

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSION**

IN RE THE MATTER OF:

**VERNON MINIARD, JR., CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE
57TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

AGREED ORDER OF SUSPENSION

Vernon Miniard, Jr. is Circuit Judge for Kentucky's 57th Judicial District consisting of Russell and Wayne Counties. Judge Miniard has waived formal proceedings and has agreed to entry of this Order.

During a preliminary investigation resulting from a complaint, the Commission received information that on or about August 17, 2015, Judge Miniard presided over Wayne Circuit Case No. 14-CR-00009 styled *Commonwealth v. Baker*, which was set for trial. He was informed by the prosecution that a subpoena was issued for Christy D. Cooper-Stinson but that officers were unable to serve her with the subpoena and believed she was intentionally attempting to evade service. The prosecution requested a material witness warrant for Ms. Cooper-Stinson's arrest. After taking testimony from law enforcement officers, Judge Minion issued a warrant for Cooper-Stinson's arrest for contempt of court. Cooper-Stinson was arrested on August 26, 2015 and remained incarcerated until November 2, 2015 without the court ever appointing an attorney to represent her, setting bond or holding a hearing on the contempt charge.

The Commission concludes that by the conduct described above, Judge Miniard violated SCR 4.300, the Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 1 by failing to maintain high standards of conduct and uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary; Canon 2A by failing to comply with the law and act in a manner that promotes public confidence in

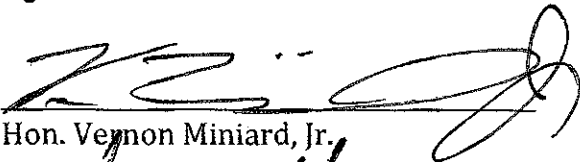
the integrity of the judiciary; and, Canon 3B(7) by failing to accord every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding the right to be heard.

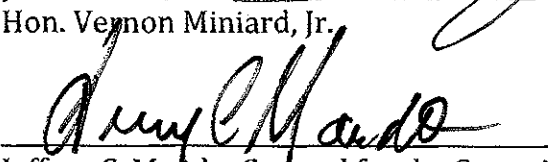
Therefore, for the foregoing conduct, Judge Miniard is hereby suspended from his duties without pay for a period of 14 consecutive days beginning 12-17-16 and ending 12-30-16. In entering this Order with the Agreement of Judge Miniard, the Commission has duly considered that he fully cooperated in the Commission's investigation, that he had no prior infractions, and that he has pledged the offending conduct will not be repeated.

Date: 9/2/16


STEPHEN D. WOLNITZEK, CHAIR

Agreed to:


Hon. Vernon Miniard, Jr.


Jeffrey C. Mando, Counsel for the Commission