

PUBLIC ADMONISHMENT OF JUDGE LILLIAN VEGA JACOBS

The Commission on Judicial Performance ordered Honorable Lillian Vega Jacobs publicly admonished, pursuant to article VI, section 18(d) of the California Constitution and commission rule 113, as set forth in the following statement of facts and reasons found by the commission:

STATEMENT OF FACTS AND REASONS

Judge Jacobs has been a judge of the Los Angeles County Superior Court since 2015. Her current term began in 2023.

On August 16, 2022, at approximately 11:16 p.m., an Anaheim police officer stopped Judge Jacobs on suspicion of driving under the influence. The officer had observed Judge Jacobs driving southbound on Brookhurst Street “very slowly” and weaving back and forth in her lane. When the officer approached Judge Jacobs’s car door, he could “smell a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage” and Judge Jacobs’s speech was slightly slurred; the judge was also unsteady on her feet during sobriety field testing. Judge Jacobs was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. At the police station, the judge submitted to the chemical test, which yielded blood alcohol levels of 0.169, 0.170, 0.166, and 0.160, all of which were at least twice the legal limit, two hours after her arrest.

On September 26, 2022, the Anaheim City Attorney charged Judge Jacobs with violating section 23152, subdivisions (a) and (b) of the Vehicle Code for operating a vehicle under the influence of an alcoholic beverage and driving with a blood alcohol content level of 0.08 percent or more, respectively. (Case No. 22NM11359.) The city attorney later dropped the second charge. On November 16, 2022, Judge Jacobs pleaded guilty to the charge of violating section 23152, subdivision (a), and the court sentenced her to three years of informal probation.

Judge Jacobs’s unlawful action in driving under the influence of alcohol, being convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol, and driving with a blood alcohol content of twice the legal limit demonstrates a serious disregard of the principles of personal and official conduct embodied in the Code of Judicial Ethics, including failure to observe high standards of conduct so that the integrity and independence of the judiciary will be preserved (canon 1); failure to respect and comply with the law and act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity of the judiciary (canon 2A); and failure to conduct her extrajudicial activities so that they do not demean the judicial office (canon 4A(2)). “Public confidence in the judiciary is eroded by irresponsible or improper conduct by judges.” (Canon 2A advisory committee commentary.) Judge

Jacobs's unlawful conduct was also prejudicial to the administration of justice and brought the judicial office into disrepute within the meaning of article VI, section 18, subdivision (d) of the California Constitution.

Commission members Dr. Michael A. Moodian; Hon. Lisa B. Lench; Hon. William S. Dato; Mr. Eduardo De La Riva; Hon. Michael B. Harper; Rickey Ivie, Esq.; Ms. Kay Cooperman Jue; Mr. Richard Simpson; and Ms. Beatriz E. Tapia voted for the Notice of Tentative Public Admonishment. Commission member Ms. Sarah Krueger Jager did not participate. One attorney position was vacant.

Date: June 29, 2023