

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