

CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT

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For the Code of Judicial Conduct as it read prior to 2011, see editions of the Practice Book prior to the 2011 edition.

AMENDMENT NOTE: This is a major rewrite of the Code of Judicial Conduct, adopted by the judges of the Superior Court on June 21, 2010, the judges of the Appellate Court on July 15, 2010, and the justices of the Supreme Court on July 1, 2010, to take effect January 1, 2011. It is based on the Model Code adopted by the ABA in 2007. Our prior Code, which was adopted with an effective date of October 1, 1974, was based on the Model Code adopted by the ABA in 1972. In the early 1990s, the ABA adopted a revised Model Code; however, the major changes in the Model Code were not adopted by the judges of Connecticut.

PREAMBLE

(1) An independent, fair and impartial judiciary is indispensable to our system of justice. The United States legal system is based on the principle that an independent, impartial, and competent judiciary, composed of men and women of integrity, will interpret and apply the law that governs our society. Thus, the judiciary plays a central role in preserving the principles of justice and the rule of law. Inherent in all the Rules contained in this Code are the precepts that judges, individually and collectively, must respect and honor the judicial office as a public trust and strive to maintain and enhance confidence in the legal system.

(2) Judges should maintain the dignity of judicial office at all times and avoid both impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in their professional and personal lives. They should aspire at all times to conduct that ensures the greatest possible public confidence in their independence, impartiality, integrity, and competence.

(3) The Code of Judicial Conduct establishes standards for the ethical conduct of judges in matters affecting the performance of their judicial duties and the fair and efficient operation of the courts or other tribunals on which they serve. Although it is not intended as an exhaustive guide

for the conduct of judges, who must be guided in their professional and personal lives by general ethical standards as well as by the law, which includes this Code, it is intended to assist judges in maintaining the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, as it affects their judicial work.

SCOPE

(1) The Code of Judicial Conduct consists of four Canons, numbered Rules¹ under each Canon, and Comments that generally follow and explain each Rule. Scope and Terminology sections provide additional guidance in interpreting and applying the Code. An Application section establishes when the various Rules apply to a judge.

(2) The Canons state overarching principles of judicial ethics that all judges must observe. Although a judge may be disciplined hereunder only for violating a Rule, the Canons provide important guidance in interpreting the Rules. Where a Rule contains a permissive term, such as “may” or “should,” the conduct being addressed is committed to the sound personal and professional discretion of the judge in question, and no disciplinary action shall be taken for action or inaction within the bounds of such discretion.

(3) The Comments that accompany the Rules serve two functions. First, they provide guidance regarding the purpose, meaning, and proper application of the Rules. They contain explanatory material and, in some instances, provide examples of permitted or prohibited conduct. Comments neither add to nor subtract from the binding obligations set forth in the Rules. Therefore, when a Comment contains the term “must,” it does not mean that the Comment itself is binding or enforceable; it signifies that the Rule in question, properly understood, is obligatory as to the conduct at issue.

¹ References herein to numbered Rules are to the Rules of this Code, unless stated otherwise.

(4) Second, the Comments identify aspirational goals for judges. To implement fully the principles of this Code as articulated in the Canons, judges should strive to exceed the standards of conduct established by the Rules, holding themselves to the highest ethical standards and seeking to achieve those aspirational goals, thereby enhancing the dignity of the judicial office.

(5) The Rules of the Code of Judicial Conduct are rules of reason that should be applied consistently with constitutional requirements, statutes, other court rules, and decisional law, and with due regard for all relevant circumstances. The Rules should not be interpreted in such a way as to impinge on the essential independence of judges in making judicial decisions.

(6) Although these Rules are binding and enforceable, it is not contemplated that every transgression will necessarily result in the imposition of discipline. Whether discipline should be imposed should be determined through a reasonable and reasoned application of the Rules and should depend on factors such as the seriousness of the transgression, the facts and circumstances that existed at the time of the transgression, the extent of any pattern of improper activity, whether there have been previous violations, and the effect of the improper activity on the judicial system or other persons.

(7) The Code is not designed or intended as a basis for civil or criminal liability. Neither is it intended to be the basis for litigants to seek collateral remedies against each other or to obtain tactical advantages in proceedings before a court.

TERMINOLOGY

As used in this Code, the following definitions shall apply:

“Appropriate authority” means the authority having responsibility for taking corrective action in connection with the conduct or violation to be reported under Rules 2.14 and 2.15.

“Confidential” means information that is not available to the public. Confidential information may include, but is not limited to, information that is sealed by statute, rule or court order or lodged with the court or communicated in camera. See Rule 3.5.

“Contribution” means both financial and in-kind contributions, such as goods, professional or volunteer services, advertising, and other types of assistance, which, if obtained by the recipient otherwise, would require a financial expenditure. See Rules 2.11, 3.7, and 4.1.

“De minimis,” in the context of interests pertaining to disqualification of a judge, means an

insignificant interest that could not raise a reasonable question regarding the judge’s impartiality. See Rule 2.11.

“Domestic partner” means a person with whom another person maintains a household and an intimate relationship, other than a spouse. See Rules 2.11, 2.13, 3.13, and 3.14.

“Economic interest” means ownership of more than a de minimis legal or equitable interest. Except for situations in which the judge participates in the management of such a legal or equitable interest, or the interest could be substantially affected by the outcome of a proceeding before a judge, it does not include:

(1) an interest in the individual holdings within a mutual or common investment fund;

(2) an interest in securities held by an educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organization in which the judge or the judge’s spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child serves as a director, an officer, an advisor, or other participant;

(3) a deposit in a financial institution or deposits or proprietary interests the judge may maintain as a member of a mutual savings association or credit union, or similar proprietary interests; or

(4) an interest in the issuer of government securities held by the judge. See Rules 1.3, 2.11, and 3.2.

“Fiduciary” includes relationships such as executor, administrator, trustee, or guardian. See Rules 2.11, 3.2, and 3.8.

“Impartial,” “impartiality,” and “impartially” mean absence of bias or prejudice in favor of, or against, particular parties or classes of parties, as well as maintenance of an open mind in considering issues that may come before a judge. See Canons 1, 2, and 4, and Rules 1.2, 2.2, 2.10, 2.11, 2.13, 3.1, 3.12, 3.13, 4.1, and 4.2.

“Impending matter” is any matter a judge knows is imminent or reasonably expects to be commenced in the near future. See Rules 2.9, 2.10, 3.13, and 4.1.

“Impropriety” includes conduct that violates the law or provisions of this Code and conduct that undermines a judge’s independence, integrity, or impartiality. See Canon 1 and Rule 1.2.

“Independence” means a judge’s freedom from influence or controls other than those established by law. See Canons 1 and 4, and Rules 1.2, 3.1, 3.12, 3.13, and 4.2.

“Integrity” means probity, fairness, honesty, uprightness, and soundness of character. See Canons 1 and 4 and Rules 1.2, 3.1, 3.12, 3.13, and 4.2.

“Knowingly,” “knowledge,” “known,” and “knows” mean actual knowledge of the fact in question. A person’s knowledge may be inferred from circumstances. See Rules 2.11, 2.15, 2.16, 3.2, 3.6, and 4.1.

“Law” encompasses court rules as well as statutes, constitutional provisions, decisional law, and this Code. See Rules 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.6, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.7, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 4.1, and 4.3.

“Member of the judge’s family” means any relative of a judge related by consanguinity within the third degree as determined by the common law, a spouse or domestic partner or an individual related to a spouse or domestic partner within the third degree as so determined, including an individual in an adoptive relationship within the third degree. See Rules 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 3.10, and 3.11.

“Member of a judge’s family residing in the judge’s household” means any member of the judge’s family or other person treated by a judge as a member of the judge’s family, who resides in the judge’s household. See Rules 2.11 and 3.13.

“Pending matter” is a matter that has commenced. A matter continues to be pending through any appellate process until final disposition. See Rules 2.9, 2.10, 3.13, and 4.1.

“Personally solicit” means a direct request made by a judge for financial support or in-kind services, whether made by letter, telephone, or any other means of communication. See Rule 4.1.

“Political organization” means a political party or other group sponsored by or affiliated with a political party or candidate, the principal purpose of which is to further the election or appointment of candidates for political office. See Rules 4.1 and 4.2.

“Public election” includes primary and general elections, partisan elections and nonpartisan elections. See Rule 4.3.

