm. v. Willis*.

The Commission concludes that Judge Conley's conduct violated SCR 4.020(1)(b)(i) by engaging in misconduct in office. The Commission further concludes that Judge Conley violated SCR 4.300 and the relevant portions of the following Rules of the Code of Judicial Conduct:

Rule 1.2 which requires judges to act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary.

Rule 2.2 which requires a judge to perform all duties of judicial office fairly and impartially.


Rule 2.8 which requires a judge to be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity.

Based on the foregoing conduct, Judge Conley is hereby publicly reprimanded. In rendering this disposition, the Commission duly considered that Judge Conley fully cooperated with the investigation and advised the Commission that on the date in question he was suffering extreme fatigue from the flu. Judge Conley has expressed remorse and acknowledged his inappropriate behavior.

Date: 9/9/20


R. MICHAEL SULLIVAN, CHAIR

Judge Coleman and Judge Acree recused from any consideration of this disposition.

Agreed to:

Hon. Robert B. Conley, Circuit Court Judge