



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT:

[Stuart Ditzen](#), Assistant for Communications
215-560-6052

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

www.pacourts.us

Supreme Court Removes Two Luzerne County Judges

HARRISBURG, January 28, 2009 — The Pennsylvania Supreme Court, exercising its supervisory powers, today issued orders removing two Luzerne County judges from service.

The Court suspended Luzerne County Judge Mark A. Ciavarella Jr., relieving him of all judicial and administrative responsibilities. Ciavarella was suspended with pay pending further order of the Court.

The Court revoked the senior judge certification of Senior Judge Michael T. Conahan and ordered all pending judicial assignments to Conahan rescinded. Conahan will no longer receive per diem pay as a senior judge.

The Supreme Court, which has administrative oversight of the Pennsylvania court system, took these actions after receiving notice that federal criminal charges had been filed against Ciavarella and Conahan. Both judges have agreed to enter guilty pleas to the charges. It is the Court's practice to suspend a judge with pay pending the outcome of a criminal case.

The Court's orders are attached.

###

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: JUDGE MARK A. CIAVARELLA, JR.	: No. 327
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LUZERNE COUNTY	: : JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION : : DOCKET NO. 1

ORDER

PER CURIAM

AND NOW, this 28th day of January 2009, this Court has received notice of an information filed by the United States Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania against Judge Mark A. Ciavarella, Jr., a judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, and an agreement by Judge Mark A. Ciavarella, Jr. to enter a plea of guilty to the offenses described in that information. In view of the compelling and immediate need to protect and preserve the integrity of the Unified Judicial System and the administration of justice for the citizens of Luzerne County, Judge Mark A. Ciavarella, Jr. is hereby relieved of any and all judicial and administrative responsibilities as a judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County and ordered not to take any further administrative or judicial action whatsoever in any case or proceeding now or hereinafter pending until further order of this Court. This action will not result in any diminution in salary or benefits until further order of this Court. This Order is without prejudice to the rights of Judge Mark A. Ciavarella, Jr. to seek such relief in this Court for the purpose of vacating or modifying this interim Order. Pa. Const. Article V §10(a); In re: Avellino, 690 A.2d 1138 (Pa. 1997); *and see*, In re: McFalls, 795 A.2d 367 (Pa. 2002).

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: JUDGE MICHAEL T. CONAHAN : No. 328
SENIOR JUDGE :
: JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
:
: DOCKET NO. 1

ORDER

PER CURIAM

AND NOW, this 28th day of January 2009, it is hereby ordered that the certification of Judge Michael T. Conahan as a senior judge in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is revoked and that any pending judicial assignments of Judge Michael T. Conahan are rescinded.