“Spouse” means a person to whom one is legally married or joined in a civil union. See Rules 2.11, 3.13, and 3.14.

“Third degree of relationship” includes the following persons: great-grandparent, grandparent, parent, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, nephew, and niece. See Rule 2.11.

APPLICATION

The Application section establishes when and to whom the various Rules apply.

I. APPLICABILITY OF THIS CODE

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b), the provisions of the Code apply to all judges of the Superior Court, senior judges, judge trial referees, state referees, family support magistrates appointed pursuant to General Statutes § 46b-231 (f), and family support magistrate referees.

(b) State referees and family support magistrate referees are not required to comply with Rules 3.4 and 3.8.

II. TIME FOR COMPLIANCE

A person to whom this Code becomes applicable shall comply immediately with its provisions, except that those judges to whom Rules 3.8 (Appointments to Fiduciary Positions) and 3.11 (Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities) apply shall comply with those Rules as soon as reasonably possible, but in no event later than one year after the Code becomes applicable to the judge.

COMMENT: If serving as a fiduciary when selected as judge, a new judge may, notwithstanding the prohibitions in Rule 3.8, continue to serve as fiduciary, but only for that period of time necessary to avoid serious adverse consequences to the beneficiaries of the fiduciary relationship and in no event longer than one year. Similarly, if engaged at the time of judicial selection in a business activity, a new judge may, notwithstanding the prohibitions in Rule 3.11, continue in that activity for a reasonable period but in no event longer than one year.

CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT

Canon

1. A Judge Shall Uphold and Promote the Independence, Integrity, and Impartiality of the Judiciary, and Shall Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety.

Rule

- 1.1. Compliance with the Law
- 1.2. Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary
- 1.3. Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

Canon

2. A Judge Shall Perform the Duties of Judicial Office Impartially, Competently, and Diligently.

Rule

- 2.1. Giving Precedence to the Duties of Judicial Office
- 2.2. Impartiality and Fairness
- 2.3. Bias, Prejudice, and Harassment
- 2.4. External Influences on Judicial Conduct or Judgment
- 2.5. Competence, Diligence, and Cooperation
- 2.6. Ensuring the Right To Be Heard
- 2.7. Responsibility To Decide
- 2.8. Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors
- 2.9. Ex Parte Communications
- 2.10. Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases
- 2.11. Disqualification
- 2.12. Supervisory Duties
- 2.13. Administrative Appointments
- 2.14. Disability and Impairment
- 2.15. Responding to Judicial and Lawyer Misconduct
- 2.16. Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities

Canon

3. A Judge Shall Conduct the Judge's Personal and Extrajudicial Activities To Minimize the Risk of Conflict with the Obligations of Judicial Office.

Rule

- 3.1. Extrajudicial Activities in General
- 3.2. Appearances before Governmental Bodies and Consultation with Government Officials
- 3.3. Testifying as a Character Witness
- 3.4. Appointments to Governmental Positions
- 3.5. Use of Confidential Information
- 3.6. Affiliation with Discriminatory Organizations
- 3.7. Participation in Educational, Religious, Charitable, Fraternal, or Civic Organizations and Activities
- 3.8. Appointments to Fiduciary Positions
- 3.9. Service as Arbitrator or Mediator
- 3.10. Practice of Law
- 3.11. Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities
- 3.12. Compensation for Extrajudicial Activities
- 3.13. Acceptance and Reporting of Gifts, Loans, Bequests, Benefits, or Other Things of Value
- 3.14. Reimbursement of Expenses and Waivers of Fees or Charges
- 3.15. Reporting Requirements

Canon

4. A Judge Shall Not Engage in Political or Campaign Activity that Is Inconsistent with the Independence, Integrity, or Impartiality of the Judiciary.

Rule

- 4.1. Political Activities of Judges in General
- 4.2. Activities of Judges as Candidates for Reappointment or Elevation to Higher Judicial Office
- 4.3. Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Public Office

Canon 1. A Judge Shall Uphold and Promote the Independence, Integrity, and Impartiality of the Judiciary, and Shall Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety.

Rule 1.1. Compliance with the Law

A judge shall comply with the law.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: This rule deals with the judge's personal conduct. A judge's professional conduct in enforcing the law is covered by Rule 2.2. When applying and interpreting the law, a judge sometimes may make good faith errors of fact or law. Errors of this kind do not violate this Rule.

Rule 1.2. Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary

A judge shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety. The test for appearance of impropriety is

whether the conduct would create in reasonable minds a perception that the judge violated this Code or engaged in other conduct that reflects adversely on the judge's honesty, impartiality, temperament, or fitness to serve as a judge.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Public confidence in the judiciary is eroded by improper conduct and conduct that creates the appearance of impropriety as defined in this Rule. This principle applies to both the professional and personal conduct of a judge.

(2) A judge should expect to be the subject of public scrutiny that might be viewed as burdensome if applied to other citizens and must accept the restrictions imposed by the Code.

(3) Conduct that compromises the independence, integrity, and impartiality of a judge undermines public confidence in the judiciary. Because it is not practicable to list all such conduct, the Rule is necessarily cast in general terms.

(4) Judges may initiate or participate in activities that promote ethical conduct among judges and lawyers, support professionalism within the judiciary and the legal profession, and promote access to justice for all.

(5) A judge may initiate or participate in community activities for the purpose of promoting public understanding of and confidence in the administration of justice. In conducting such activities, the judge must act in a manner consistent with this Code.

Rule 1.3. Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office

A judge shall not use or attempt to use the prestige of judicial office to advance the personal or economic interests of the judge or others or allow others to do so.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) It is improper for a judge to use or attempt to use his or her position to gain personal advantage or deferential treatment of any kind. For example, it would be improper for a judge to allude to his or her judicial status to gain favorable treatment in encounters with traffic officials. Similarly, a judge must not use judicial letterhead to gain an advantage in conducting his or her personal business.

(2) A judge may provide a reference or recommendation for an individual based on the judge's personal knowledge. The judge may use official letterhead if the judge indicates that the reference is personal and if the use of the letterhead would not reasonably be perceived as an attempt to exert pressure by reason of the judicial office.

(3) Judges may participate in the process of judicial selection by cooperating with appointing authorities and screening committees and by responding to inquiries from such entities concerning the professional qualifications of a person being considered for judicial office.

(4) Special considerations arise when judges write or contribute to publications of for-profit entities, whether related or unrelated to the law. A judge should not permit anyone associated with the publication of such materials to exploit the judge's office in a manner that violates this Code or other applicable law. In contracts for publication of a judge's writing, the judge should retain sufficient control over the advertising to avoid such exploitation.

Canon 2. A Judge Shall Perform the Duties of Judicial Office Impartially, Competently, and Diligently.**Rule 2.1. Giving Precedence to the Duties of Judicial Office**

The duties of judicial office, as prescribed by law, shall take precedence over all of a judge's personal and extrajudicial activities.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) To ensure that judges are available to fulfill their judicial duties, judges must conduct their personal and extrajudicial activities in such a way as to minimize the risk of conflicts that would result in disqualification. A judge's personal extrajudicial activities shall not be conducted in such a way as to interfere unduly with the duties of judicial office. See Canon 3.

(2) Although it is not a duty of judicial office, judges are encouraged to initiate or participate in activities that promote public understanding of and confidence in the justice system.

Rule 2.2. Impartiality and Fairness

A judge shall uphold and apply the law and shall perform all duties of judicial office fairly and impartially.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) To ensure impartiality and fairness to all parties, a judge must be objective and open-minded.

(2) Although each judge comes to the bench with a unique background and personal philosophy, a judge must interpret and apply the law without regard to whether the judge approves or disapproves of the law in question.

(3) When applying and interpreting the law, a judge sometimes may make good faith errors of fact or law. Errors of this kind do not violate this Rule.

(4) It is not a violation of this Rule for a judge to make reasonable accommodations to ensure self-represented litigants the opportunity to have their matters fairly heard.

Rule 2.3. Bias, Prejudice, and Harassment

(a) A judge shall perform the duties of judicial office, including administrative duties, without bias or prejudice.

(b) A judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct, manifest bias or prejudice or engage in harassment including, but not limited to, bias, prejudice, or harassment based on race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation and shall not condone such conduct by court staff, court officials, or others subject to the court's direction and control.

