

**STATE OF VERMONT  
JUDICIAL CONDUCT BOARD**

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**In re: Honorable William Cobb**

**Docket No. 20.005**

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**STIPULATED FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

The Respondent, William Cobb, by and through his attorney, Christopher D. Ekman, Esq., and Richard R. Goldsborough, Esq., Special Counsel to the Judicial Conduct Board, hereby stipulate to the following Facts and Conclusions of Law.

**STIPULATED FACTS**

1. William Cobb has served as Probate Judge in the Vermont Superior Court, Caledonia Unit, Probate Division, since February 2019. He serves in this role on a part-time basis.
2. Judge Cobb is also an admitted lawyer in the State of Vermont with an office in St. Johnsbury, Vermont.
3. Judge Cobb practices law in multiple counties in the State of Vermont, including Caledonia.
4. In January 2020, a complaint was filed with the Judicial Conduct Board by a Vermont lawyer alleging that Judge Cobb may have violated the Code of Judicial Conduct by using his part-time judgeship status to gain advantage for one of Judge Cobb's private clients.

5. The information in the complaint and through investigation revealed that Judge Cobb believed that he could not represent a client in any division of the Caledonia Unit. For one private client with a matter pending in the Caledonia Unit Criminal Division, Judge Cobb leveraged his position as a part-time judge to gain an advantage for his client, and attempted to do so for another private client with a matter pending in the Caledonia Unit Criminal Division, violating Rules 1.2 and 1.3 of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

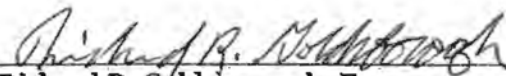
**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

6. The conduct by the Judge violated Rule 1.2 (promoting confidence in the judiciary) and 1.3 (avoiding abuse of the prestige of the office).

**SANCTION**

7. The parties agree that a public reprimand is appropriate and may be entered by the Judicial Conduct Board. Judge Cobb acknowledges that he used his dual status as both a part-time probate judge and an attorney to advance the interest of a private client, and attempting to do so with another private client, in violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct. Judge Cobb agrees to a twelve (12) month mentorship with another part-time Probate judge requiring Judge Cobb to confer with said mentor whenever accepting representation of a client in any matter pending in any unit of Caledonia Superior Court.

DATED at South Burlington, Vermont, this 23 day of December 2020.

  
Richard R. Goldsborough, Esq.  
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DECEMBER 23, 2020

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DATED this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December 2020.



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