

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT

JCP No. 08-25-90087

In re Complaint of John Doe*

This is a complaint of judicial misconduct by a pro se plaintiff against a district judge who presided over his civil lawsuit.

The complaint alleges that the judge’s “conduct exceeds mere legal error and demonstrates a pattern of behavior that compromises impartiality, interferes with appellate rights, and undermines confidence in the judiciary.” Specifically, the complainant alleges that (1) on September 10, 2025, the judge issued a “blanket denial of filings, including a motion for recusal, without addressing the merits or impartiality concerns,” (2) on September 10 through 12, 2025, his notice of appeal and related exhibits “were omitted from the docket, despite electronic filing receipts confirming omission,” (3) his notices of appeal and related documents were subjected to pre-filing restrictions, “effectively cutting off statutory appellate rights,” (4) the judge’s dismissal order of May 22, 2025 “aligned with state court recusals of [state judges] in parallel cases,” raising “the appearance of coordination designed to insulate systemic misconduct,” (5) the judge disregarded evidence filed in August 2025 showing “successor judge . . . continuing service violations,” and (6) the judge’s imposition of a filing injunction on September 12, 2025 created the appearance of retaliation for exercising the right to seek recusal and appeal.

*Under Rule 24(a) of the Rules for Judicial-Conduct and Judicial-Disability Proceedings, the names of the complainant and the subject judge are not disclosed. Citations or references herein to a “Rule” refer to these Rules.

In support, the complainant attaches his motion seeking the judge's recusal, receipts showing submission of his notice of appeal from September 10, 2025, and copies of allegedly omitted filings—a Rule 60(b) motion, a financial affidavit, and notices filed on September 11 and 12, 2025.

The record shows that on May 22, 2025, the judge issued a seven-page ruling dismissing the complaint. The judge concluded that the complainant failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted, and explained why claims against each of the defendants could not proceed. In July 2025, the court of appeals affirmed the judgment.

In August 2025, the complainant filed several motions, including one seeking the judge's recusal. On September 10, 2025, the judge denied the motions, stating that all matters in the case had been resolved and affirmed on appeal. Due to the volume and the nature of the complainant's motions, the court placed him on restricted filing status, which required him to obtain leave of court to make future filings. The complainant filed a motion seeking leave to file motions for recusal and for further relief, and filed a notice of appeal dated September 10, 2025. On September 11, 2025, the notice of appeal was entered on the docket. A day later, the judge denied the motion seeking to file motions for recusal, and permanently enjoined the complainant from making future filings in the case. In October 2025, the court of appeals affirmed the district court's decisions of September 10.

For the most part, the complaint challenges the judge's decisions regarding the complainant's complaint and motions, and imposition of filing restrictions after dismissal of the case was affirmed on appeal. To that extent, the complaint is dismissed as "directly related to the merits of a decision or procedural ruling." 28 U.S.C. § 352(b)(1)(A)(ii); Rule 11(c)(1)(B); *see* Rule 4(b)(1) ("Cognizable misconduct does not include an allegation that calls into question the correctness of a judge's ruling, including a failure to recuse."). The complaint is otherwise

dismissed as “based on allegations lacking sufficient evidence to raise an inference that misconduct has occurred.” Rule 11(c)(1)(D).

For these reasons, the judicial complaint is dismissed.

/s/ Steven M. Colloton
Chief Judge

Filed: June 1, 2026