(c) A judge shall require lawyers in proceedings before the court to refrain from manifesting bias or prejudice or engaging in harassment, based on attributes including, but not limited to, race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation against parties, witnesses, lawyers, or others.

(d) The restrictions of subsections (b) and (c) do not preclude judges or lawyers from making legitimate reference to the listed factors or similar factors when they are relevant to an issue in a proceeding.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) A judge who manifests bias or prejudice in a proceeding impairs the fairness of the proceeding and brings the judiciary into disrepute.

(2) Examples of manifestations of bias or prejudice include, but are not limited to, epithets; slurs; demeaning nicknames; negative stereotyping; attempted humor based on stereotypes; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; suggestions of connections between race, ethnicity, or nationality and criminality; and irrelevant references to personal characteristics. Even facial expressions and body language can convey to parties and lawyers in the proceeding, jurors, the media, and others an appearance of bias or prejudice. A judge must avoid conduct that may reasonably be perceived as prejudiced or biased.

(3) Harassment, as referred to in subsections (b) and (c), is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a person on bases such as race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation.

(4) Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome.

Rule 2.4. External Influences on Judicial Conduct or Judgment

(a) A judge shall not be swayed in the performance of the judge's judicial duties by public clamor or fear of criticism.

(b) A judge shall not permit family, social, political, financial, or other interests or relationships to influence the judge's judicial conduct or judgment.

(c) A judge shall not convey or permit others to convey the impression that any person or organization is in a position to influence the judge's judicial conduct or judgment.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: An independent judiciary requires that judges decide cases according to the law and facts, without regard to whether particular laws or litigants are popular or unpopular with the public, the media, government officials, or the judge's friends or family. The integrity of judicial decision making is undermined if it is based in whole or in part on inappropriate outside influences.

Rule 2.5. Competence, Diligence, and Cooperation

(a) A judge shall perform judicial and administrative duties competently and diligently.

(b) A judge shall cooperate with other judges and court officials in the administration of court business.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Competence in the performance of judicial duties requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation reasonably necessary to perform a judge's responsibilities of judicial office.

(2) A judge should seek the necessary docket time, court staff, expertise, and resources to discharge all adjudicative and administrative responsibilities.

(3) Prompt disposition of the court's business requires a judge to devote adequate time to judicial duties, to be punctual in attending court and expeditious in determining matters under submission, and to take reasonable measures to ensure that court officials, litigants, and their lawyers cooperate with the judge to that end.

(4) In disposing of matters promptly and efficiently, a judge must demonstrate due regard for the rights of parties to be heard and to have issues resolved without unnecessary cost or delay. A judge should monitor and supervise cases in ways that reduce or eliminate dilatory practices, avoidable delays, and unnecessary costs.

Rule 2.6. Ensuring the Right To Be Heard

(a) A judge shall accord to every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding, or that person's lawyer, the right to be heard according to law.

(b) A judge may encourage parties to a proceeding and their lawyers to settle matters in dispute but shall not act in a manner that coerces any party into settlement.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) The right to be heard is an essential component of a fair and impartial system of justice. Substantive rights of litigants can be protected only if procedures protecting the right to be heard are observed.

(2) The judge plays an important role in overseeing the settlement of disputes but should be careful that efforts to further settlements do not undermine any party's right to be heard according to law. The judge should keep in mind the effect that the judge's participation in settlement discussions may have, not only on the judge's own views of the case, but

also on the perceptions of the lawyers and the parties if the case remains with the judge after settlement efforts are unsuccessful. Among the factors that a judge should consider when deciding on appropriate settlement practices for a case are: (a) whether the parties have requested or voluntarily consented to a certain level of participation by the judge in settlement discussions, (b) whether the parties and their counsel are relatively sophisticated in legal matters, (c) whether the case will be tried by the judge or a jury, (d) whether the parties participate with their counsel in settlement discussions, (e) whether any parties are unrepresented by counsel, and (f) whether the matter is civil or criminal.

(3) Judges must be mindful of the effect settlement discussions can have, not only on their objectivity and impartiality, but also on the appearance of their objectivity and impartiality. Despite a judge's best efforts, there may be instances when information obtained during settlement discussions could influence a judge's decision making during trial, and, in such instances, the judge should consider whether disqualification may be appropriate. See Rule 2.11 (a) (1).

Rule 2.7. Responsibility To Decide

A judge shall hear and decide matters assigned to the judge, except when disqualification is required by Rule 2.11 or other law.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: Judges must be available to decide the matters that come before the court. Although there are times when disqualification is necessary to protect the rights of litigants and preserve public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, judges must be available to decide matters that come before the courts. Unwarranted disqualification may bring public disfavor to the court and to the judge personally. The dignity of the court, the judge's respect for fulfillment of judicial duties and a proper concern for the burdens that may be imposed on the judge's colleagues require that a judge not use disqualification to avoid cases that present difficult, controversial, or unpopular issues.

Rule 2.8. Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors

(a) A judge shall require order and decorum in proceedings before the court.

(b) A judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity and shall require similar conduct of lawyers, court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control.

(c) Although a judge may thank jurors for their willingness to serve, a judge shall not commend or criticize jurors with respect to their verdict in a case other than in an instruction, order or opinion in a proceeding, if appropriate.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) The duty to hear all proceedings with patience and courtesy is not inconsistent with the duty imposed in Rule 2.5 to dispose promptly of the business of the court. Judges can be efficient and businesslike while being patient and deliberate.

(2) Commending or criticizing jurors for their verdict may imply a judicial expectation in future cases and may impair a juror's ability to be fair and impartial in a subsequent case.

(3) A judge who is not otherwise prohibited by law from doing so may meet with jurors who choose to remain after trial but shall be careful to avoid discussion of the merits of the case.

(4) This rule does not purport to prevent a judge from returning a jury for further deliberations if its verdict is insufficient in amount, inaccurate, inconsistent with the court's instructions or otherwise improper in form or substance.

Rule 2.9. Ex Parte Communications

(a) A judge shall not initiate, permit, or consider ex parte communications or consider other communications made to the judge outside the presence of the parties or their lawyers, concerning a pending or impending matter, except as follows:

(1) When circumstances require it, ex parte communication for scheduling, administrative, or emergency purposes, which does not address substantive matters, is permitted, provided:

(A) the judge reasonably believes that no party will gain a procedural, substantive, or tactical advantage as a result of the ex parte communication; and

(B) the judge makes provision promptly to notify all other parties of the substance of the ex parte communication and gives the parties an opportunity to respond.

(2) A judge may obtain the written advice of a disinterested expert on the law applicable to a proceeding before the judge, if the judge gives advance notice to the parties of the person to be consulted and the subject matter of the advice to be solicited, and affords the parties a reasonable opportunity to object and to respond to the notice and to the written advice received.

(3) A judge may consult with court staff and court officials whose functions are to aid the judge in carrying out the judge's adjudicative responsibilities, or with other judges, provided the judge makes reasonable efforts to avoid receiving factual information that is not part of the record and does not abrogate the responsibility personally to decide the matter.

(4) A judge may, with the consent of the parties, confer separately with the parties and their lawyers in an effort to settle matters pending before the judge.

(5) A judge may initiate, permit, or consider any ex parte communication when expressly authorized by law to do so.

(b) If a judge inadvertently receives an unauthorized ex parte communication bearing on the substance of a matter, the judge shall make provision promptly to notify the parties of the substance of the communication and provide the parties with an opportunity to respond.

(c) A judge serving as a fact finder shall not investigate facts in a matter independently and shall consider only the evidence presented and any facts that may properly be judicially noticed.

(d) A judge shall make reasonable efforts, including providing appropriate supervision, to ensure that this Rule is not violated by court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) To the extent reasonably possible, all parties or their lawyers shall be included in communications with a judge.

(2) Whenever the presence of a party or notice to a party is required by this Rule, it is the party's lawyer, or if the party is unrepresented, the party, who is to be present or to whom notice is to be given.

(3) The proscription against communications concerning a proceeding includes communications with lawyers, law teachers, and other persons who are not participants in the proceeding, except to the limited extent permitted by this Rule.

(4) A judge may initiate, permit, or consider ex parte communications expressly authorized by law.

(5) A judge may consult with other judges on pending matters but must avoid ex parte discussions of a case with judges who are disqualified from hearing the matter and with judges who have appellate jurisdiction over the matter.

