

# Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### PUBLIC REPRIMAND ISSUED TO DISTRICT COURT JUDGE PAUL L. BALLARD

The Minnesota Board on Judicial Standards has imposed a public reprimand on Seventh District Court Judge Paul L. Ballard. The discipline was administered after the Board determined there was sufficient cause to conclude that Judge Ballard (1) took possession of certain assets at the request of a friend, knowing or having reason to know that the assets were subject to litigation in another jurisdiction; (2) served as a director of a business entity and as a trustee on behalf of a non-family member, and accepted payment for these services, while simultaneously serving as a District Court Judge; (3) failed to report extra-judicial income to the Minnesota State Court Administrator; (4) accepted judicial pay for time not engaged in official judicial business; and (5) failed to cooperate with the Board's investigation and misrepresented facts to Board representatives.

These acts were in violation of the *Minnesota Code on Judicial Conduct*, Canons, 1, 2A, 2B, 4A(2), 4A(3), 4D(3), 4E(1), 4H(1) and 4H(2), which provide as follows:

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**Canon 1**

***A Judge Should Uphold the Integrity and Independence of the Judiciary***

*An independent and honorable judiciary is indispensable to justice in our society. A judge should participate in establishing, maintaining and enforcing standards of conduct, and personally observe those standards in order to preserve the integrity and independence of the judiciary. The provisions of this Code should be construed and applied to further that objective.*

**Canon 2**

***A Judge Shall Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety in All of the Judge's Activities***

- A. *A judge shall respect and comply with the law and act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary.*
- B. *A judge shall not allow family, social, political or other relationships to influence official conduct or judgment. A judge shall not lend the prestige of the office to advance the private interests of the judge or others . . .*

**Canon 4**

***A Judge Shall Conduct All Extra-Judicial Activities so as to Minimize the Risk of Conflict With Judicial Obligations***

- A. ***Extra-judicial Activities in General*** *A judge shall conduct all extra-judicial activities so that they do not:*
  - 2) *demean the judicial office; or*
  - 3) *interfere with the proper performance of judicial duties.*

***D. Financial Activities***

- 3) *A judge shall not serve as an officer, director, manager, general partner, advisor, or employee of any business entity.*

***E. Fiduciary Activities***

- 1) *A judge shall not serve as executor, administrator or other personal representative, trustee, guardian, conservator, attorney in fact or other fiduciary, except for the estate, trust, conservatorship or person of a family member, and then only if such service will not interfere with the proper performance of judicial duties.*

***H. Compensation, Reimbursement, and Reporting***

- 1) *A judge may receive compensation and reimbursement of expenses for the extra-judicial activities permitted by this Code, if the source of such payments does not give the appearance of influencing the judge's performance of judicial duties or otherwise give the appearance of impropriety.*
  - a) *Compensation shall not exceed a reasonable amount nor shall it exceed what a person who is not a judge would receive for the same activity.*
  - b) *Expense reimbursement shall be limited to the actual cost of travel, food and lodging reasonably incurred by the judge and, where appropriate to the occasion, the judge's spouse or guest. Any payment in excess of such amount is compensation.*
- 2) *A judge shall report the date, place, and nature of any activity for which the judge received compensation, and the name of the payor and the amount of compensation so received. Income from investments, whether in real or personal property and other sources where the judge does not render service in exchange for the income is not extra-judicial compensation to the judge. This report shall be made annually, on or before the first day of May each year, and be filed as a public document in the office of the State Court Administrator.*