



# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

COMMISSION ON  
JUDICIAL DISABILITIES  
AND TENURE

2015

ANNUAL  
REPORT



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION ON  
JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS**

**HON. GLADYS KESSLER, CHAIRPERSON**

**JEANNINE C. SANFORD, ESQ., VICE CHAIRPERSON**

**MICHAEL K. FAUNTROY, PH.D.**

**HON. JOAN L. GOLDFRANK**

**WILLIAM P. LIGHTFOOT, ESQ.**

**DAVID P. MILZMAN, M.D.**

**ANTHONY T. PIERCE, ESQ.**

**515 Fifth Street, N.W.  
Building A, Suite 246  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363  
<http://www.cjdt.dc.gov>  
[dc.cjdt@dc.gov](mailto:dc.cjdt@dc.gov)**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE 2015 ANNUAL REPORT .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>I. COMMISSION MEMBERS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Commission Members' Biographies .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. LEGAL AUTHORITY AND COMMISSION PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Commission History .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Commission Jurisdiction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Legal Authority .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Complaint Review and Investigations .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Complaint Process Flow Chart .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Codes of Conduct and Commission Rules.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Reappointment Evaluations.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Senior Judge Recommendations .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>III. 2015 STATISTICS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Complaints Received and Investigated.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Complaints Received FY 2007 – FY 2015 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Complaint Allegations .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Source of Complaints .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Complaint Dispositions .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Judicial Positions Under the Commission's Jurisdiction.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Associate Judge Reappointments .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Senior Judge Recommendations .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IV. COMMISSION EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2015 .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
<b>A. Commission Public Actions</b>	
<b>Reappointment Evaluation Reports .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Determination and Undertaking.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>B. Governing Provisions .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>C. Commission Rules .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>D. Code of Conduct for the District of Columbia Courts.....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>E. Complaint Form .....</b>	<b>163</b>



## **INTRODUCTION TO THE 2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

Since its inception in 1970, 48 individuals have served as members of the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure. The Commission has been very fortunate that the appointing authorities have selected capable, dedicated, and conscientious members to serve on this body over the past 45 years. Though the membership changes periodically, one factor has remained constant, and that is the Commission's steadfast commitment to fulfill its statutory duties and responsibilities. In addition, despite the intermittent changes in membership and leadership, and the difficult issues presented for resolution over the years, members past and present have always been cordial and maintained an abiding respect for each individual's views. This level of cooperation and collegiality has served the Commission well.

There were no changes in membership that occurred this year. The term of William P. Lightfoot expired in 2014. He was reappointed *nunc pro tunc*, in 2015, by Mayor Muriel E. Bowser, to another six-year term that will expire in 2020.

The Commission re-elected Judge Gladys Kessler, Chairperson, and re-elected Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq., Vice Chairperson, for fiscal year 2015.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge its outstanding staff, Executive Director, Cathae J. Hudgins, Administrative Support Specialist, April Jenkins, and Special Counsel, Henry F. Schuelke, III, Esq. who continue to provide invaluable assistance that is so crucial for the Commission to fulfill its mandate.

Over the past 45 years, the Commission's authority has expanded due to the passage of the Home Rule Act (1973) and the Retired Judge Service Act (1984), the number of judges under its jurisdiction has increased, and the workload has grown considerably. The Commission has reviewed over 2,500 complaints, conducted 88 reappointment evaluations of Associate Judges, and performed 79 fitness reviews of retiring judges who requested recommendations for initial appointments as Senior Judges.

Each year since 1976 the Commission has published an Annual Report to keep the legal community and the general public informed of its activities consistent with the confidentiality restrictions of the Commission's governing statute. This year marks the publication of

our 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Report reviewing the Commission's activities during its fiscal year ended September 30, 2015. It also discusses the Commission's statutory authority and procedures.

The Commission's public actions for this fiscal year, the Commission's enabling statutes and Rules, the 2012 Code of Judicial Conduct for the District of Columbia Courts, and the Commission's complaint form, appear under the noted appendices.

We welcome your comments.