(6) The prohibition against a judge investigating the facts in a matter extends to information available in all mediums, including electronic. Nothing in this Rule is intended to relieve a judge of the independent duty to investigate allegations of juror misconduct. See *State v. Santiago*, 245 Conn. 301, 715 A.2d 1 (1998).

(7) A judge may consult ethics advisory committees, outside counsel, or legal experts concerning the judge's compliance with this Code. Such consultations are not subject to the restrictions of subsection (a) (2).

Rule 2.10. Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases

(a) A judge shall not make any public statement that might reasonably be expected to affect the outcome or to impair the fairness of a matter pending or impending in any court or make any non-public statement that might substantially interfere with a fair trial or hearing.

(b) A judge shall not, in connection with cases, controversies, or issues that are likely to come before the court, make pledges, promises, or commitments that are inconsistent with the impartial performance of the adjudicative duties of judicial office.

(c) A judge may consult with other judges or court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control whose function is to aid the judge in carrying out the judge's adjudicative responsibilities. However, a judge shall require court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control to refrain from making statements that the judge would be prohibited from making by subsections (a) and (b).

(d) Notwithstanding the restrictions in subsection (a), a judge may make public statements in the course of official duties, may explain court procedures, and may comment on any proceeding in which the judge is a litigant in a personal capacity.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) This Rule's restrictions on judicial speech are essential to the maintenance of the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary.

(2) This Rule does not prohibit a judge from commenting on proceedings in which the judge is a litigant in a personal capacity. In cases in which the judge is a litigant in an official capacity, such as a writ of mandamus, the judge must not comment publicly.

Rule 2.11. Disqualification

(a) A judge shall disqualify himself or herself in any proceeding in which the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned including, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

(1) The judge has a personal bias or prejudice concerning a party or a party's lawyer, or personal knowledge of facts that are in dispute in the proceeding.

(2) The judge knows that the judge, the judge's spouse or domestic partner, or a person within the third degree of relationship to either of them, or the spouse or domestic partner of such a person is:

(A) a party to the proceeding, or an officer, director, general partner, managing member, or trustee of a party;

(B) acting as a lawyer in the proceeding;

(C) a person who has more than a de minimis interest that could be substantially affected by the proceeding; or

(D) likely to be a material witness in the proceeding.

(3) The judge knows that he or she, individually or as a fiduciary, or the judge's spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child, or any other member of the judge's family residing in the judge's household, has an economic interest in the subject matter in controversy or in a party to the proceeding.

(4) The judge has made a public statement, other than in a court proceeding, judicial decision, or opinion that commits or appears to commit the judge to reach a particular result or rule in a particular way in the proceeding or controversy.

(5) The judge:

(A) served as a lawyer in the matter in controversy or was associated with a lawyer who participated substantially as a lawyer in the matter during such association;

(B) served in governmental employment and in such capacity participated personally and substantially as a lawyer or public official concerning the proceeding or has publicly expressed in such capacity an opinion concerning the merits of the particular matter in controversy; or

(C) was a material witness concerning the matter.

(b) A judge shall keep informed about the judge's personal and fiduciary economic interests

and make a reasonable effort to keep informed about the personal economic interests of the judge's spouse or domestic partner and minor children residing in the judge's household.

(c) A judge subject to disqualification under this Rule, other than for bias or prejudice under subsection (a) (1), may ask the parties and their lawyers to consider, outside the presence of the judge and court personnel, whether to waive disqualification, provided that the judge shall disclose on the record the basis of such disqualification. If, following the disclosure, the parties and lawyers agree, either in writing or on the record before another judge, that the judge should not be disqualified, the judge may participate in the proceeding.

(d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, a judge may contribute to a client security fund maintained under the auspices of the court, and such contribution will not require that the judge disqualify himself or herself from service on such a client security fund committee or from participation in a lawyer disciplinary proceeding or in any matter concerning restitution or subrogation relating to such a client security fund.

(e) A judge is not automatically disqualified from sitting on a proceeding merely because a lawyer or party to the proceeding has filed a lawsuit against the judge or filed a complaint against the judge with the Judicial Review Council or an administrative agency. When the judge becomes aware pursuant to Practice Book Sections 1-22 (b), 4-8, 66-9, or otherwise that such a lawsuit or complaint has been filed against him or her, the judge shall proceed in accordance with Practice Book Section 1-22 (b) or 66-9.

(f) The fact that the judge was represented or defended by the attorney general in a lawsuit that arises out of the judge's judicial duties shall not be the sole basis for recusal by the judge in lawsuits where the attorney general appears.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.) (Amended June 15, 2018, to take effect Jan. 1, 2019; amended June 9, 2023, to take effect Jan. 1, 2024.)

HISTORY—2024: Prior to 2024, the second sentence of subsection (e) read: "When the judge becomes aware pursuant to Practice Book Section 1-22 (b) or 4-8 or otherwise that such a lawsuit or complaint has been filed against him or her, the judge shall, on the record, disclose that fact to the lawyers and parties to the proceeding before such judge, and the judge shall thereafter proceed in accordance with Practice Book Section 1-22 (b)."

COMMENT: (1) Under this Rule, a judge is disqualified whenever the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned, regardless of whether any of the specific provisions of subsections (a) (1) through (5) apply. In many jurisdictions, the term "recusal" is used interchangeably with the term "disqualification."

(2) A judge's obligation not to hear or decide matters in which disqualification is required applies regardless of whether a motion to disqualify is filed.

(3) The rule of necessity may override the rule of disqualification. For example, a judge might be required to participate in judicial review of a judicial salary statute. In matters that require immediate action, the judge must disclose on the record the basis for possible disqualification and make reasonable efforts to transfer the matter to another judge as soon as practicable.

(4) The fact that a lawyer in a proceeding is affiliated with a law firm with which a relative of the judge is affiliated does not itself disqualify the judge. If, however, the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned under subsection (a) or the relative is known by the judge to have an interest in the law firm that could be substantially affected by the proceeding under subsection (a) (2) (C), the judge's disqualification is required.

(5) The Rule does not prevent a judge from relying on personal knowledge of historical or procedural facts acquired as a result of presiding over the proceeding itself.

(6) Subsection (d) is intended to make clear that the restrictions imposed by *Dacey v. Connecticut Bar Assn.*, 184 Conn. 21, 441 A.2d 49 (1981), or any implications therefrom should not be considered to apply to judges contributing to a client security fund under the auspices of the court.

AMENDMENT NOTE—2011: Comment (7) to Rule 2.11 was adopted by the judges of the Appellate Court on July 15, 2010, and the justices of the Supreme Court on July 1, 2010. It was not, however, adopted by the judges of the Superior Court.

(7) A justice of the Supreme Court or a judge of the Appellate Court is not disqualified from sitting on a proceeding merely because he or she previously practiced law with the law firm or attorney who filed an amicus brief in the matter, or the justice's or judge's spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child, or any other member of the justice's or judge's family residing in his or her household is practicing or has practiced law with such law firm or attorney.

AMENDMENT NOTE—2023: The change to this rule deletes the requirement that the judge, on the record, disclose the fact that a lawsuit or complaint has been filed against him or her, because the burden of disclosure under Section 1-22 and under Section 66-9, is on the party or attorney filing the lawsuit or complaint.

Rule 2.12. Supervisory Duties

(a) A judge shall take reasonable measures to ensure that court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control act in a manner consistent with the judge's obligations under this Code.

(b) A judge with supervisory authority for the performance of other judges shall take reasonable measures to ensure that those judges properly discharge their judicial responsibilities, including the prompt disposition of matters before them.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) A judge is responsible for his or her own conduct and for the conduct of others, such as staff, when those persons are acting at the judge's direction or control. A judge may not direct court personnel to engage in conduct on

the judge's behalf or as the judge's representative when such conduct would violate the Code if undertaken by the judge.

(2) Public confidence in the judicial system depends on timely justice. To promote the efficient administration of justice, a judge with supervisory authority must take the steps needed to ensure that judges under his or her supervision administer their workloads promptly.

Rule 2.13. Administrative Appointments

(a) In making or facilitating administrative appointments, a judge:

(1) shall act impartially and on the basis of merit; and

(2) shall avoid nepotism, favoritism, and unnecessary appointments.

