

Ex-EDC judge faces 11 ethics charges from state

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By Kathryn Reed

Former El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Steve Bailey faces 11 counts from the state Commission on Judicial Review.

The 22-page document filed this week lays out in detail how on multiple times Bailey allegedly violated the Code of Judicial Ethics. He is charged with “willful misconduct in office, conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice that brings the judicial office into disrepute.”



Steve Bailey

Bailey officially **resigned from office in August 2017**. His term did not expire until 2020. The seat has remained vacant since then, with visiting judges picking up some of the workload.

Bailey, who worked in the South Lake Tahoe courthouse during his tenure, could not be reached for comment.

However, after this story was originally published, Corey Uhden, communications director of Bailey’s AG race, issued this statement to *Lake Tahoe News*, “This is merely an inquiry that the commission dominated by liberal appointees admits is ‘not a finding of judicial misconduct’ because there is no

misconduct to find. It's simply an attempt to disparage a respected former judge and a highly qualified candidate for attorney general. These proceedings will conclude that this is a waste of time and taxpayers' money."

Details of the complaint include:

- On multiple occasions ordering criminal defendants to use an electronics monitoring firm where his son works. This dates to 2009, the first year he was a judge.
- Giving legal work to a friend who was not on the court-approved list of special masters without disclosing their relationship, or the fact he had received gifts from the man and presided over his wedding.
- Acceptance of gifts from various individuals and entities. Judges are not ethically allowed to accept any gifts.
- Failure to declare on state disclosure forms reimbursements from two law schools where he attended judicial education programs.
- Inappropriate comments to other judges about homosexuality.
- Using the judicial office to raise funds for his bid to be attorney general.
- Raising funds for the attorney general race prior to filing a candidate intention statement.
- Engaging in on-going political activity without taking a leave of absence without pay from his judgeship.

The next step is for Bailey to respond to the charges. The commission will then issue a notice of admonishment, which

could be public or private. Bailey could accept the punishment, reject it or ask for a hearing before the commission.

The Commission on Judicial Review "is the independent state agency responsible for investigating complaints of judicial misconduct and judicial incapacity and for disciplining judges."

Even though Bailey is not on the bench anymore, he is running for attorney general this year. His website for that campaign is still active.