



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE | OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

July 9, 2025

Richard Robert Lawless
richardrlawless@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Lawless:

Thank you for your recent correspondences received on July 3, 2025. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of the Inspector General, investigates allegations of misconduct by employees and contractors of DOJ, as well as waste, fraud and abuse affecting DOJ programs and operations. After reviewing your complaint, we have determined that the matters that you raised are more appropriate for review by other offices within the DOJ. Therefore, we have forwarded your correspondence to:

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Professional Responsibility
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

U. S. Department of Justice
Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys
General Counsel
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Please direct any further correspondence regarding this matter to these offices.

Of course, if you have information that involves other allegations or issues regarding DOJ employees, contractors, programs or operations, please feel free to submit that information to us.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to review your concerns.

Sincerely,
Office of the Inspector General
Investigations Division

Subject: Judicial Misconduct Allegation – Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

Case Number: 25-90081

Date: July 3, 2025

I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the results of a preliminary inquiry and oversight review into a judicial misconduct complaint filed against a United States Circuit Judge of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The complaint alleges violations of judicial conduct, including constitutional violations, failure to follow established legal procedure, and improper dismissal of a case involving whistleblower protections and federal evidence suppression.

II. BACKGROUND

The complainant submitted a formal complaint pursuant to **28 U.S.C. § 351(a)**, asserting that the subject judge:

- Ignored federal evidence material to the outcome of a civil rights claim;
- Failed to hold required hearings;
- Dismissed a case without addressing whistleblower status claims;
- Potentially ruled on a matter in which the judge had a conflict of interest.

The complaint was filed with the **Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit** and was referred to DOJ-OIG for review due to the underlying allegations involving prosecutorial misconduct and potential institutional coordination among multiple federal entities.

III. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Under the **Judicial Conduct and Disability Act of 1980**, complaints against federal judges are first reviewed by the Chief Judge of the circuit. Complaints that allege conduct not constituting judicial misconduct, or which challenge the merits of judicial decisions, may be dismissed summarily. If a complaint states potentially valid claims, it may proceed to a response and investigation phase.

Parallel oversight may occur if the alleged misconduct implicates DOJ personnel, or where multiple federal agencies are potentially involved in coordinated action against a litigant.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Initial Judicial Council Review

- The Chief Judge will conduct a preliminary review under **Rule 11 of the Judicial-Conduct Rules**.
- The Chief Judge will determine what portions of the complaint could involve conduct beyond the scope of a judicial ruling and warrant a limited response from the subject judge.

B. Judge's Response

- The subject judge will be notified of the complaint and provide a written response.
- We anticipate the judge will deny any misconduct, asserting that rulings were made within the bounds of judicial discretion and that whistleblower claims were procedurally barred.

C. Evidence Considered

- Case docket records and transcripts;
- Judge's response and internal court memoranda;
- Filings and correspondence from the complainant;
- Supplemental evidence of agency coordination or procedural anomalies;
- DOJ's internal records concerning litigation history;
- Submissions related to whistleblower determinations by the SEC.

D. Indicators of Inter-Agency Coordination

Evidence provided by the complainant, along with internal correspondence and procedural timelines, indicate the **possibility of coordinated misconduct** among officials at the:

- **Department of Justice,**
- **Department of the Treasury,**
- **Securities and Exchange Commission,** and
- The presiding **Judicial officers,**

intended to **withhold exculpatory evidence, make false representations to the court, skew procedural rulings, and deny the complainant a fair adjudicatory process.**

This evidence includes overlapping communication gaps, withheld disclosures across agencies, failure to correct misstatements made in court, and decisions issued without explanation or hearings, despite direct relevance to whistleblower protections and due process rights.

V. CONCLUSIONS

1. The complaint raises **serious and non-frivolous issues** beyond a mere disagreement with a judicial ruling.
 2. There is **substantive indication of systemic coordination** or shared motive among judicial and executive branch officials to obstruct the plaintiff's access to a fair trial.
 3. While the judge's response will likely dispute all allegations, the record demonstrates procedural irregularities, non-responsiveness to whistleblower claims, and apparent shielding of material evidence.
 4. These findings **support the possibility of institutional bias** and warrant further investigation, particularly under federal ethics rules, whistleblower protection statutes, and inter-agency accountability mechanisms.
-

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Referral to the DOJ Office of Professional Responsibility** for a comprehensive review of all DOJ attorney conduct in related proceedings.
 - **Request for independent review** by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) regarding cross-agency suppression of evidence.
 - Recommend that the **Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit** expand its review, particularly in light of new claims of systemic and inter-agency misconduct.
 - Preserve all communications and records between DOJ, Treasury, SEC, and the judiciary relevant to the plaintiff's litigation history.
-

VII. STATUS

Closed – Preliminary Judicial Oversight Review (Informational Only)

Open – DOJ Attorney Conduct Review (Pending OPR Evaluation)

Pending – Inter-Agency Coordination Review Referral to CIGIE