(b) A judge shall not approve compensation of appointees beyond the fair value of services rendered.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Appointees of a judge include, but are not limited to, assigned counsel, officials such as referees, commissioners, special masters, receivers, and guardians, and personnel such as clerks, secretaries, and judicial marshals. Consent by the parties to an appointment or an award of compensation does not relieve the judge of the obligation prescribed by subsection (a).

(2) Unless otherwise defined by law, nepotism is the appointment or hiring of any relative within the third degree of relationship of either the judge or the judge's spouse or domestic partner, or the spouse or domestic partner of such relative.

Rule 2.14. Disability and Impairment

A judge having a reasonable belief that the performance of a lawyer or another judge is impaired by drugs or alcohol or by a mental, emotional, or physical condition, shall take appropriate action, which may include notifying appropriate judicial authorities or a confidential referral to a lawyer or judicial assistance program.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) "Appropriate action" means action intended and reasonably likely to help the judge or lawyer in question address the problem. Depending on the circumstances, appropriate action may include, but is not limited to, speaking directly to the impaired person, notifying an individual with supervisory responsibility over the impaired person, or making a referral to an assistance program.

(2) Taking or initiating corrective action by way of notifying judicial administrators or referral to an assistance program may satisfy a judge's responsibility under this Rule. Assistance programs have many approaches for offering help to impaired judges and lawyers, such as intervention, counseling, or referral to appropriate health care professionals. Depending on the gravity of the conduct that has come to the judge's attention, however, the judge may be required to take other action, such as reporting the impaired judge or lawyer to the appropriate authority, agency, or body. See Rule 2.15.

(3) A client security fund has been established to promote public confidence in the judicial system and the integrity of the legal profession by, among other things, a lawyers assistance program providing crisis intervention and referral assistance to attorneys admitted to the practice of law in this state who suffer from alcohol or other substance abuse problems or

gambling problems or who have behavioral health problems. See Practice Book Section 2-68.

Rule 2.15. Responding to Judicial and Lawyer Misconduct

(a) A judge having knowledge that another judge has committed a violation of this Code that raises a substantial question regarding the judge's honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a judge in other respects shall take appropriate action including informing the appropriate authority.

(b) A judge having knowledge that a lawyer has committed a violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct that raises a substantial question regarding the lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a lawyer in other respects shall take appropriate action including informing the appropriate authority.

(c) A judge who receives information indicating a substantial likelihood that another judge has committed a violation of this Code shall take appropriate action.

(d) A judge who receives information indicating a substantial likelihood that a lawyer has committed a violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct shall take appropriate action.

(e) A judge is not required to disclose information gained by the judge while serving as a member of a committee that renders assistance to ill or impaired judges or lawyers or while serving as a member of a bar association professional ethics committee or the Judicial Branch Committee on Judicial Ethics.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Taking appropriate action under the circumstances to address known misconduct is a judge's obligation. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (e), subsections (a) and (b) impose an obligation on the judge to report to the appropriate disciplinary authority the known misconduct of another judge or a lawyer that raises a substantial question regarding the honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness of that judge or lawyer. Ignoring or denying known misconduct among one's judicial colleagues or members of the legal profession undermines a judge's responsibility to participate in efforts to ensure public respect for the justice system. This Rule limits the reporting obligation to those offenses that an independent judiciary must vigorously endeavor to prevent.

(2) A judge who does not have actual knowledge that another judge or a lawyer may have committed misconduct, but receives information indicating a substantial likelihood of such misconduct, is required to take appropriate action under subsections (c) and (d), except as otherwise provided in subsection (e). Appropriate action may include, but is not limited to, communicating directly with the judge who may have violated this Code, communicating with a supervising judge, or reporting the suspected violation to the appropriate authority or other agency or body.

(3) Similarly, actions to be taken in response to information indicating that a lawyer has committed a violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct may include, but are not limited to, communicating directly with the lawyer who may have committed

the violation or reporting the suspected violation to the appropriate authority or other agency or body.

Rule 2.16. Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities

(a) A judge shall cooperate and be candid and honest with judicial and lawyer disciplinary agencies.

(b) A judge shall not retaliate, directly or indirectly, against a person known or suspected to have assisted or cooperated with an investigation of a judge or a lawyer.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: Cooperation with investigations and proceedings of judicial and lawyer discipline agencies, as required in subsection (a), instills confidence in judges' commitment to the integrity of the judicial system and the protection of the public.

Canon 3. A Judge Shall Conduct the Judge's Personal and Extrajudicial Activities To Minimize the Risk of Conflict with the Obligations of Judicial Office.

Rule 3.1. Extrajudicial Activities in General

A judge may engage in extrajudicial activities, except as prohibited by law. However, when engaging in extrajudicial activities, a judge shall not:

(1) participate in activities that will interfere with the proper performance of the judge's judicial duties;

(2) participate in activities that will lead to frequent disqualification of the judge;

(3) participate in activities that would appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality;

(4) engage in conduct that would appear to a reasonable person to be coercive; or

(5) make use of court premises, staff, stationery, equipment, or other resources, except for incidental use or for activities that concern the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice, or unless such additional use is permitted by law.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) To the extent that time permits, and judicial independence and impartiality are not compromised, judges are encouraged to engage in appropriate extrajudicial activities. Judges are uniquely qualified to engage in extrajudicial activities that concern the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice, such as by speaking, writing, teaching, or participating in scholarly research projects. In addition, judges are permitted and encouraged to engage in educational, religious, charitable, fraternal or civic extrajudicial activities not conducted for profit, even when the activities do not involve the law. See Rule 3.7.

(2) Participation in both law related and other extrajudicial activities helps integrate judges into their communities and furthers public understanding of and respect for courts and the judicial system.

(3) Discriminatory actions and expressions of bias or prejudice by a judge, even outside the judge's official or judicial actions, are likely to appear to a reasonable person to call into question the judge's integrity and impartiality. Examples include jokes or other remarks that demean individuals based on their race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. For the same reason, a judge's extrajudicial activities must not be conducted in connection or affiliation with an organization that practices unlawful discrimination. See Rule 3.6.

(4) While engaged in permitted extrajudicial activities, judges must not coerce others or take action that would reasonably be perceived as coercive. For example, depending on the circumstances, a judge's solicitation of contributions or memberships for an organization, even as permitted by Rule 3.7 (a), might create the risk that the person solicited would feel obligated to respond favorably or would do so to curry favor with the judge.

Rule 3.2. Appearances before Governmental Bodies and Consultation with Government Officials

A judge shall not appear voluntarily at a public hearing before, or otherwise consult with, an executive or a legislative body or official, except:

(1) in connection with matters concerning the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice;

(2) in connection with matters about which the judge acquired knowledge or expertise in the course of the judge's judicial duties; or

(3) when the judge is acting in a matter involving the judge's legal or economic interests or when the judge is acting in a fiduciary capacity.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Judges possess special expertise in matters of law, the legal system, and the administration of justice and may properly share that expertise with governmental bodies and executive or legislative branch officials.

(2) In appearing before governmental bodies or consulting with government officials, judges must be mindful that they remain subject to other provisions of this Code, such as Rule 1.3, prohibiting judges from using the prestige of office to advance their own or others' interests; Rule 2.10, governing public comment on pending and impending matters; and Rule 3.1 (3), prohibiting judges from engaging in extrajudicial activities that would appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality.

(3) In general, it would be an unnecessary and unfair burden to prohibit judges from appearing before governmental bodies or consulting with government officials on matters that are likely to affect them as private citizens, such as zoning proposals affecting their real property. In engaging in such activities, however, a judge should state affirmatively that the judge is not acting in his or her official capacity and must otherwise exercise caution to avoid using the prestige of judicial office.

Rule 3.3. Testifying as a Character Witness

A judge shall not testify as a character witness in a judicial, administrative, or other adjudicatory proceeding or otherwise vouch for the character

of a person in a legal proceeding, except when duly summoned.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: A judge who, without being duly summoned, testifies as a character witness abuses the prestige of judicial office to advance the interests of another. See Rule 1.3. Except in unusual circumstances where the demands of justice require, a judge should discourage a party from requiring the judge to testify as a character witness.

