



**BEFORE THE STATE COMMISSION
ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

CJC No. 25-0190

PUBLIC WARNING

**HONORABLE ISRAEL GARCIA, JR.
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, PRECINCT 5, PLACE 1
HOUSTON, HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS**

During its meeting on April 2-3, 2025, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct concluded a review of the allegations against the Honorable Israel Garcia, Jr., Justice of the Peace, Precinct 5, Place 1, in Houston, Harris County, Texas. Judge Garcia, Jr. was advised by letter of the Commission's concerns and provided a written response.

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

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Honorable Israel Garcia, Jr. ¹, was a Justice of the Peace, Precinct 5, Place 1, in Houston, Harris County, Texas.
2. Judge Garcia, Jr. presided over an eviction case styled *H.K. Capital Management, L.P. d/b/a Ashford St. Cloud v. In-Chul Sohn*, Cause No. 225100326066 (the "Sohn Case"). A final jury trial was set for October 26, 2022.
3. On the morning of trial, Petitioner's counsel filed Petitioner's Motion for Summary Disposition (the "Motion").
4. When Judge Garcia, Jr. called the Sohn Case, Respondent In-Chul Sohn ("Sohn") announced he was ready to proceed and notified the court that he was a licensed attorney representing himself. Judge Garcia, Jr. sneered at Sohn and stated, "Oh, your wife is an attorney?" before the potential jury pool.

¹ Judge Garcia, Jr. lost his reelection in November 2024 and left the bench on December 31, 2024

5. After a brief discussion between Sohn and Petitioner's counsel regarding pre-trial motions, Judge Garcia, Jr. and the parties discussed the Motion. Sohn informed Judge Garcia, Jr. that the Motion could not be ruled on for at least fourteen (14) days according to Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 503.2 ("TRCP").
6. Judge Garcia, Jr. granted the Motion and ordered Sohn's appellate bond to be two months' rent. Sohn objected to the ruling.
7. On October 27, 2022, Sohn filed his response, Defendant's Response to Plaintiff's Motion for Summary Disposition.
8. On November 22, 2022, Judge Garcia, Jr. signed the Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion for Summary Disposition.
9. In his written responses to the Commission about this matter, Judge Garcia, Jr. admitted to ruling on the Motion stating both parties agreed to waive the fourteen (14) day requirement in accordance with TRCP 503.2(c). Also, Judge Garcia, Jr. stated he asked Sohn if he wanted a continuance, but Sohn declined and chose to move forward.

RELEVANT STANDARDS AND AUTHORITIES

1. Canon 2A of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides, in relevant part, "A judge shall comply with the law..."
2. Canon 3B(2) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides, in relevant part, "A judge...shall maintain professional competence in [the law]."
3. Canon 3B(4) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides, in relevant part, "A judge shall be patient, dignified and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity ..."
4. Canon 3B(8) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct provides, in relevant part, "A judge shall accord to every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding, or that person's lawyer, the right to be heard according to law."
5. Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 503.2(c) provides, "*Hearing*. The court must not consider a motion for summary disposition until it has been on file for at least 14 days. The judge may consider evidence offered by the parties at the hearing. By agreement of the parties, the judge may decide the motion and response without a hearing."

CONCLUSION

Based on the record before it and the factual findings recited above, the Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that the Honorable Israel Garcia, Jr., Justice of the Peace, Precinct 5, Place 1, in Houston, Harris County, Texas, should be publicly warned for: (1) failing to comply with and maintaining professional competence in the law, mainly Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 503.2, when he granted the Petitioner's Motion for Summary Disposition without waiting the required fourteen days in the Sohn Case; (2) failing to be patient, dignified and courteous towards Sohn during the Sohn Case; and (3) failing to accord Sohn the right to be heard regarding the Petitioner's Motion for Summary Disposition and having a jury trial in the Sohn Case, in violation of Canons 2A, 3B(2), 3B(4) and 3B(8) of the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

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 12 day of May, 2025.



Ken Wise
Vice-Chair, State Commission on Judicial Conduct