

TRIAL COURTS
State of Alaska
Third Judicial District

William F. Morse
Presiding Judge
Third Judicial District

Nesbett Courthouse
825 West 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

(907) 264-0425
Fax (907) 265-0146

January 5, 2022

George Peck
PO Box 1929
Seward, AK 99664

Re: Renewal of Temporary Appointment Denied

On June 30, 2016, you retired from your position as a Magistrate Judge with the Alaska Court System. At that time, the Administrative Director approved your request to work as a temporary, part-time Magistrate Judge through June 30, 2017. This temporary appointment was approved so that the court could have time to evaluate the delivery of justice in Seward. You have served as a temporary employee for the Seward court since that date.

Renewal of your temporary appointment is currently up for review. To determine if your temporary appointment should be extended, I considered the business needs of the Seward court and your ability to meet those needs.

On December 20, 2021, the Anchorage Daily News published a letter to the editor entitled, "Protecting Our Rights" (attached). The author of this letter was George Peck of Seward. The letter expressed strong negative opinions about Governor Dunleavy and the Republican Party. When questioned, you confirmed that you were the author of this letter and that you wrote it, "because of the current anti-democratic behavior of the republican party." You did not believe writing this letter could create an ethical concern under the Code of Judicial Conduct and that it would not impact public perception about your ability be fair and impartial when deciding cases where the State of Alaska is a party participant. I disagree. The Judicial Cannons require that in all activities you act

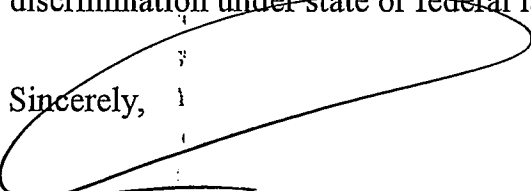
in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary. You shall not allow politics to influence your conduct or judgement. As a Magistrate Judge, the public entrusts you to decide cases with the utmost fairness, independence, and impartiality. The power of your own voice, even when expressed off the bench, can become inextricably tied to your position, especially in a small community where you are the sole judicial officer.

I also looked at the current and future business needs of the Third Judicial District when determining your status as a temporary employee. The Kenai Peninsula needs a full-time circuit Magistrate Judge who can serve the communities of Seward and Homer. After consulting with Ms. McAllen, we concur that hiring a full-time permanent employee will best serve the business needs of the district.

I appreciate your willingness to work as a temporary employee in Seward for the past 5 years, but at this time, your services are no longer needed. You will be separated from employment with the Alaska Court System effective the close of business on Friday, January 7, 2022. Your HR Generalist will provide you with a separation packet.

Personnel Rule PX4.05 outlines the appointment of a temporary employee. Temporary employees serve "at-will" and are not eligible to file a grievance unless their separation from employment is allegedly due to reasons of discrimination under state or federal law.

Sincerely,



William F. Morse
Presiding Judge
Third Judicial District

Obituaries • Games • ADN Store • e-Edition • Sponsored Content • Real Estate/Open Houses

Letters to the Editor

Sections

Coronavirus • Alaska News • Politics

• Opinions • Talk to us



By George Peck

Updated: December 20, 2021

Published: December 20, 2021

Gov. Mike Dunleavy's recent commentary promised that government's infringement on our rights will "not go unchecked" by his party. This is rich, coming from a leader within the party whose members recently and vigorously tried to disenfranchise 81 million voters and whose party is actively trying to steer the U.S. into an authoritarian kleptocracy.

— George Peck

Seward

Have something on your mind? Send to letters@adn.com or click [here](#) to submit via any web browser. Letters under 200 words have the best chance of being published. Writers should disclose any personal or professional connections with the subjects of their letters. Letters are edited for accuracy, clarity and length.

Comments
