

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS

In re Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission Cases

Judicial Discipline Cases, 2026 Ark. 86 (Ark. 2026) · Decided April 23, 2026

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Arkansas orders the Executive Director of the Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission, Emily Abbott, to appear and show cause why she should not be held in contempt or otherwise sanctioned for failing to provide records required by a prior court order. The court sets a show-cause hearing for May 21, 2026, and requires any written response by May 11, 2026.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Arkansas
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per Curiam
JURISDICTION	Supreme Court of Arkansas
DECIDED	April 23, 2026
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The Supreme Court of Arkansas issued an order to appear and show cause why the Executive Director of the Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission should not be held in contempt or otherwise sanctioned for failing to comply with a prior court order requiring production of Commission records.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published

TOPICS

- contempt
- sanctions
- administrative law
- appellate procedure
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- judicial discipline
- contempt
- administrative law
- appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Commission's Executive Director should be ordered to appear and show cause why she should not be held in contempt or otherwise sanctioned for failing to comply with the court's December 11, 2025 order.

2. Whether failure to appear at the show-cause hearing would support a default finding of contempt and appropriate sanctions.

HOLDINGS

1. Because the Executive Director had not fully complied with the court's December 11, 2025 order, and no objection, relieving order, or explanation excused the noncompliance, the court ordered her to appear and show cause why she should not be held in contempt or otherwise sanctioned.
2. Failure to appear at the scheduled show-cause hearing will result in a default finding of contempt and implementation of appropriate sanctions.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Therefore, we order the Executive Director, Emily Abbott, to appear before this court and show cause why she should not be held in contempt or otherwise sanctioned for her refusal to comply with our December 11th order.” (at 2)

“Failure to appear will result in a default finding of contempt and appropriate sanctions being implemented.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The court had previously ordered the Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission's Executive Director, Emily Abbott, to provide records concerning the Commission's investigations and complaints. Although the court granted three extensions, Abbott had not supplied records or summaries concerning pending and open investigations. No objection, excusing relief, or explanation for the noncompliance had been filed or provided.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On December 11, 2025, the court ordered the Commission's Executive Director to provide records concerning pending and recently closed investigations, including a comprehensive list of complaints since January 1, 2023. After three extensions, the Executive Director still had not provided records or summaries concerning pending and open investigations. The court ordered her to appear at a show-cause hearing and warned that failure to appear would result in a default finding of contempt and appropriate sanctions.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- In re Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission Cases, 2025 Ark. 223

OPINION

In Re Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission Cases
2026 Ark. 87

PER CURIAM.

Cite as 2026 Ark. 86

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS

Opinion Delivered: April 23, 2026

IN RE JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE AND

DISABILITY COMMISSION CASES

ORDER TO APPEAR AND SHOW

CAUSE.

PER CURIAM

On December 11, 2025, we issued a per curiam opinion directing the Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission (the Commission) to provide us with records concerning its pending and recently closed investigations. In re Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission Cases, 2025 Ark. 223, at 1–3. Specifically, the opinion “order[ed] the Executive Director of the Commission to provide us with[,]” among other things, “a comprehensive list of every complaint made to the Commission” since January 1, 2023. Id. at 2 (emphasis added). These records were originally due no later than January 26, 2026. Despite receiving three extensions, which doubled the time originally given to satisfy the request, the Executive Director has still failed to fully comply with our order. Specifically, she has failed to provide any records related to, or summaries of, pending and open investigations. We note that no objection has been filed related to the order to provide these records, and no relief has been granted that would excuse the failure to file them as ordered. Neither has any explanation been provided to this court for the failure to comply with our order. Therefore, we order the Executive Director, Emily Abbott, to appear before this court and show cause why she should not be held in contempt or otherwise sanctioned for her refusal to comply with our December 11th order. A show-cause hearing will be held in the Supreme Court courtroom on May 21, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. If the Executive Director wishes to file a written response in addition to her in-person appearance, the written response is due no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 11, 2026. A written response, however, does not relieve the Executive Director of the requirement that she appear at the show- cause hearing. Failure to appear will result in a default finding of contempt and appropriate sanctions being implemented. It is so ordered. 2