## I. COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Commission consists of seven members. One is appointed by the President of the United States. Two are appointed by the Board of Governors of the District of Columbia Bar. Two are appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia, one of whom shall not be a lawyer. One is appointed by the City Council of the District of Columbia. One is appointed by the Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. The term of office of the President's appointee is five years, and all others serve six year terms.

The Commission usually meets once a month, except the month of August. The members elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson annually, at the beginning of each fiscal year. Commission members do not receive a salary or an expense allowance.

In fiscal year 2015 the Commission's membership was as follows: Hon. Gladys Kessler, Chairperson, appointed by the Chief Judge of the United States District Court; Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq., Vice Chairperson, appointed by the D.C. Bar; Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D., appointed by the Mayor; Hon. Joan L. Goldfrank, appointed by the D.C. Bar; William P. Lightfoot, Esq., appointed by the Mayor; David P. Milzman, M.D., appointed by the Council of the District of Columbia; and Anthony T. Pierce, Esq., appointed by the President.

### Commission Members' Biographies

**MICHAEL K. FAUNTROY, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Howard University, where he teaches courses in American government and political behavior. From 2002 to 2013, he was an Associate Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, where he taught courses in civil rights policy and urban policy. Professor Fauntroy also lectures nationally on a variety of national political issues. Prior to his appointment at George Mason University, he was an Adjunct Professor at American University and Trinity College in 2001, an Adjunct Professor at the University of the District of Columbia from 2000-2001, and an Adjunct Professor at Howard University from 1998-1999. Professor Fauntroy also conducted research for and consulted with Congressional members and Committees, while serving as an analyst in American national government at the Congressional Research Service from 2000-2001. He served as a civil rights analyst at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1993-1996, where he analyzed trends on voting rights and Title VI enforcement. Professor Fauntroy received his B.A. from Hampton University, and received his M.A. and Ph.D. from Howard University. He was appointed to the Commission in 2009 by Mayor Adrian Fenty.

**HON. JOAN L. GOLDFRANK**, graduated cum laude from Emory University, and received her J.D. from Emory University School of Law. Following graduation Judge Goldfrank began her legal career as a Trial Attorney with the United States Department of Energy from 1976-1979. She served as Associate Chief Counsel for President Jimmy Carter's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island. She was an associate at the law firm of Collier, Shannon, Rill & Scott from 1980-1983, and she served as an attorney in the Office of Legal Advisor for Saint Elizabeths Hospital from 1983-1985. Judge Goldfrank became the Executive Attorney for the D.C. Board on Professional Responsibility in 1985. In 1994, she accepted a position as an Attorney at the United States Department of Justice where she worked in the Professional Responsibility Advisory Office, the Environment and Natural Resources Division, and the Office of Professional Responsibility until her appointment as a Magistrate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia in 2002. During her tenure as a Magistrate Judge she also served as Chair of the Superior Court's Commission on Mental Health. Judge Goldfrank retired after more than ten years of service on the Court. She continues to participate in various Bar activities, and she was appointed to the Commission in 2014 by the Board of Governors of the D.C. Bar.

**HON. GLADYS KESSLER**, was appointed to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in July 1994. She received a B.A. from Cornell University and an LL.B. from Harvard Law School. Following graduation, Judge Kessler was employed by the National Labor Relations Board, served as Legislative Assistant to a U.S. Senator and a U.S. Congressman, worked for the New York City Board of Education, and then opened a public interest law firm. In June 1977, she was appointed Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. From 1981 to 1985, Judge Kessler served as Presiding Judge of the Family Division and was a major architect of one of the nation's first Multi-Door Courthouses. She served as President of the National Association of Women Judges from 1983 to 1984, served on the Executive Committee and as Vice President of the ABA's Conference of Federal Trial Judges, and on the U.S. Judicial Conference's Committee on Court Administration and Management for six years. Judge Kessler co-edited the Third Edition of the Reference Manual on Scientific Evidence of the Federal Judicial Center, which was published in 2011. Judge Kessler was recently appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to the Defender Services Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States. From 2006 – 2008 she chaired the Board of Directors of Our Place, D.C., a non-profit community organization that provided a range of services to incarcerated women to help reintegrate them into the community, and with their families, so they could return to productive lives. She served on the Our Place Board from its inception until October 2009, and from 2011 to 2013. The Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia appointed Judge Kessler to the Commission in 2001. In December of 2010, she was reappointed by the Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia to another six-year term on the Commission. Judge Kessler served as Vice Chairperson from 2002 to 2009, and has served as Commission Chairperson since 2009. Judge Kessler has recently been given the ABA's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award.

