



State of Illinois
Circuit Court of Cook County

Chambers of
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Chief Judge

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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Judge removed from hearing cases due to alleged misconduct

CHICAGO (August 17, 2016) Pursuant to action taken today by the Executive Committee of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Judge Valarie E. Turner has been temporarily reassigned to duties other than judicial duties in the office of the Presiding Judge of the First Municipal District, Judge E. Kenneth Wright, Jr. The assignment is effective until further notice.

The decision to reassign Judge Turner followed a meeting of the Circuit Court of Cook County Executive Committee convened today by Chief Judge Timothy C. Evans to discuss allegations of improper conduct involving Judge Turner. The committee was informed that Judge Turner allegedly permitted attorney Rhonda Crawford, a law clerk with the Office of the Chief Judge and candidate for judicial election in November 2016, to adjudicate at least two cases from the bench while wearing a judicial robe in Judge Turner's courtroom.

Until today, Judge Turner had been assigned to the Sixth Municipal District Courthouse in Markham where she heard a variety of matters in rotation with other judges.

"The public's confidence in the judiciary is the cornerstone of our system of justice, and I have taken the steps necessary to preserve that confidence," said Chief Judge Evans. "Because the investigation is pending, I believe it is inappropriate to comment further at this time."

In addition, Crawford was suspended pending internal investigation without pay by the Office of the Chief Judge. Her current annual salary is \$56,961, and she has been employed as a law clerk/staff attorney with the office since 2011.

The members of the Executive Committee who participated in the meeting are as follows:

Honorable Timothy C. Evans, Chief Judge and Committee Chair
Honorable Patricia Banks, Presiding Judge, Elder Law and Miscellaneous Remedies Division
Honorable LeRoy K. Martin, Jr., Presiding Judge, Criminal Division
Honorable Mary Ellen Coghlan, Presiding Judge, Probate Division
Honorable Grace G. Dickler, Presiding Judge, Domestic Relations Division
Honorable Sophia H. Hall, Presiding Judge, Juvenile Justice and Child Protection Resource Section
Honorable Moshe Jacobius, Presiding Judge, Chancery Division
Honorable James P. Flannery, Jr., Presiding Judge, Law Division
Honorable Patricia M. Martin, Presiding Judge, Child Protection Division
Honorable Sebastian T. Patti, Presiding Judge, Domestic Violence Division
Honorable Sharon M. Sullivan, Presiding Judge, County Division
Honorable Michael P. Toomin, Presiding Judge, Juvenile Justice Division
Honorable E. Kenneth Wright, Jr., Presiding Judge, First Municipal District
Honorable Shelley Sutker-Dermer, Presiding Judge, Second Municipal District
Honorable William O. Maki, Presiding Judge, Third Municipal District
Honorable Cheyrl D. Ingram, Presiding Judge, Fourth Municipal District
Honorable Raymond L. Jagielski, Presiding Judge, Fifth Municipal District
Honorable Marjorie C. Laws, Presiding Judge, Sixth Municipal District

A judge may be temporarily reassigned to restricted or other than judicial duties whenever there are charges or implications of improper conduct, depending on the severity and nature, under *Illinois Supreme Court Rule 56. Temporary Assignment to Other Duties*.

Attached is Special Order 2016-42 addressing the subject matter of Judge Turner's reassignment.

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