



Administrative Office of the District Courts
Harris County, Texas

Judge Maria T. Jackson
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE
District Courts Trying Criminal Cases

201 Caroline
Houston, Texas 77002
(832) 927-6576

February 11, 2019

Dear Commission Judicial Conduct,

In February 4, 2019, Darrell Jordan, the presiding judge of the Harris County Criminal Court at Law No. 16, verbally intimidated me to the point of fear for my physical well-being. I have served the state of Texas for 15 years – serving five years as a full-time Municipal Court Judge and 10 years as the Harris County 339th District Court Judge. Currently, I serve as the Administrative Judge for Harris County District Courts trying criminal cases. In my tenure, I have presided over felonies cases with some of the most violent and heinous offenders, yet I have never felt such fear as I did at this meeting with Judge Jordan.

This incident took place during a meeting of the statutorily-created board that oversees the Harris County Criminal Law Hearing Officers. The committee is composed of three state district judges, three county criminal court at law judges, and three justices of the peace. The committee elected me to preside over our meetings.

During an emergency meeting to discuss renewal of the appointments of hearing officers, Judge Jordan began yelling at me. I was seated at the head of the table and Judge Jordan was standing over me. As I tried to engage in civil discourse with Judge Jordan, he moved closer, spoke louder, and continually talked over me. Judge Jordan refused to engage in civil debate. Instead he just continued to yell such that I instinctively stood up, fearing physical contact from him. Several people in the room witnessed this. Judge Jordan's behavior caused them concern as well.

A day after the meeting, I saw a man on the street who looked like Judge Jordan and felt physically in fear.

Judge Jordan simply refuses to conduct himself civilly in these meetings. The week before he refused to engage in debate with one of the committee members who simply asked a question about a motion Judge Jordan put forth. Judge Jordan yelled at that member and said "I don't have to explain myself to you.... Who are you?" The committee was never able to hear Judge Jordan's reasons.

In the meeting on February 4th, Judge Jordan refused to hear recommendations from the staff attorneys, including his own, and began making baseless accusations against the county executive branch that had offered employment advice. Judge Jordan just talked over everyone and stymied the committee from acting on business. Instead Judge Jordan uses these judicial meetings to politick and try to legislate from the bench. His bullying, yelling, and intimidation would not be tolerated in any other setting.

Another Judge should never make a colleague feel in fear at work. Nor should a judge be allowed to impede the administration of justice through fear and intimidation because the majority isn't following his lead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "M. T. Jackson", written over a printed name.

Judge Maria T. Jackson