**WILLIAM P. LIGHTFOOT, ESQ.**, is a graduate of Howard University, and Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, Missouri. A partner in the law firm of Koonz, McKenney, Johnson, DePaolis & Lightfoot, he has practiced law for over thirty years, specializing in personal injury litigation. He is a frequent lecturer to attorneys about personal

injury cases and trial advocacy. Mr. Lightfoot is a former Councilmember at Large for the District of Columbia where he chaired the Committee on the Judiciary. He was appointed to the Commission in 2001 by Mayor Anthony A. Williams, reappointed by Mayor Adrian Fenty in 2008, and reappointed by Mayor Muriel E. Bowser in 2015. Mr. Lightfoot served as Commission Chairperson from 2004-2009, and as Commission Vice Chairperson from 2009-2013.

**DAVID P. MILZMAN, M.D.**, currently serves in multiple roles at the Georgetown University School of Medicine where he specializes in emergency medicine. He is an Assistant Dean for Student Research, Professor of Emergency Medicine, Research Director in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the Washington Hospital Center of Georgetown University Hospital, and an Associate Professor of Clinical Emergency Medicine. Dr. Milzman is also an Adjunct Professor of Biology at Georgetown University. In addition, he is an Attending Emergency Physician at the Indian Health Service in Gallup, New Mexico, and at Children's Hospital National Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Dr. Milzman received his B.S. from the University of Maryland, and his Doctor of Medicine from Georgetown University School of Medicine, and he completed his residency training in Emergency and Internal Medicine at Eastern Virginia Graduate School of Medicine. He has served on several community and public service organizations, as well as government commissions tasked with the study and improvement of various health care issues, such as the D.C. EMS Task Force, the D.C. EMS Commission, the Advisory Board on Health and Safety Services of the American Red Cross, and the D.C. Continuum of Care Task Force to name a few. Dr. Milzman has also served as the Medical Officer for professional sports teams and sporting arenas, and has been an invited expert appearing before private organizations, and local government and Congressional Committees. He is a member of many professional societies namely, the American College of Emergency Medicine, the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, the Eastern Society and the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma. Dr. Milzman was appointed to the Commission in 2014 by the Council of the District of Columbia.

**ANTHONY T. PIERCE, ESQ.** is a litigator whose practice focuses on complex commercial disputes in state and federal courts, including commercial and regulatory litigation, intellectual property, employment matters and internal investigations. His practice covers a diverse group of industries, including technology and telecommunications, health care, energy, entertainment and media, financial services and government contracting. He is the partner in charge of the Washington, D.C. office of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, a global law firm with 20 offices worldwide and more than 850 attorneys, as well as a member of the firm's management committee. Mr. Pierce joined Akin Gump in 1987. From 1984 to 1987, he served as an evaluator for the U.S. General Accounting Office. In addition to his service on the D.C. Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure, he is past president and a member of the board of trustees of the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia and serves on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia's Advisory Committee on Pro Se Litigation. Mr. Pierce is Chair of the Greater Washington Board of Trade and a member of the Leadership Greater Washington Class of 2002. In 2012, he received the Minority Business Leader of the Year award from the *Washington Business Journal*, which also selected him as a "Top Washington Lawyer" for litigation in 2008. Mr. Pierce received his J.D. from the Georgetown University Law Center and his B.S. from George Mason University. Mr. Pierce is an appointee of President Barack Obama.

