

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE
OF PENNSYLVANIA

FEB 10 2022

RECEIVED AND FILED

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight :
Magisterial District Judge :
Magisterial District 12-2-04 : 1 JD 2021
12th Judicial District :
Dauphin County :

**JOINT STIPULATIONS OF FACT IN LIEU OF TRIAL AND
WAIVER OF TRIAL PURSUANT TO C.J.D.R.P. NO. 502(D)(1)**

AND NOW, this 10th day of February 2022, comes the Judicial Conduct Board of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Board), and Judge Sonya M. McKnight (Respondent), by and through their undersigned counsel, and files these Joint Stipulations Of Fact In Lieu Of Trial And Waiver Of Trial Pursuant To C.J.D.R.P. No. 502(D)(1), as follows:

1. From January 4, 2016, to the present, Respondent has served as a Magisterial District Judge for Magisterial District Court No. 12-2-04 in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.
2. On February 8, 2021, the Board filed a Complaint against Respondent in the above captioned matter.
3. The Complaint pertained to an incident that occurred on February 22, 2020 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
4. The Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General (OAG) conducted a criminal investigation regarding the February 22, 2020 incident.
5. In furtherance of its investigation, on November 12, 2020, the OAG interviewed Respondent regarding her February 22, 2020 conduct.

6. On December 16, 2020, the OAG charged Respondent with Tampering with Evidence, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4910, Obstructing Administration of Law, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §5101 and Official Oppression, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §5301 regarding her conduct on February 22, 2020.
7. On July 26 and 27, 2021, Judge Stephen Leiberman presided over a jury trial in the matter of *Commonwealth v. Sonya McKnight* pertaining to the above referenced charges.
8. At the conclusion of the Commonwealth's case, Judge Leiberman granted the defense motion for judgment of acquittal.
9. During the course of the July 2021 jury trial in the matter of *Commonwealth v. Sonya McKnight*, the following six witnesses testified on direct and on cross-examination:
 - a. Farida Kingsboro;
 - b. Chad Showers;
 - c. Anthony Cummings;
 - d. Dominic Cristillo;
 - e. Thomas Carter; and
 - f. Jarrett Ferrari.
10. The six witnesses who testified at the July 2021 trial are the same witnesses whom the Board would call to testify in the matter now before this Honorable Court.
11. If called to testify before this Honorable Court relative to the above captioned matter, the six witnesses who testified at the July 2021 trial would testify consistent with their testimony during the July 2021 trial.

12. The Board and Respondent stipulate to the admission of the July 2021 notes of testimony of the six witnesses in the matter of *Commonwealth v. McKnight*.
13. A portion of the February 22, 2020 incident was recorded by video camera installed in the police vehicle driven by Officer Anthony Cummings, one of the six above-named witnesses.
14. The above-mentioned video recording was shown in its entirety during the July 2021 trial in the matter of *Commonwealth v. McKnight*.
15. The Board and Respondent stipulate to the admission of the above-mentioned video recording.
16. Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration (Rule 1921) mandates:

[w]henever a judge receives notice that he or she is the subject of any federal or state criminal investigation or prosecution through a target letter, a subject letter, a presentment, an indictment, an arrest, a summons, a complaint, or by any other legal process, the judge must report the receipt of such notice in writing to the Chief Justice and to the Judicial Conduct Board within five (5) days.

17. At no time, following her November 12, 2020 interview with the OAG did Respondent report in writing to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.
18. At no time, following her November 12, 2020 interview with the OAG did Respondent report in writing to the Judicial Conduct Board that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.

