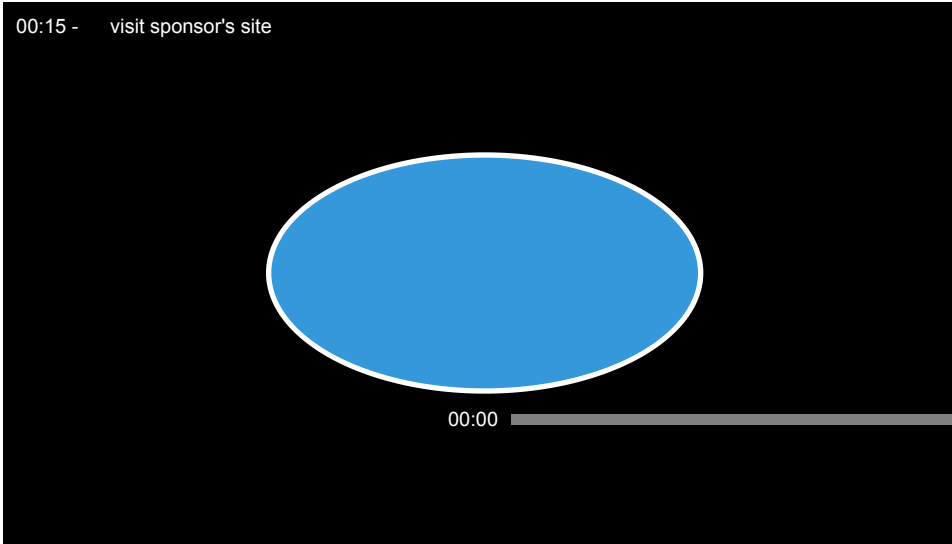


HOW DID AMERICA'S JUDGES BECOME SUCH CORRUPT PERVERTS?

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Kristin Thorne reports on the Long Island judge who police say repeatedly broke into his neighbor's home to steal her underwear.

Eyewitness News

Updated 31 mins ago

EAST ISLIP, Long Island (WABC) -- A Long Island judge who police say repeatedly broke into his neighbor's home to steal her underwear has confessed to snatching panties on multiple occasions, even though he has pleaded not guilty.

Still, Suffolk County District Judge Robert Cicale has been removed from the bench and is facing up to 15 years in prison.

Cicale was [arrested on burglary charges](#) and appeared in court Friday morning.



The judge is a married father of three young children, and he is accused of sneaking into a home across the street and stealing the underwear of a 23-year-old woman who lives there with her parents. He reportedly knew the girl from when she worked as an intern at the Islip Town Attorney's Office, when he used to work there.

In his confession, he said he stole the underwear upon feeling "urges." He admitted that on several

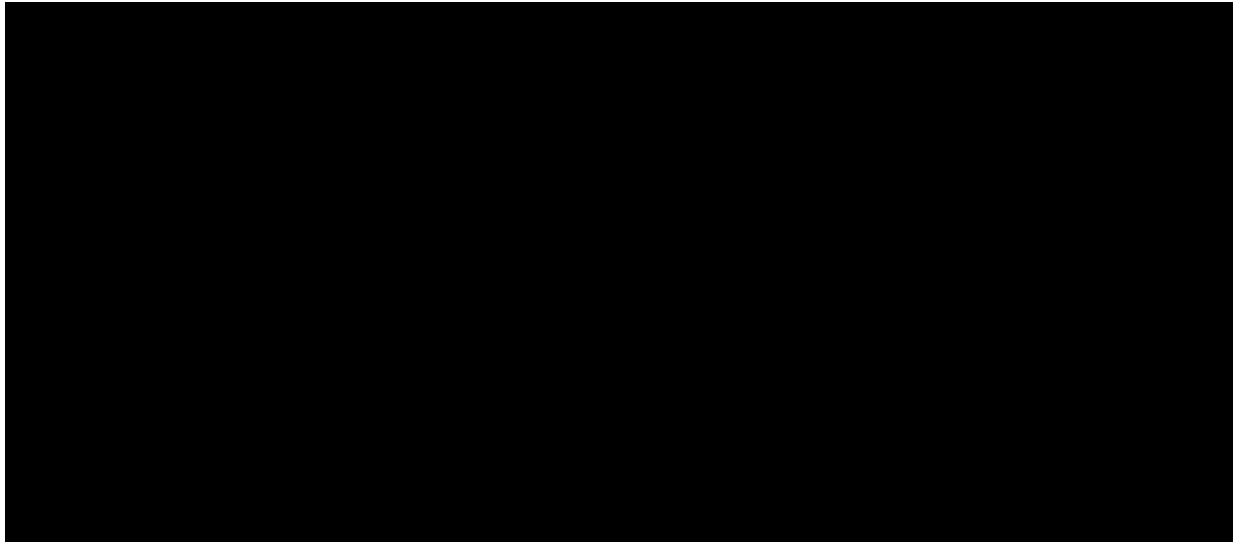
occasions, he entered the home, opened her hamper and took underwear.

Cicarle was taken into custody after an incident that happened around 9 a.m. Thursday, when the young woman was alone. Prosecutors said she was sleeping but woke up when she heard the door open. She called out, "Hello?" and that's when she saw Cicale at the doorway.

Authorities say he turned around and ran away, and the victim closed and locked the door and called her mother, who called 911. Responding officers say they saw Cicale walking up to a different house and pretending to knock on the door.

They approached him because he matched the description of the person the victim described. They reportedly found several pairs of soiled women's underwear on him, which the victim identified as her own.

Cicale has written letter of apology to victim and also provided a written confession.



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Cicale is accused of stealing his female neighbor's underwear.

"This is highly disturbing," Suffolk County District Attorney Tim Sini said. "This is an individual who swore to uphold the law. He violated it in a very serious way. The message here from both the Suffolk County Police Department and the Suffolk County District Attorney's office is that no one is above the law, and we'll prosecute this case to the fullest extent of the law."

A Nassau County district judge presided over Cicale's case to prevent a conflict of interest. Cicale is expected to receive mental health treatment.

"His reputation throughout the court is stellar," defense attorney William Wexler said. "Every judge,

every lawyer respects him, and we just have to see how the process plays out."

Wexler went on to say that the judge's wife is standing by her husband through this process.

Cicale was ordered held on \$50,000. Cicale was "temporarily relieved of his judicial duties" and the matter was referred to the state's Court of Appeals to determine whether to suspend the jurist, court system spokesman Lucian Chalfen said.

A judge also issued a restraining order that prevents Cicale from contacting the victim and, as a condition of his bail, Cicale will also be required to wear a GPS monitor, Sini said.

Neighbors were shocked when they learned of the judge's arrest.

"From what I heard, it's a little perverted maybe," neighbor William Bloom said. "And that never makes sense to me."

Cicale is a graduate of St. John's Law School, a former legal aide attorney and a former Islip Town Attorney elected to the District Criminal Court in 2016.

"He's a family man, he's always outside playing basketball with his kids," neighbor Jay Mocerri said. "He's always jogging. He's always friendly to everybody in the neighborhood."

(The Associated Press contributed to this report.)