**JEANNINE C. SANFORD, ESQ.**, is the Chief Operating Officer of Bread for the City, a non-profit organization that provides food, clothing, medical care, legal and social services to nearly 10,000 low income District of Columbia residents each month. Ms. Sanford began her career with Bread for the City in 1993, serving as the first official Legal Clinic Director, who fostered the development of the organization's volunteer program into a professional civil legal services practice. The Clinic received the 1998 Frederick B. Abramson Award due to her leadership and direction. Ms. Sanford was appointed Deputy Director of Bread for the City in 1999, and served in that capacity until her appointment as COO. Ms. Sanford is a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Law and moved to the District of Columbia to accept a staff attorney position with the Neighborhood Legal Services Program where she worked for several years. She has served on the Board of Governors of the D.C. Bar, and on several occasions, she has Co-Chaired the Consortium of Legal Services Providers. In 2005, Ms. Sanford received the Jerrold Scoutt Prize in recognition of her contributions and long-standing commitment to civil legal services. She was appointed to the Commission in 2012 by the Board of Governors of the D.C. Bar, and was elected Commission Vice Chairperson in 2014.

## **II. LEGAL AUTHORITY AND COMMISSION PROCEDURES**

### **Commission History**

The District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure was created by the District of Columbia Court Reorganization Act of July 29, 1970. The Commission was reorganized, and its jurisdiction significantly enlarged, by the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act of December 24, 1973, known as the "Home Rule Act", and its jurisdiction was enlarged further by the Retired Judge Service Act of October 30, 1984.

### **Commission Jurisdiction**

The Commission's jurisdiction extends to all Associate and Senior Judges of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Its jurisdiction embraces four areas: (1) a judge's conduct warranting disciplinary action; (2) involuntary retirement of a judge for reasons of health; (3) evaluation of a judge who seeks reappointment upon the expiration of his or her term; and (4) evaluation of a judge who retires and wishes to continue judicial service as a Senior Judge.

The Commission does not have jurisdiction over Magistrate Judges of the Superior Court or Administrative Law Judges.

## **Legal Authority**

The Commission has the authority to remove a judge for willful misconduct in office, for willful and persistent failure to perform judicial duties, and for conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice or which brings the judicial office into disrepute. The Commission also has the authority to involuntarily retire a judge if the Commission determines that the judge suffers from a mental or physical disability which is or is likely to become permanent and which prevents, or seriously interferes with, the proper performance of judicial duties. In addition, the Commission may, under appropriate circumstances, censure or reprimand a judge publicly or privately, with the consent of the judge.

