

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY
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CONFIDENTIAL

May 12, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMITTAL

Supreme Court of New Jersey
Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex
25 W. Market Street
P.O. Box 970
Trenton, N.J. 08625

Re: **In the Matter of Lilia A. Munoz, J.M.C.**
ACJC 2018-255

Dear Chief Justice and Associate Justices:

Pursuant to Rule 2:15-15A(b)(3), please find enclosed herewith an application for discipline by consent filed with the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct ("the Committee" or "ACJC") on April 20, 2020 by Maureen G. Bauman, Esq., ACJC Presenter, and Respondent, Lilia A. Munoz, J.M.C., through her counsel, Robert S. Feder, Esq. Respondent has conceded to violating Canon 1, Rule 1.1, Canon 2, Rule 2.1 and Canon 3, Rule 3.17(B), of the Code of Judicial Conduct, and Rule 1:12-1(g), when she presided over multiple court matters for a period of seven years (2008-2015) despite a conflict of interest with counsel for the defendants in those matters from whom she leased professional office space.

The Committee granted the application on April 29, 2020. Pursuant to the enclosed stipulation, Presenter and Respondent agreed to a recommended disciplinary sanction within the range of a public admonition to a public reprimand for Respondent's judicial misconduct. After careful consideration, and for the reasons stated below, the Committee respectfully recommends to

this Court that the appropriate sanction for Respondent's misconduct is a public reprimand.

The Court, in similar circumstances, has imposed a public reprimand for a jurist's involvement in a conflict of interest. E.g. In re Miniman, 195 N.J. 276 (2008) (reprimanding a judge for engaging in a conflict of interest when he granted his municipal court administrator's application for a temporary restraining order); In re Bowkley, 195 N.J. 176 (2008) (admonishing a judge for engaging in two distinct conflicts of interest when issuing an arrest warrant against a defendant despite representing the mother of the defendant's child in a family court matter, and in presiding over the arraignment of a client); In re Elias, 195 N.J. 276 (2008) (censuring a judge for engaging in an *ex parte* communication with a defendant, disposing of a case despite the existence of a conflict of interest, and for dismissing a ticket off the record). The Committee, on weighing Respondent's repeated involvement in conflicts of interest against her otherwise unblemished judicial disciplinary history and her acknowledgement of wrongdoing, recommends the imposition of a public reprimand as the appropriate quantum of discipline consistent with case precedent.

Please find enclosed herewith the record in this matter, which consists of the following documents:

1. Stipulation of Discipline by Consent;
2. Affidavit of Consent;
3. All material exhibits (#1-4) in support of Stipulation;
4. Formal Complaint filed August 2, 2019; and
5. Verified Answer filed August 27, 2019.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Virginia A. Long

Virginia A. Long, Chair

Enclosures

Cc: Candace Moody, Esq., ACJC Chief Counsel / Exec. Director
Maureen G. Bauman, Esq., ACJC Presenter
Robert S. Feder, Esq., Counsel to Respondent