

Steve Armitage
Staff Attorney



Oregon Supreme Court

March 12, 2020

Carol DeCoursey
740 Shipping St NE
Salem, OR 97301-7134

Dear Ms. DeCoursey:

Thank you for your letter to Chief Justice Walters dated March 1, 2020. I have reviewed the letter with the Chief Justice, and she asked me to provide the following response. The Chief Justice appreciates your concern with seeing that the criminal justice system proceeds fairly and openly. She shares that concern.

That said, the actions that can be taken by this office -- outside of an appeal -- are very limited. The Oregon Supreme Court and the individual justices of the court cannot become involved informally in pending cases. The authority of the Court and its justices is limited by the Oregon Constitution and the statutes enacted by the legislature, among other things. As a result, the Court and its justices can address only those appellate court matters that have been properly filed before the court.

Your letter includes a complaint about the actions of the trial court judge in State v. Kenneth Ketchem, Marion County Circuit Court No. 19CR05609. Complaints about unethical behavior of judges should be filed with the Commission on Judicial Fitness and Disability. If you would like to file a complaint with the Commission, the process and a complaint form are available online at

<<https://www.courts.oregon.gov/programs/cjfd/complaint/Pages/default.aspx>>.

I am also forwarding a copy of your letter to the Presiding Judge of Marion County Circuit Court.

Finally, your letter also suggests that you may want to obtain some form of legal relief in your own right. Legal relief must be sought through formal legal processes. To ensure fairness to all parties, we cannot give you any advice on how to obtain that relief. You may wish to seek legal advice. The Oregon State Bar provides a Lawyer Referral Service at 503-684-3763, or toll-free in Oregon at 800-452-7636, or online at

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<<https://www.osbar.org/public/ris/>>. A copy of that webpage is attached. Should you have limited means, you may want to contact the Oregon Law Center's Salem Office at (503) 485-0696.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SA', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steve Armitage
Staff Attorney

cc: Hon. Tracy Prall

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