

MAR 17 2026

CIRCUIT EXECUTIVE

CONFIDENTIAL

Before the Judicial Council of the
Eleventh Judicial Circuit

Judicial Complaint No. 11-26-90003

ORDER

Before: ROSENBAUM, NEWSOM, and BRANCH, Circuit Judges; BEAVERSTOCK and WINSOR, Chief District Judges.

Pursuant to 11th Cir. JCDR 18.3, this Judicial Council Review Panel has considered the materials described in JCDR 18(c)(2), including petitioner's complaint, the order of Chief United States Circuit Judge William H. Pryor Jr., and the petition for review filed by petitioner. No judge on this panel has requested that this matter be placed on the agenda of a meeting of the Judicial Council.

The Judicial Council Review Panel hereby AFFIRMS the disposition of this matter by Chief Judge Pryor. The petition for review is DENIED.

Done this 17th day of March, 2026.

FOR THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL:

/s/ Robin S. Rosenbaum

United States Circuit Judge

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David J. Smith
Clerk

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ORDER

An individual has filed a Complaint against a United States bankruptcy judge under the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act of 1980, 28 U.S.C. §§ 351–364, and the Rules for Judicial-Conduct and Judicial-Disability Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States.

As an initial matter, after Complainant filed her Complaint, she filed a supplement. The filing of the supplement is permitted. *See* 11th Cir. JCDR 6.7.

Background

The record establishes that an individual filed a voluntary petition for Chapter 7 bankruptcy. Complainant later filed a *pro se* adversary complaint against the debtor and moved to waive the filing fee. The debtor moved to dismiss the adversary complaint. After a hearing at which Complainant did not appear, the Subject Judge denied the motion to waive the fee and denied the debtor's

motion to dismiss. Afterward, the Subject Judge entered an order scheduling trial, and the defendant moved for summary judgment. Complainant moved to continue the pre-trial and trial dates due in part to her medical conditions, and the Subject Judge granted the motions. The Subject Judge also granted in part and denied in part the debtor's motion for summary judgment.

Complainant then moved for an extension of time to appeal the summary-judgment order, and the Subject Judge denied the motion because she failed to establish excusable neglect and the record established "a pattern of excuses with no evidentiary support." The order stated no further requests for continuance related to pre-trial or trial-related deadlines would be considered. Complainant moved to recuse the Subject Judge on the grounds that he was biased, spoke to her in a "condescending and dismissive manner" at a hearing, and created a "hostile environment," and the Subject Judge denied the motion. Complainant later filed a motion for a continuance and a "Motion For Review By District Court Judge," both of which the Subject Judge denied. At a trial, the Subject Judge rendered judgment in favor of the debtor with findings of fact and conclusions of law to follow.

Complaint

Complainant alleges the Subject Judge's "conduct and remarks demonstrate impermissible bias and a strong appearance of partiality against me as a pro se litigant, creating a hostile environment." She alleges "[h]e frequently interrupts me and addresses me in a condescending and dismissive manner, which hinders my

ability to present my case effectively.” She contends that, throughout the proceedings, the Subject Judge expressed doubt about her ability to represent herself, and she states, “His remarks, tone, and demeanor suggested he viewed my case as a waste of time, which appeared intended to dissuade me from pursuing the matter rather than to provide guidance.” She states the Subject Judge had no basis to assume she could not represent herself effectively, and she contends the Subject Judge’s “statements and conduct appear to be based on assumptions about self-represented litigants, which supports my concerns about bias.” She takes issue with the Subject Judge’s statement that even if she was successful, the judgment would merely be “a piece of paper.”

Complainant asserts the Subject Judge failed to consider her documented personal and medical circumstances and to provide her reasonable accommodations. She states that, at a hearing, the Subject Judge expressed frustration when she had technical difficulties, interrupted her, “proceed[ed] with anger” without giving her an opportunity to explain her situation, and stated she “always ha[s] something going on.” Complainant states, “His demeanor suggested he had decided to deny my motion before reviewing it, which raises concerns about bias and pre-judgment.” She contends the Subject Judge denied her motion to continue without good cause, refused to allow her to provide input on the scheduling process, prevented her from presenting key arguments and evidence, and violated her rights. She alleges that the Subject Judge’s “conduct has created a hostile environment, increased my anxiety and depression, and made it difficult to focus on the proceedings.”

Complainant next takes issue with the Subject Judge's statement that she missed two hearings without providing an explanation, asserting she missed only one hearing and provided an explanation. She states the Subject Judge "is not being forthright" about her circumstances and her difficulties receiving mail and that she believes the Subject Judge made false statements to justify his decisions. She complains the Subject Judge had the ability to send her orders via email "a long time ago" but did not. She also contends the Subject Judge used her failure to file a brief as a reason to deny her a continuance, but failed to sanction the opposing party for failing to file a brief.

Supplement

Complainant's supplement is composed of various documents, and she does not raise any specific allegations against the Subject Judge.

Discussion

Judicial-Conduct Rule 4(b)(1) provides in part that "[c]ognizable misconduct does not include an allegation that calls into question the correctness of a judge's ruling, including a failure to recuse." The Commentary on Rule 4 explains the rationale for this rule as follows:

Rule 4(b)(1) tracks the Act, 28 U.S.C. § 352(b)(1)(A)(ii), in excluding from the definition of misconduct allegations "[d]irectly related to the merits of a decision or procedural ruling." This exclusion preserves the independence of judges in the exercise of judicial

authority by ensuring that the complaint procedure is not used to collaterally call into question the substance of a judge's decision or procedural ruling. Any allegation that calls into question the correctness of an official decision or procedural ruling of a judge — without more — is merits-related.

The Complaint fails to present a basis for a finding of misconduct. To the extent Complainant's allegations concern the substance of the Subject Judge's official actions, findings, rulings, and orders in the above-described case, the allegations are directly related to the merits of the Subject Judge's decisions or procedural rulings. Judicial-Conduct Rule 11(c)(1)(B). Complainant's remaining claims are based on allegations lacking sufficient evidence to raise an inference that the Subject Judge acted with an illicit or improper motive, was biased or otherwise not impartial, treated her in a demonstrably egregious and hostile manner, made false statements, or otherwise engaged in misconduct. Judicial-Conduct Rule 11(c)(1)(D). For these reasons, this Complaint is **DISMISSED**.

/s/ William H. Pryor Jr.

Chief Judge