

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE  
455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 14400  
San Francisco, CA 94102

---

Contact: Gregory Dresser  
Director-Chief Counsel  
(415) 557-1200

---

FOR RELEASE  
April 11, 2018

JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE COMMISSION ISSUES DECISION AND ORDER  
IMPOSING PUBLIC ADMONISHMENT ON JUDGE JOHN DAVID LORD

The Commission on Judicial Performance has publicly admonished Judge John David Lord of the Los Angeles County Superior Court. The commission determined that it should issue a public admonishment to Judge Lord for his conduct during a misdemeanor domestic violence case over which he presided in 2015.

After a guilty verdict in that case, but prior to a hearing on a motion for a new trial, Judge Lord commented publicly to a reporter about the case. As a part of those comments, Judge Lord discussed his reasons for refusing to issue a protective order prior to sentencing. Judge Lord also made statements about the possibility of a motion for a new trial and about “an arguable issue for appeal.” Judge Lord’s comments to the reporter violated the canon that prohibits public comment by judges regarding pending cases. Judge Lord’s comments also created the impression that Judge Lord was defending his rulings in the case, and may have created the appearance that he was embroiled in the case.

Later, in the same case, Judge Lord presided over the hearing on the new trial motion. During that hearing, in open court, Judge Lord made a discourteous and flippant remark about the domestic violence victim. Judge Lord’s comments were inconsistent with the canon that requires judges to be patient, dignified, and courteous to those with whom they deal in an official capacity, and may have furthered the appearance that he was embroiled in the case.

In issuing the public admonishment, Judge Lord’s prior discipline was a significant factor in the commission’s determination.

The public admonishment is available on the commission’s website at <http://cjp.ca.gov> (under “Pending Cases - Press Releases & Documents” and “Public Discipline & Decisions”) and at the commission’s office. Judge Lord is represented by Attorney Edith R. Matthai of Los Angeles.

\* \* \*

The commission is composed of six public members, three judges and two lawyers. The chairperson is Nanci E. Nishimura, Esq.

For further information about the Commission on Judicial Performance, see the commission’s website at <http://cjp.ca.gov>.