

Title: Re: Suspension of Clerk of Court Rogelio R. Joboco, RTC, Branch 16 Naval, Biliran

Facts:

1. **Initial Complaint**: Atty. Gabino Velasquez files an administrative complaint due to missing case records. Judge Bonifacio Maceda issues a suspension order against Atty. Rogelio Joboco, Clerk of Court, citing Infidelity in Case Records' Custody as per an admission by Joboco.
2. **Response and Proceedings**:
  - Joboco denies liability, suggesting Judge Maceda and another employee, Mr. Amante, had access to the records.
  - Joboco posits that political motivations, given past involvement in another judicial case, influenced the complaint.
  - Judge Maceda insists on Joboco's accountability for records as a Clerk of Court.
  - Clerk III Maria Mercolita supports claims of record mismanagement by Joboco.
3. **Legal Motions**:
  - Joboco files a motion to the Supreme Court to lift the suspension citing breach of constitutional supervisory roles.
  - Supreme Court eventually voids the suspension, supporting Joboco initial procedural claim.
4. **Subsequent Suspension for Dishonesty**:
  - A subsequent suspension is issued by Judge Maceda due to Joboco's failure to disclose an accidental meeting with an accused, which allegedly led to a warrant issuance.
  - Joboco contests this, clarifying that notices were issued to appropriate parties.
5. **Allegations of Judicial Sabotage**:
  - Joboco faces accusations of mishandling property bond approvals but is defended as having acted in good faith.
6. **Further Complaints Against Judge Maceda**:
  - Joboco accuses Maceda of oppressive behavior, including verbal abuse.
  - Additional suspensions are issued against Joboco for alleged mismanagement tasks such as unauthorized schedule changes in case hearings and refusal to turn over court-related documents.
  - Joboco appeals to the Supreme Court regarding suspensions and non-payment of salary

due to unsigned service certificates.

7. **Resolution of Falsification and Mass Leave Allegations**:

- Judge Maceda claims falsification by Joboco in service certificates leading to salary withholding.
- Joboco contests suspensions and salary withholding, filing a special civil action for resolution, while Judge Maceda rebuts allegations.

Issues:

1. **Infidelity in the Custody of Court Records**: Whether Joboco was liable for negligence in managing case records.
2. **Dishonesty**: The duty to disclose meetings with an accused.
3. **Judicial Sabotage**: Viability of the allegations of sabotaging bond procedures.
4. **Usurpation of Authority and Subpoena Tampering**: Whether Joboco overstepped his role by resetting a hearing schedule.
5. **Falsification and AWOL**: Validity of charges regarding service certificate inaccuracies and absenteeism.
6. **Judicial Misconduct**: Judging the propriety of Judge Maceda's actions, including his refusal to certify Joboco's attendance and alleged oppressive behavior.

Court's Decision:

1. **Infidelity in Court Records**: Atty. Joboco was found guilty due to negligence in managing case files, failing to perform inventory and related supervisory duties.
2. **Dishonesty**: Charges of dishonesty were not upheld; relevance of the meeting with the accused did not merit Joboco's liability.
3. **Allegations of Judicial Sabotage**: No evidence of intentional malpractice was found; charge dismissed.
4. **Usurpation and Subpoena Tampering**: Joboco guilty of overstepping his boundaries in court calendar management and communications.

5. **Falsification and Absenteeism**: Joboco found guilty; errors in certificates and absenteeism without official leave justified administrative fine.

6. **Judge Maceda's Conduct**: No disciplinary action taken, though admonished for handling Joboco's salary withholding improperly.

**Doctrine**: The case reaffirms the administrative duties and responsibilities of court personnel, emphasizing accountability for record keeping and separation of administrative and judicial functions. It also underscores the supervisory role of the Supreme Court over administrative decisions within courts.

**Class Notes**:

- **Infidelity in Custody**: Clerks of Court must ensure precise record management.
- **Dishonesty and Duty of Disclosure**: Employees are not obligated to provide unsolicited information unless directly relevant to duties.
- **Administrative Authority**: Courts must respect procedural supervision highlighted in the Constitution.
- **Separation of Roles**: Clerks must not assume judicial discretion (e.g., trial schedules, quorum).

**Historical Background**:

The case reflects the broader judiciary reforms occurring in the 1990s Philippines aiming at enhancing accountability and efficiency within the judiciary. It demonstrates the evolving administrative oversight of court processes by the Supreme Court to prevent misconduct and uphold judicial integrity.