## **Complaint Review and Investigations**

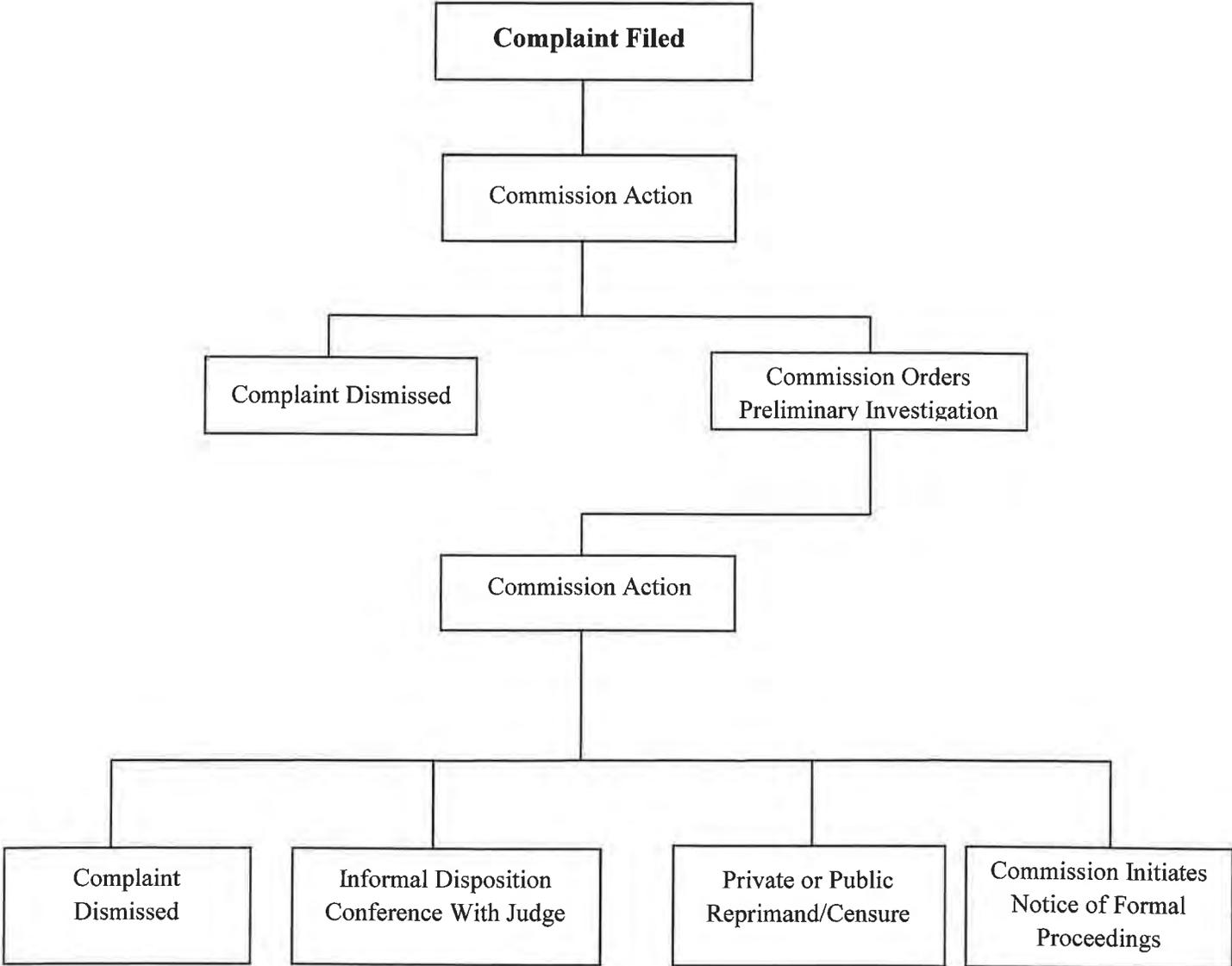
The Commission reviews complaints written or oral, concerning the misconduct of judges; it does not, however, have jurisdiction to review judicial decisions or errors of law. Examples of judicial misconduct include: rude, abusive and improper treatment of lawyers, witnesses, jurors, Court staff or others, showing bias toward anyone in the courtroom based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, etc., and sleeping or drunkenness or other improper conduct while on the bench. Judicial misconduct also may involve improper off-the-bench conduct such as: criminal behavior, improper use of a judge's authority, publicly commenting on a pending or expected lawsuit, communicating with only one side in a court case or proceeding unless permitted by law, and giving or receiving bribes or favors.

Although the Commission has no prescribed format for lodging a complaint, it does have a suggested complaint form which citizens may use. A copy of the complaint form is reprinted under Appendix E. The Commission will consider information concerning possible misconduct from any source or on its own initiative, and will consider complaints made anonymously. The Commission prefers, but does not require, that a complaint be in writing and be as specific as possible. Receipt of a complaint is acknowledged.

The Commission usually meets once a month to review all new complaints that have been received, to discuss the progress of investigations, and address any other matters within its jurisdiction. Each complaint is considered individually. If the Commission determines that a matter falls within its jurisdiction, it may order an investigation. Commission investigations are conducted by the staff and may include contacting witnesses, reviewing court records and other documents, and observing courtroom

proceedings. If the investigation substantiates the complaint, the Commission may resolve a matter through an informal conference with the judge involved, or the Commission may initiate formal disciplinary action against a judge. All of the Commission's disciplinary proceedings and investigations are confidential. Under certain circumstances, however, a decision or action by the Commission may be made public.

### COMPLAINT PROCESS



If the allegations are found to be untrue or the investigation reveals that the matter is not within the Commission's jurisdiction, the Commission will dismiss the complaint and advise the complainant or source accordingly. Complainants are also notified, though the nature of the action taken is not divulged, when the Commission has resolved a matter.