Rule 3.4. Appointments to Governmental Positions

A judge shall not accept appointment to a governmental committee, board, commission, or other governmental position, unless it is one that concerns the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Rule 3.4 implicitly acknowledges the value of judges accepting appointments to entities that concern the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice. Even in such instances, however, a judge should assess the appropriateness of accepting an appointment, paying particular attention to the subject matter of the appointment and the availability and allocation of judicial resources, including the judge's time commitments, and giving due regard to the requirements of the independence and impartiality of the judiciary.

(2) A judge may represent his or her country, state, or locality on ceremonial occasions or in connection with historical, educational, or cultural activities. Such representation does not constitute acceptance of a government position.

(3) This rule is intended to prohibit a judge from participation in governmental committees, boards, commissions or other governmental positions that make or implement public policy unless they concern the law, the legal system or the administration of justice.

Rule 3.5. Use of Confidential Information

A judge shall not intentionally disclose or use confidential information acquired in a judicial capacity for any purpose unrelated to the judge's judicial duties unless the judge is acting on information necessary to protect the health or safety of the judge, a member of the judge's family, court personnel, a judicial officer or any other person if consistent with other provisions of this Code.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: In the course of performing judicial duties, a judge may acquire information of commercial or other value that is unavailable to the public. The judge must not reveal or use such information for personal gain or for any purpose unrelated to his or her judicial duties.

Rule 3.6. Affiliation with Discriminatory Organizations

(a) A judge shall not hold membership in any organization that practices unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. When a judge learns that an organization to which the judge belongs engages

in unlawful discrimination, the judge must resign immediately from the organization.

(b) A judge shall not use the benefits or facilities of an organization if the judge knows or should know that the organization practices unlawful discrimination on one or more of the bases identified in subsection (a). A judge's attendance at an event in a facility of an organization that the judge is not permitted to join is not a violation of this Rule when the judge's attendance is an isolated event that could not reasonably be perceived as an endorsement of the organization's practices.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

Rule 3.7. Participation in Educational, Religious, Charitable, Fraternal, or Civic Organizations and Activities

(a) Subject to the requirements of Rule 3.1, a judge may participate in activities sponsored by organizations or governmental entities concerned with the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice, and those sponsored by or on behalf of educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations not conducted for profit including, but not limited to, the following activities:

(1) assisting such an organization or entity in planning related to fund-raising and participating in the management and investment of the organization's or entity's funds;

(2) soliciting contributions for such an organization or entity, but only from members of the judge's family, or from judges over whom the judge does not exercise supervisory or appellate authority;

(3) soliciting membership for such an organization or entity, even though the membership dues or fees generated may be used to support the objectives of the organization or entity but only if the organization or entity is concerned with the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice;

(4) appearing or speaking at, receiving an award or other recognition at, being featured on the program of, and permitting his or her title to be used in connection with an event of such an organization or entity, but if the event serves a fund-raising purpose, the judge may participate only if the event concerns the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice;

(5) making recommendations to such a public or private fund-granting organization or entity in connection with its programs and activities but only if the organization or entity is concerned with the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice; and

(6) serving as an officer, director, trustee, or nonlegal advisor of such an organization or entity, unless it is likely that the organization or entity:

(A) will be engaged in proceedings that would ordinarily come before the judge; or

(B) will frequently be engaged in adversary proceedings in the court of which the judge is a member or in any court subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the court of which the judge is a member.

(b) A judge may encourage lawyers to provide pro bono publico legal services.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) The activities permitted by subsection (a) generally include those sponsored by or undertaken on behalf of public or private not-for-profit educational institutions and other not-for-profit organizations, including law related, charitable, and other organizations.

(2) Even for law related organizations, a judge should consider whether the membership and purposes of the organization, or the nature of the judge's participation in or association with the organization, would conflict with the judge's obligation to refrain from activities that reflect adversely on a judge's independence, integrity, and impartiality.

(3) Mere attendance at an event, whether or not the event serves a fund-raising purpose, does not constitute a violation of subsection (a) (4). It is also generally permissible for a judge to serve as an usher or a food server or preparer, or to perform similar functions, at fund-raising events sponsored by educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations. Such activities are not solicitation and do not present an element of coercion or abuse the prestige of judicial office.

(4) Identification of a judge's position in educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations on letterhead used for fund-raising or membership solicitation does not violate this Rule. The letterhead may list the judge's title or judicial office if comparable designations are used for other persons.

(5) In addition to appointing lawyers to serve as counsel for indigent parties in individual cases, a judge may promote broader access to justice by encouraging lawyers to participate in pro bono publico legal services if, in doing so, the judge does not employ coercion or abuse the prestige of judicial office. Such encouragement may take many forms, including providing lists of available programs, training lawyers to do pro bono publico legal work, and participating in events recognizing lawyers who have done pro bono publico work.

Rule 3.8. Appointments to Fiduciary Positions

(a) A judge shall not accept appointment to serve in a fiduciary position, such as executor, administrator, trustee, guardian, attorney in fact, or other personal representative, except for the estate, trust, or person of a member of the judge's family, and then only if such service will not interfere with the proper performance of judicial duties.

(b) A judge shall not serve in a fiduciary position if the judge as fiduciary will likely be engaged in proceedings that would ordinarily come before the judge or if the estate, trust, or ward becomes involved in adversary proceedings in the court on which the judge serves or one under its appellate jurisdiction.

(c) A judge acting in a fiduciary capacity shall be subject to the same restrictions on engaging in financial activities that apply to a judge personally.

(d) If a person who is serving in a fiduciary position becomes a judge, he or she must comply with this Rule as soon as reasonably practicable but in no event later than one year after becoming a judge.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: A judge should recognize that other restrictions imposed by this Code may conflict with a judge's obligations as a fiduciary; in such circumstances, a judge should resign as fiduciary. For example, serving as a fiduciary might require frequent disqualification of a judge under Rule 2.11 because a judge is deemed to have an economic interest in shares of stock held by a trust if the amount of stock held is more than de minimis.

Rule 3.9. Service as Arbitrator or Mediator

A judge shall not act as an arbitrator or a mediator or perform other judicial functions apart from the judge's official duties unless expressly authorized by law.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: This Rule does not prohibit a judge from participating in arbitration, mediation, or settlement conferences performed as part of official judicial duties. Rendering dispute resolution services apart from those duties, whether or not for economic gain, is prohibited unless it is expressly authorized by law.

Rule 3.10. Practice of Law

Except as provided herein, a judge shall not practice law. A judge may act as a self-represented party and may, without compensation, give legal advice to and draft or review documents for a member of the judge's family but is prohibited from serving as the family member's lawyer in any forum.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: A judge may act as a self-represented party in all legal matters, including matters involving litigation and matters involving appearances before or other dealings with governmental bodies. A judge must not use the prestige of office to advance the judge's personal or family interests. See Rule 1.3.

Rule 3.11. Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities

(a) A judge may hold and manage investments of the judge and members of the judge's family.

(b) A judge shall not serve as an officer, director, manager, general partner or advisor of any business entity except for:

(1) a business closely held by the judge or members of the judge's family; or

(2) a business entity primarily engaged in investment of the financial resources of the judge or members of the judge's family.

(c) A judge shall not engage in financial activities permitted under subsections (a) and (b) if they will:

(1) interfere with the proper performance of judicial duties;

(2) lead to frequent disqualification of the judge;

(3) involve the judge in frequent transactions or continuing business relationships with lawyers or other persons likely to come before the court on which the judge serves; or

(4) result in violation of other provisions of this Code.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Judges are generally permitted to engage in financial activities, including managing real estate and other investments for themselves or for members of their families. Participation in these activities, like participation in other extrajudicial activities, is subject to the requirements of this Code. For example, it would be improper for a judge to spend so much time on business activities that it interferes with the performance of judicial duties. See Rule 2.1. Similarly, it would be improper for a judge to use his or her official title or to appear in judicial robes in business advertising, or to conduct his or her business or financial affairs in such a way that disqualification is frequently required. See Rules 1.3 and 2.11.

(2) As soon as practicable without serious financial detriment, the judge must divest himself or herself of investments and other financial interests that might require frequent disqualification or otherwise violate this Rule.

Rule 3.12. Compensation for Extrajudicial Activities

A judge may accept reasonable compensation for extrajudicial activities permitted by law unless such acceptance would appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) A judge is permitted to accept honoraria, stipends, fees, wages, salaries, royalties, or other compensation for speaking, teaching, writing, and other extrajudicial activities, provided the compensation is reasonable and commensurate with the task performed. The judge should be mindful, however, that judicial duties must take precedence over other activities. See Rule 2.1.

