

# NEWS FROM:

Supreme Court of Tennessee  
Administrative Office of the Courts

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Elizabeth Sykes, Director  
Tim Townsend, Deputy Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 17, 2009

Today at 12:00 noon, CDT, the Tennessee Court of the Judiciary issued the following:

## **PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

April 17, 2009

The Honorable Carolyn Wade Blackett  
Shelby County Justice Complex  
201 Poplar Avenue, Suite 519  
Memphis, Tennessee 38103

In re: Internal Complaint vs. Judge Carolyn Blackett

Dear Judge Blackett:

This shall serve as a public letter of reprimand pursuant to your agreement with the Investigative Panel of this Court.

This reprimand relates to your handling of a post-conviction relief petition filed by Perry Cribbs. This post-conviction petition in a capital case was filed April 13, 1998. The case was not decided by you until May 23, 2006, a time lapse of seven years, five months and twenty-one days. This being a capital case, Tennessee Code Annotated §40-30-111(d) required such a post-conviction petition to be concluded in the trial court within one year of the filing of the petition. The same statute requires a ruling within sixty-days of the conclusion of the proof. In this case a draft final revised order was in your possession on May 22, 2005 and you did not enter your decision until May 23, 2006.

Your actions in failing to decide this case in a timely manner violated Canon 3B (8) of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The failure to decide the case also violates Canon 2A requiring a judge to respect and comply with the law and Canon 3A which requires judicial duties to take precedence over all other activities of the judge. This conduct also violates Canon 3B(2) requiring a judge to be faithful to the law and to maintain professional competence in it. In particular this conduct in failing to decide the case in a timely manner violated Tennessee Code Annotated § 40-30-111(d), Tennessee Code Annotated § 40-30-109(a) and Tennessee Code Annotated § 40-30-121. Your conduct in this matter has detrimentally affected the integrity of the Tennessee Judiciary and undermines public confidence in the administration of justice.

Thus this letter serves as a public letter of reprimand and will be appropriately filed and disseminated. We are now closing our file on this matter.

Sincerely,

Don. R. Ash  
Presiding Judge

DRA/mpm  
cc: Disciplinary Counsel  
Investigative Panel