

MAR 17 2026

CIRCUIT EXECUTIVE

CONFIDENTIAL

Before the Judicial Council of the  
Eleventh Judicial Circuit

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Judicial Complaint No. 11-25-90291

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**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

JAN 26 2026

David J. Smith  
Clerk

CONFIDENTIAL

Before the Chief Judge of the  
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**ORDER**

An individual has filed a Complaint against a United States district 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.

**Background**

The record establishes that Complainant filed an employment-discrimination action against a defendant, and the case was assigned to the Subject Judge. She later filed a new civil complaint against the same defendant, raising claims stemming from the initial case, and the defendant moved to dismiss. The second case was initially assigned to a different judge, and that judge issued an order transferring the case to the Subject Judge with his consent to be considered with the related case.

After additional proceedings, the Subject Judge entered an order granting the defendant's motion to dismiss because the case was an effort to collaterally attack rulings in the previous case. The order directed Complainant to show cause as to why sanctions should not be imposed because it appeared she was proceeding in bad faith.

At a show-cause hearing, Complainant stated that a deputy clerk told her to file the second civil case, and the Subject Judge asked for the identity of the clerk. After Complainant gave further explanation, the Subject Judge thanked her, stated he knew who the person was, and stated that the person did not give Complainant good advice. The Subject Judge then stated his "honest appraisal" was that Complainant would not prevail on either of her lawsuits in the district court. The Subject Judge then explained that he would not impose sanctions, but that if Complainant continued to submit vexatious or frivolous filings, he would require her to pay the defendant's attorney's fees and costs. Complainant thanked the Subject Judge and reiterated that she was told to file a separate lawsuit, and the Subject Judge responded, "I believe you. It's unfortunate because that wasn't good advice you received." The Subject Judge then entered an order discharging the show-cause order, and the case was closed. Afterward, Complainant filed a motion to recuse the Subject Judge.

### **Complaint**

Complainant alleges the Subject Judge "demonstrated personal animus and a threat of punitive sanction against the

Complainant.” She alleges the Subject Judge improperly instructed another district judge to transfer her second case to him, orchestrated the transfer to ensure the case would be dismissed, and promptly dismissed the case “suggesting a clear improper motive.” Complainant states that at the show-cause hearing, the Subject Judge made hostile statements, “directly threatened” her with sanctions, “threatened the effectiveness of any appeal” by stating any appeal would not go anywhere in his court, and called her a liar when she stated a deputy clerk informed her to file a new complaint. Complainant states the Subject Judge “denied/ignored” her motion to recuse “demonstrating an unwillingness to correct the appearance of bias created by his threats.” She attached documents to her Complaint.

### **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 cases, 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, 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