(2) Compensation derived from extrajudicial activities may be subject to public reporting. See Rule 3.15.

Rule 3.13. Acceptance and Reporting of Gifts, Loans, Bequests, Benefits, or Other Things of Value

(a) A judge shall not accept any gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, or other things of value, if acceptance is prohibited by law or would appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality.

(b) Unless otherwise prohibited by law, or by subsection (a), a judge may accept the following without publicly reporting such acceptance:

(1) items with little intrinsic value, such as plaques, certificates, trophies, and greeting cards;

(2) gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, or other things of value from friends, relatives, or other persons, including lawyers, whose appearance or interest

in a proceeding pending or impending before the judge would in any event require disqualification of the judge under Rule 2.11;

(3) ordinary social hospitality;

(4) commercial or financial opportunities and benefits, including special pricing and discounts, and loans from lending institutions in their regular course of business, if the same opportunities and benefits or loans are made available on the same terms to similarly situated persons who are not judges;

(5) rewards and prizes given to competitors or participants in random drawings, contests, or other events that are open to persons who are not judges;

(6) scholarships, fellowships, and similar benefits or awards, if they are available to similarly situated persons who are not judges, based on the same terms and criteria;

(7) books, magazines, journals, audiovisual materials, and other resource materials supplied by publishers on a complimentary basis for official use; or

(8) gifts, awards, or benefits associated with the business, profession, or other separate activity of a spouse, a domestic partner, or other family member of a judge residing in the judge's household but that incidentally benefit the judge.

(c) Unless otherwise prohibited by law or by subsection (a), a judge may accept the following items and must report such acceptance to the extent required by Rule 3.15:

(1) gifts incident to a public testimonial;

(2) invitations to the judge and the judge's spouse, domestic partner, or guest to attend without charge:

(A) an event associated with a bar related function or other activity relating to the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice; or

(B) an event associated with any of the judge's educational, religious, charitable, fraternal or civic activities permitted by this Code, if the same invitation is offered to nonjudges who are engaged in similar ways in the activity as is the judge.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Whenever a judge accepts a gift or other thing of value without paying fair market value, there is a risk that the benefit might be viewed as intended to influence the judge's decision in a case. Rule 3.13 imposes restrictions on the acceptance of such benefits, according to the magnitude of the risk. Subsection (b) identifies circumstances in which the risk that the acceptance would appear to undermine the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality is low and explicitly provides that such items need not be publicly reported. As the value of the benefit or the likelihood that the source of the benefit will appear before the judge increases, the judge is either prohibited under subsection (a) from accepting the gift, or required under subsection (c) to publicly report it.

(2) Gift giving between friends and relatives is a common occurrence and ordinarily does not create an appearance of impropriety or cause reasonable persons to believe that the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality has been compromised. In addition, when the appearance of friends or relatives in a case would require the judge's disqualification under Rule 2.11, there would be no opportunity for a gift to influence the judge's decision making. Subsection (b) (2) places no restrictions on the ability of a judge to accept gifts or other things of value from friends or relatives under these circumstances and does not require public reporting.

(3) Businesses and financial institutions frequently make available special pricing, discounts, and other benefits, either in connection with a temporary promotion or for preferred customers, based on longevity of the relationship, volume of business transacted, and other factors. A judge may freely accept such benefits if they are available to the general public or if the judge qualifies for the special price or discount according to the same criteria as are applied to persons who are not judges. As an example, loans provided at generally prevailing interest rates are not gifts, but a judge could not accept a loan from a financial institution at below-market interest rates unless the same rate was being made available to the general public for a certain period of time or only to borrowers with specified qualifications that the judge also possesses.

(4) Rule 3.13 applies only to acceptance of gifts or other things of value by a judge. Nonetheless, if a gift or other benefit is given to the judge's spouse, domestic partner, or member of the judge's family residing in the judge's household, it may be viewed as an attempt to evade Rule 3.13 and influence the judge indirectly. Where the gift or benefit is being made primarily to such other persons, and the judge is merely an incidental beneficiary, this concern is reduced. A judge should, however, remind family and household members of the restrictions imposed on judges and urge them to take these restrictions into account when making decisions about accepting such gifts or benefits.

Rule 3.14. Reimbursement of Expenses and Waivers of Fees or Charges

(a) Unless otherwise prohibited by Rules 3.1 and 3.13 (a) or other law, a judge may accept reimbursement of necessary and reasonable expenses for travel, food, lodging, or other incidental expenses, or a waiver or partial waiver of fees or charges for registration, tuition, and similar items, from sources other than the judge's employing entity, if the expenses or charges are associated with the judge's participation in extrajudicial activities permitted by this Code.

(b) Reimbursement of expenses for necessary travel, food, lodging, or other incidental expenses shall be limited to the actual costs reasonably incurred by the judge or a reasonable allowance therefor and, when appropriate to the occasion, by the judge's spouse, domestic partner, or guest.

(c) A judge who accepts reimbursement of expenses or waivers or partial waivers of fees or charges on behalf of the judge or the judge's spouse, domestic partner, or guest shall publicly report such acceptance as required by Rule 3.15.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) Educational, civic, religious, fraternal, and charitable organizations often sponsor meetings, seminars, symposia, dinners, awards ceremonies, and similar events. Judges are encouraged to attend educational programs, as both teachers and participants, in law related and academic disciplines, in furtherance of their duty to remain competent in the law. Participation in a variety of other extrajudicial activity is also permitted and encouraged by this Code.

(2) Not infrequently, sponsoring organizations invite certain judges to attend seminars or other events on a fee-waived or partial-fee-waived basis and sometimes include reimbursement for necessary travel, food, lodging, or other incidental expenses. A judge's decision whether to accept reimbursement of expenses or a waiver or partial waiver of fees or charges in connection with these or other extrajudicial activities must be based on an assessment of all the circumstances. Per diem allowances shall be reasonably related to the actual costs incurred. The judge must undertake a reasonable inquiry to obtain the information necessary to make an informed judgment about whether acceptance would be consistent with the requirements of this Code.

(3) A judge must assure himself or herself that acceptance of reimbursement or fee waivers would not appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence, integrity, or impartiality. The factors that a judge should consider when deciding whether to accept reimbursement or a fee waiver for attendance at a particular activity include:

(a) whether the sponsor is an accredited educational institution or bar association rather than a trade association or a for-profit entity;

(b) whether the funding comes largely from numerous contributors rather than from a single entity and is earmarked for programs with specific content;

(c) whether the content is related or unrelated to the subject matter of litigation pending or impending before the judge or to matters that are likely to come before the judge;

(d) whether the activity is primarily educational rather than recreational and whether the costs of the event are reasonable and comparable to those associated with similar events sponsored by the judiciary, bar associations, or similar groups;

(e) whether information concerning the activity and its funding sources is available upon inquiry;

(f) whether the sponsor or source of funding is generally associated with particular parties or interests currently appearing or likely to appear in the judge's court, thus possibly requiring disqualification of the judge under Rule 2.11;

(g) whether differing viewpoints are presented; and

(h) whether a broad range of judicial and nonjudicial participants are invited, whether a large number of participants are invited, and whether the program is designed specifically for judges.

Rule 3.15. Reporting Requirements

(a) A judge shall publicly report the amount or value of:

(1) compensation received for extrajudicial activities as permitted by Rule 3.12;

(2) gifts and other things of value as permitted by Rule 3.13 (c), unless the value of such items, alone or in the aggregate with other items received from the same source in the same calendar year, does not exceed \$250; and

(3) reimbursement of expenses and waiver of fees or charges permitted by Rule 3.14 (a), unless

the amount of reimbursement or waiver, alone or in the aggregate with other reimbursements or waivers received from the same source in the same calendar year, does not exceed \$250.

(b) When public reporting is required by subsection (a), a judge shall report the date, place, and nature of the activity for which the judge received any compensation; the description of any gift, loan, bequest, benefit, or other thing of value accepted; and the source of reimbursement of expenses or waiver or partial waiver of fees or charges.

(c) The public report required by subsection (a) shall be made at least annually, except that for reimbursement of expenses and waiver or partial waiver of fees or charges, the report shall be made within thirty days following the conclusion of the event or program.