19. Respondent's attorney, Brian Perry, reported that Respondent was the subject of a state criminal investigation in an oral communication with counsel for the Judicial Conduct Board.
20. Respondent believed that Attorney Perry's communication with counsel for the Judicial Conduct Board complied with her obligation under Rule 1921 to report to the Judicial Conduct Board that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.
21. Respondent was aware of the requirements of Rule 1921 because she was the subject of a state criminal investigation following an incident on May 10, 2019, and failed to report the information to the Chief Justice of Supreme Court or the Judicial Conduct Board in accordance with Rule 1921.
22. During a deposition before Board counsel on December 12, 2019, related to the May 10, 2019 incident, Respondent stated that she understood that Rule 1921 requires her to notify the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Judicial Conduct Board in writing if she receives notice that she is the subject of a criminal investigation.
23. The investigation of the May 10, 2019 incident did not result in the filing of charges against Respondent.
24. The Board and Respondent stipulate that Respondent will be provided an opportunity to supplement these stipulations with live testimony, subject to cross-examination before this Honorable Court.

Trial Exhibits:

1. Video recording of February 22, 2020, vehicle stop of Kevin Baltimore from Officer Cummings vehicle.

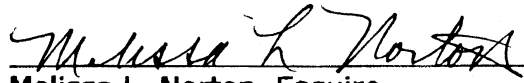
2. Transcript of December 12, 2019 deposition pages 8:12 - 13:14.
3. *Commonwealth v. McKnight* July 2021 notes of testimony of the six witnesses (pages 64 -256).

WAIVER OF RIGHT TO TRIAL

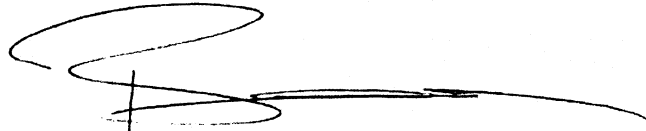
By submitting these Stipulations of Fact in Lieu of Trial, the Board and the Respondent agree they shall be bound by them and the Court of Judicial Discipline shall adopt them as the facts of the case upon which a decision shall be rendered. The Board and the Respondent expressly waive any right to trial under Article V, §18(b)(5) of the Pennsylvania Constitution and the Rules of the Court of Judicial Discipline as per C.J.D.R.P. No. 502(D)(1).

WHEREFORE, the parties, through their respective counsel, intending to be legally bound by this document, do hereby set their hand and seal.

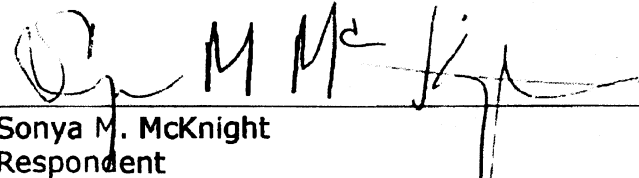
DATE: 2-10-22


Melissa L. Norton, Esquire
Deputy Counsel
Judicial Conduct Board

DATE: 2-4-22


Brian J. McMonagle, Esquire
Counsel for Respondent

DATE: 2-4-22


Sonya M. McKnight
Respondent

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight :
Magisterial District Judge :
Magisterial District 12-2-04 :
12th Judicial District : 1 JD 2021
Dauphin County :

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania

Signature:



Name:

Melissa L. Norton
Deputy Counsel

Attorney No.:

46684

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	
12th Judicial District	:	1 JD 2021
Dauphin County	:	

PROOF OF SERVICE

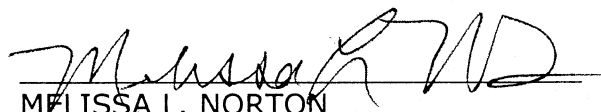
In compliance with Rule 122 of the Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure, the date below, a copy of the Joint Stipulations of Fact in Lieu of Trial and Waiver of Trial Pursuant to C.J.D.R.P. No. 502(D)(1) was sent by First Class Mail and Electronic Mail to Brian J. McMonagle, Esquire, counsel for Respondent, at the following address:

Brian J. McMonagle, Esquire
McMonagle Perri McHugh
1845 Walnut Street, 19th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Email: bmcmonagle@mpmpc.com

Respectfully submitted,

DATE: February 10, 2022

By:



MELISSA L. NORTON

Deputy Counsel

Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 46684

Judicial Conduct Board

Pennsylvania Judicial Center

601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500

P.O. Box 62525

Harrisburg, PA 17106

(717) 234-7911