



**BEFORE THE STATE COMMISSION
ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

CJC Nos. 20-0820, 20-1057 & 20-1219

**PUBLIC REPRIMAND AND
ORDER OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION**

**HONORABLE JESUS MARIA "CHUY" ALVAREZ
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, PRECINCT 1
RIO GRANDE CITY, STARR COUNTY, TEXAS**

During its meeting on August 6 and 11-13, 2021, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct concluded a review of the allegations in these matters against the Honorable Jesus Maria "Chuy" Alvarez, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, Rio Grande City, Starr County, Texas. Judge Alvarez was advised by letter of the Commission's concerns and provided written responses.

BACKGROUND

The Commission received complaints alleging, amongst other things, that; (i) during Judge Alvarez's wife, Iselda "Tinita" Alvarez's campaign in the 2020 primary election for Starr County Commissioner, Precinct 1, Judge Alvarez engaged in numerous efforts to support his wife's candidacy; (ii) Judge Alvarez lent the prestige of his judicial office to advance his private law practice through various marketing/advertising methods; and (iii) Judge Alvarez improperly acted as a lawyer in proceedings in which he had served as a judge.

In his written responses regarding these matters, Judge Alvarez represented he has made some efforts to change his marketing/advertising practices, including no longer distributing two-sided business cards and maintaining separate business cards for his judicial and private offices. The judge also represented to the Commission that he has taken actions to ensure he does not act as a lawyer for defendants who have appeared before him in his judicial capacity and is in the process of implementing a more robust system for checking conflicts of interest in such circumstances.

After considering the evidence before it, the Commission enters the following Findings and Conclusion:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Honorable Jesus Maria “Chuy” Alvarez was the Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, Rio Grande City, Starr County, Texas.
2. Judge Alvarez’s wife, Iselda “Tinita” Alvarez, was a candidate in the 2020 primary election for Starr County Commissioner, Precinct 1.
3. During his wife’s campaign for public office, Judge Alvarez produced and erected signs advertising her campaign, discussed her candidacy with others at campaign events and elsewhere, and maintained a Facebook page on which materials supporting his wife’s campaign appeared.
4. Judge Alvarez produced and erected signs/signage advertising his services as both a justice of the peace and as a private attorney.
5. Judge Alvarez produced and disseminated business cards featuring the contact information for his judicial office on one side and his private practice on the other.
6. In November of 2019, Judge Alvarez acted as an attorney on behalf of defendant, Casey Rosas, by filing a Motion to Lift Capias and Reinstate Original Bond, in a case in which Judge Alvarez had previously performed Rosas’ magistration in his judicial capacity.

RELEVANT STANDARDS AND AUTHORITIES

1. Canon 2B of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides in relevant part that a judge shall not lend the prestige of judicial office to advance the private interests of the judge or others.
2. Canon 5(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides in relevant part that a judge shall not authorize the public use of his or her name endorsing another candidate for any public office.
3. Canon 6C(1)(d) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides that a justice of the peace cannot act as a lawyer in a proceeding in which he or she served as a judge or any proceeding relating thereto.

CONCLUSION

Based on the record before it and the factual findings recited above, the Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined the Honorable Jesus Maria “Chuy” Alvarez, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, Rio Grande City, Starr County, Texas, should be publicly reprimanded for: (1) lending the prestige of his judicial office to advance the private interests of his wife and endorsing her candidacy during her campaign for public office in violation of Canons 2B and 5(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct; (2) lending the prestige of his judicial office to advance his own private interests, through various marketing/advertising practices that improperly blended his judicial office with his private law practice; and (3) acting as a lawyer for defendant Casey Rosas in a proceeding in which he had previously served as a judge, in violation of Canon 6C(1)(d) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

Pursuant to this Order, Judge Alvarez must obtain **two (2) hours** of instruction with a mentor, in addition to his required judicial education for Fiscal Year 2022. In particular, the Commission desires that Judge Alvarez receive this additional education in the areas of campaign ethics, conflicts of interest, and performing magistration. Pursuant to the authority contained in §33.036 of the Texas Government Code, the Commission authorizes the disclosure of certain information relating to this matter to the Texas Justice

Court Training Center to the extent necessary to enable that entity to assign the appropriate mentor for Judge Alvarez.

Judge Alvarez shall complete the additional **two (2) hours** of instruction recited above within **60 days** from the date of written notification from the Commission of the assignment of a mentor. Upon receiving such notice, it is Judge Alvarez's responsibility to contact the assigned mentor and schedule the additional education.

The Commission has taken this action pursuant to the authority conferred it in Article V, Section 1-a of the Texas Constitution in a continuing effort to protect the public and promote public confidence in the judicial system.

Issued this the 29th day of October, 2021.



David Hall
Chairman, State Commission on Judicial Conduct