

**ANNUAL REPORT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE IN SOUTH CAROLINA
2014 - 2015**

COMPLAINTS PENDING & RECEIVED:

Complaints Pending June 30, 2014	24	
Complaints Received July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015	<u>305</u>	
Total Complaints Pending and Received		<u>329</u>

DISPOSITION OF COMPLAINTS:

Dismissed:

By Disciplinary Counsel after initial review (no jurisdiction)	193	
By Disciplinary Counsel after investigation (lack of evidence)	27	
By Investigative Panel	66	
By Supreme Court	<u>0</u>	
Total Dismissed		<u>(286)</u>

Not Dismissed:

Referral to Another Agency	0	
Closed but not Dismissed	0	
Closed due to Death	0	
Deferred Discipline Agreement	0	
Letter of Caution	13	
Confidential Admonition	1	
Public Reprimand	2	
Suspension	0	
Removal from Office	<u>0</u>	
Total Not Dismissed		<u>(16)</u>

		<u>(302)</u>
Total Complaints Concluded		
Total Complaints Pending as of June 30, 2015		<u>27</u>

JUDICIAL POSITION*:

Circuit Court Judge	85
Magistrate	78
Family Court Judge	57
Probate Court Judge	30
Municipal Court Judge	25
Master/Referee	13
Unknown	7
Administrative Law Judge**	5
Appellate Court Judge	1
Judicial Candidate	0

*These figures represent the number of complaints filed against each type of judge.

**By statute enacted in 2014, discipline of administrative law judges was changed from the State Ethics Commission to the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

SOURCE OF COMPLAINT:

Litigant	86.71%	Less than 1.00%:
Family/Friend of Litigant	2.99%	Family/Friend of Victim
Citizen (not involved in case)	2.33%	Another Judge
Attorney	1.66%	Public Official/Agency
Disciplinary Counsel	1.33%	Litigation Witness
Self-Report	1.33%	Law Enforcement

CASE TYPE:

Criminal	37.21%	
Domestic	19.93%	
Probate	8.97%	Less than 1.00%:
General Civil	8.64%	Real Estate
Not Case Related	5.32%	Regulatory
Post-Conviction Relief	4.98%	Restraining Order
Property Disp./Claim & Deliv.	3.99%	Personal Injury
Landlord/Tenant	2.99%	Employment
Debt Collection/Foreclosure	2.99%	
Contract Dispute	2.32%	

ALLEGED MISCONDUCT:

Fairness/Bias/Prejudice	49.83%	Less than 1.00%:
Competence	18.27%	Trust Account Conduct
Civility/Temperament	9.31%	Supervision/Employee Relations
Diligence	5.98%	Exerting Improper Influence
Disqualification/Recusal/Conflict	4.98%	Political Activity/Campaign
Ex Parte Communication	2.99%	Unauthorized Practice of Law
Criminal Conduct	1.99%	

SUBSTANCE ABUSE/MENTAL HEALTH:

One complaint involved substance abuse or mental health issues. That complaint involved alcohol abuse.

COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS:

Meetings of Investigative Panels	4
Formal Charges Filed	0
Disciplinary Hearings	0
Incapacity Proceedings	0
Meetings of Full Commission	1

REQUESTS FOR DISMISSAL REVIEW:

Requests for Review by Complainant	6
Dismissal Affirmed	(6)
Case Remanded for Further Investigation	<u>(0)</u>
Dismissal Reviews Pending	0

JUDGES BEING MONITORED:

New Monitor Files Opened	0
Judges Currently Monitored	0

SUPREME COURT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

DISCIPLINARY ORDERS*:

Dismissal	0
Letter of Caution	1
Admonition	0
Public Reprimand	2
Definite Suspension	0
Removal from Office	0
Transfer to Incapacity Inactive	0
Interim Suspension	1

*These figures represent the number of orders issued by the Supreme Court, not the number of complaints. A disciplinary order might conclude multiple complaints.

COMPLAINTS REFERRED TO SUPREME COURT:

Complaints resolved	3
Pending as of June 30, 2015	0