



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

NEWS RELEASE

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Supreme Court Terminates Ciavarella's Pay and Benefits

HARRISBURG, February 13, 2009 - The Pennsylvania Supreme Court today terminated the salary and benefits of Luzerne County Judge Mark A. Ciavarella Jr. following Ciavarella's guilty plea to criminal charges in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Ciavarella pleaded guilty in Scranton on Thursday, February 12, to charges of defrauding the public of honest service and conspiracy to commit tax fraud. Former Luzerne County Senior Judge Michael T. Conahan also pleaded guilty to the same charges. The judges are accused of accepting kickbacks from the building of two private juvenile detention facilities and of benefiting financially from the placement of juveniles in those facilities.

The Supreme Court, exercising its constitutional supervisory powers over the Pennsylvania court system, removed both judges from service on January 28, 2009, after they were formally charged by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Ciavarella was relieved from all judicial duties at that time, but was permitted to continue receiving salary and benefits. With his guilty plea, his salary and benefits have been terminated.

Conahan was a senior judge at the time charges were filed. The Supreme Court revoked his senior judge certification and ordered all pending judicial assignments to him rescinded. From that point, Conahan no longer could perform judicial work or receive per diem pay as a senior judge.

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On Wednesday, February 11, the Supreme Court appointed a special master to review all cases in which Ciavarella is alleged to have improperly committed juveniles in Luzerne County to detention or to have denied juveniles their constitutional right to counsel.

A copy of the court's order terminating Ciavarella's salary and benefits is attached. <http://www.pacourts.us/OpPosting/Supreme/out/327jad.1-2.pdf>

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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: JUDGE MARK A. CIAVARELLA, : No. 327
JR. :
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF : JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
LUZERNE COUNTY :
: DOCKET NO. 1

ORDER

PER CURIAM

AND NOW, this 13th day of February 2009, upon consideration of the entry of a plea of guilty on February 12, 2009 in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania by Judge Mark A. Ciavarella, Jr., of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, the Order of this Court dated January 28, 2009 is hereby amended and the salary and benefits of Judge Mark A. Ciavarella, Jr. are terminated.