(d) Reports made in compliance with this Rule shall be filed as public documents in the Office of the Chief Court Administrator or other office designated by law.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

Canon 4. A Judge Shall Not Engage in Political or Campaign Activity that Is Inconsistent with the Independence, Integrity, or Impartiality of the Judiciary.

Rule 4.1. Political Activities of Judges in General

(a) Except as permitted by law, or by Rules 4.2 and 4.3, a judge shall not:

(1) act as a leader in, or hold an office in, a political organization;

(2) make speeches on behalf of a political organization;

(3) publicly endorse or oppose a candidate for any public office;

(4) solicit funds for, pay an assessment to, or make a contribution to a political organization or a candidate for public office;

(5) attend or purchase tickets for dinners or other events sponsored by a political organization or a candidate for public office;

(6) seek, accept, or use endorsements from a political organization;

(7) knowingly, or with reckless disregard for the truth, make any false or misleading statement in connection with the appointment or reappointment process;

(8) make any statement that would reasonably be expected to affect the outcome or impair the fairness of a matter pending or impending in any court; or

(9) in connection with cases, controversies, or issues that are likely to come before the court, make pledges, promises, or commitments that are

inconsistent with the impartial performance of the adjudicative duties of judicial office.

(b) A judge shall take reasonable measures to ensure that other persons do not undertake, on behalf of the judge, any activities prohibited under subsection (a).

(c) A judge should not engage in any other political activity except on behalf of measures to improve the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT:

General Considerations

(1) Even when subject to reappointment or when seeking elevation to a higher office, a judge plays a role different from that of a legislator or executive branch official. Rather than making decisions based on the expressed views or preferences of the public, a judge makes decisions based on the law and the facts of every case. Therefore, in furtherance of this interest, judges must, to the greatest extent possible, be free and appear to be free from political influence and political pressure. This Canon imposes narrowly tailored restrictions on the political activities of all judges and sitting judges seeking reappointment or appointment to a higher judicial office.

Participation in Political Activities

(2) Public confidence in the independence and impartiality of the judiciary is eroded if judges are perceived to be subject to political influence. Although judges may register to vote as members of a political party, they are prohibited by subsection (a) (1) from assuming leadership roles in political organizations.

(3) Subsections (a) (2) and (a) (3) prohibit judges from making speeches on behalf of political organizations or publicly endorsing or opposing candidates for public office, respectively, to prevent them from abusing the prestige of judicial office to advance the interests of others. See Rule 1.3.

(4) Although members of the families of judges are free to engage in their own political activity, including running for public office, there is no “family exception” to the prohibition in subsection (a) (3) against a judge publicly endorsing candidates for public office. A judge must not become involved in, or publicly associated with, a family member’s political activity or campaign for public office. To avoid public misunderstanding, judges should take, and should urge members of their families to take, reasonable steps to avoid any implication that they endorse any family member’s candidacy or other political activity.

(5) Judges retain the right to participate in the political process as voters in both primary and general elections.

Statements and Comments Made By a Sitting Judge When Seeking Reappointment for Judicial Office or Elevation to a Higher Judicial Office

(6) Judges must be scrupulously fair and accurate in all statements made by them. Subsection (a) (7) obligates judges to refrain from making statements that are false or misleading or that omit facts necessary to make the communication considered as a whole not materially misleading.

(7) Judges are sometimes the subject of false, misleading, or unfair allegations made by third parties or the media. For example, false or misleading statements might be made

regarding the identity, present position, experience, qualifications, or judicial rulings of a judge. In other situations, false or misleading allegations may be made that bear on a judge’s integrity or fitness for judicial office. As long as the judge does not violate subsection (a) (7), (a) (8), or (a) (9), the judge may make a factually accurate public response. See Rule 2.10.

(8) Subject to subsection (a) (8), a judge is permitted to respond directly to false, misleading, or unfair allegations made against him or her, although it is preferable for someone else to respond if the allegations relate to a pending case.

(9) Subsection (a) (8) prohibits judges from making comments that might impair the fairness of pending or impending judicial proceedings. This provision does not restrict rulings, statements, or instructions by a judge that may appropriately affect the outcome of a matter.

Pledges, Promises, or Commitments Inconsistent with Impartial Performance of the Adjudicative Duties of Judicial Office

(10) The role of a judge is different from that of a legislator or executive branch official. Sitting judges seeking reappointment or elevation must conduct themselves differently from persons seeking other offices. Narrowly drafted restrictions on the activities of judges provided in Canon 4 allow judges to provide the appointing authority with sufficient information to permit it to make an informed decision.

(11) Subsection (a) (9) makes applicable to judges the prohibition that applies to judges in Rule 2.10 (b), relating to pledges, promises, or commitments that are inconsistent with the impartial performance of the adjudicative duties of judicial office.

(12) The making of a pledge, promise, or commitment is not dependent on, or limited to, the use of any specific words or phrases; instead, the totality of the statement must be examined to determine if a reasonable person would believe that the judge has specifically undertaken to reach a particular result. Pledges, promises, or commitments must be contrasted with statements or announcements of personal views on legal, political, or other issues, which are not prohibited. When making such statements, a judge should acknowledge the overarching judicial obligation to apply and uphold the law, without regard to his or her personal views.

(13) A judge may make promises related to judicial organization, administration, and court management, such as a promise to dispose of a backlog of cases, start court sessions on time, or avoid favoritism in appointments and hiring. A judge may also pledge to take action outside the courtroom, such as working toward an improved jury selection system or advocating for more funds to improve the physical plant and amenities of the courthouse.

(14) Judges may receive questionnaires or requests for interviews from the media and from issue advocacy or other community organizations that seek to learn their views on disputed or controversial legal or political issues. Subsection (a) (13) does not specifically address judicial responses to such inquiries. Depending on the wording and format of such questionnaires, judges’ responses might be viewed as pledges, promises, or commitments to perform the adjudicative duties of office other than in an impartial way. To avoid violating subsection (a) (13), therefore, judges who respond to media and other inquiries should also give assurances that they will keep an open mind and will carry out their adjudicative duties faithfully and impartially. Judges who do not respond may state their reasons for not responding, such as the danger that answering might be perceived by a reasonable person

as undermining a judge's independence or impartiality or that it might lead to frequent disqualification. See Rule 2.11.

Rule 4.2. Activities of Judges as Candidates for Reappointment or Elevation to Higher Judicial Office

A judge who is a candidate for reappointment or elevation to higher judicial office may:

(a) communicate with the appointing or confirming authority, including any selection, screening, or nominating commission or similar agency; and

(b) seek endorsements for the appointment from any person or organization other than a partisan political organization, provided that such endorsement or the request therefor would not appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence, integrity or impartiality.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) When seeking support or when communicating directly with an appointing or confirming authority, a judge must not make any pledges, promises, or commitments that are inconsistent with the impartial performance of the adjudicative duties of the office. See Rule 4.1 (a) (9).

(2) It is never acceptable to seek an endorsement of an advocacy group or a group whose interests have or are likely to come before the judge.

Rule 4.3. Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Public Office

(a) Upon becoming a candidate for an elective public office either in a party primary or a general

election, a judge shall resign from judicial office, unless permitted by law to continue to hold judicial office. A judge may continue to hold judicial office while being a candidate for election to or serving as a delegate in a state constitutional convention.

(b) Upon becoming a candidate for an appointive public office, a judge is not required to resign from judicial office, provided that the judge complies with the other provisions of this Code.

(Effective Jan. 1, 2011.)

COMMENT: (1) In campaigns for elective public office, candidates may make pledges, promises, or commitments related to positions they would take and ways they would act if elected to office. Although appropriate in public campaigns, this manner of campaigning is inconsistent with the role of a judge, who must remain fair and impartial to all who come before him or her. The potential for misuse of the judicial office and the political promises that the judge would be compelled to make in the course of campaigning for elective public office together dictate that a judge who wishes to run for such an office must resign upon becoming a candidate.

(2) The "resign to run" rule set forth in subsection (a) ensures that a judge cannot use the judicial office to promote his or her candidacy and prevents postcampaign retaliation from the judge in the event the judge is defeated in the election. When a judge is seeking appointive public office, however, the dangers are not sufficient to warrant imposing the "resign to run" rule. However, the judge should be careful to avoid presiding over matters affecting the entity to which the judge is seeking public office.