

SUPERIOR COURT OF ARIZONA  
MARICOPA COUNTY

CR2024-006850-001 DT

11/12/2024

HONORABLE BRUCE R. COHEN

CLERK OF THE COURT  
D. MacErnie  
Deputy

STATE OF ARIZONA

NICHOLAS KLINGERMAN

v.

KELLI WARD (001)

BRADLEY LEWIS MILLER

JUDGE BRUCE COHEN  
JUDGE GREEN  
VICTIM WITNESS DIV-AG-CCC

**NOTICE OF RECUSAL  
HEARINGS VACATED**

On November 8, 2024, this court was advised about a report on an internet site relating to e-mails sent by this judicial officer to other judicial officers in late August, 2024. Immediately upon learning of the report, this court scheduled a Status Conference to be conducted on November 13, 2024 to address the contents of the posting.

On November 12, 2024 (before the status conference could be conducted), the court received a motion filed by Defendant Hoffman requesting that this court recuse itself from presiding over these proceedings. With further comment, this court is electing to honor that request.

This court is comprised of a significant percentage of female judicial officers as well as a share of judicial officers who identify as part of a minority group. Each of those judicial officers have ascended to their current positions through merit and because of exceptionalism, not based upon favor. Directed solely to fellow colleagues, this judicial officer expressed in an e-mail support for the exceptionalism of the judicial officers of Maricopa County and was a stand for decency and respect. What was contained in the e-mail is not reflective of bias. As noted in the subject e-mail, the same cry for decency and respect would have been made about disparaging

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comments from either political sphere. That said, within hours after sending the August e-mail solely to other judicial officers and not in any public forum, an apology was sent out to those same judicial officers. The apology focused on the use of the “all judges” forum via e-mail. That was the error in judgment as that forum was not the place for unsolicited comments.

This court remains confident in and proud of the fact that during an almost 20-year judicial career, this court has been rooted in fundamental fairness, free from bias. But this court is also mindful of the appearances the subject e-mail may have created for those who have interpreted the communication differently than intended. Out of a commitment to justice, even the appearance of bias cannot be allowed to undermine the fundamental fairness that is extended by the court to all who come before it. It is for that reason alone that this court is recusing itself from all further proceedings in this matter.

IT IS ORDERED referring this matter to the Presiding Judge of the Criminal Department for reassignment.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED vacating the Status Conference set for November 13, 2024 and the Hearing set for November 21, 2024 in this division. Upon reassignment, the newly assigned judge shall work with counsel to develop an appropriate pretrial and hearing schedule of the matters that are now before the court.