### **Codes of Conduct and Commission Rules**

In considering claims of misconduct, the Commission looks to the American Bar Association Code of Judicial Conduct (2012) as adopted by the District of Columbia Joint Committee on Judicial Administration, along with the advisory opinions of the Committee on Codes of Conduct of the Judicial Conference of the United States regarding the Code of Conduct for U.S. Judges, and the advisory opinions of the District of Columbia Courts' Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct. Judges under its jurisdiction are deemed to be on notice of the Commission's published actions as well.

The Commission conducts its proceedings pursuant to Rules which appear in 28 District of Columbia Municipal Regulations Chapter 20, amended December 21, 2007. The regulations are set forth in Appendix C.

### **Reappointment Evaluations**

Aside from its disciplinary function, the Commission also has the responsibility to determine whether or not a sitting judge whose term is expiring, and who seeks a new term, is to be reappointed. The Home Rule Act requires that the Commission file with the President of the United States a written evaluation of the judicial candidate's performance during the term of office, and his or her fitness for reappointment to another term. Under the Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act, the Commission in its evaluation is required to place a judge in one of three categories. If the Commission evaluates a sitting judge as "well qualified", the judge is automatically reappointed to a new term of 15 years. If the Commission evaluates the judge as "qualified", the President may, if he chooses, renominate the judge subject to Senate confirmation; if the Commission evaluates the judge as "unqualified", the judge is ineligible for reappointment. The Commission defines the evaluation categories as follows:

**Well Qualified** - The candidate's work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional, and the candidate's performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system.

**Qualified** - The candidate satisfactorily performs the judicial function or, if there are negative traits, they are overcome by strong positive attributes.

**Unqualified** - The candidate is unfit for further judicial service.

At least six months prior to the expiration of the term of office, a judge who seeks reappointment must file a declaration of candidacy with the Commission. The judge must also submit a written statement, including illustrative materials, reviewing the significant aspects of the judge's judicial activities during the term of office. In addition, a judicial medical form completed by the judge's physician must be submitted to the Commission attesting to the judge's mental and physical health.

Once the Commission receives the declaration of candidacy, it solicits comments from the bar, Court personnel, other judges, and the lay public concerning the candidate's qualifications and contributions to the Court and the community. The Commission also conducts interviews with attorneys who have regularly appeared before the judge, and Court personnel who have worked closely with the judge, to gain additional insight concerning the judge's performance and fitness. The Commission respectively interviews the Chief Judge of the judge's Court and the judge as well.

If the Commission, in the course of a reappointment evaluation, receives information that raises a substantial doubt that the judge is at least qualified, the Commission will provide in summary form the basis for doubt, and provide the judge an opportunity to confer with the Commission.

The final step in the reappointment evaluation process is the Commission's preparation of a written evaluation discussing the judge's performance during the present term of office and his or her fitness for reappointment to another term. The report must be submitted to the President at least 60 days prior to the expiration of the judge's term of office, is furnished simultaneously to the judge, and released to the public immediately thereafter.

### **Senior Judge Recommendations**

In addition to evaluating the performance of Associate Judges who are eligible for and request reappointment, the Commission performs a virtually identical function for retiring judges who wish to continue their judicial service as Senior Judges. The Retired Judge Service Act requires a judge seeking senior status to request a recommendation for appointment from the Commission. Once a request is received, the Commission conducts a thorough review of a

judge's physical and mental fitness, and evaluates the judge's ability to satisfactorily perform judicial duties. The Commission must submit a written report of its findings to the appropriate Chief Judge, and the report must include the Commission's recommendation concerning a judge's fitness and qualifications to continue judicial service. If the Commission makes a favorable recommendation, the Chief Judge determines if the judge is to be appointed a Senior Judge. If the Commission makes an unfavorable recommendation, the requesting judge is ineligible for appointment. The recommendation of the Commission and the decision of the Chief Judge regarding appointment are final. A Senior Judge must be recommended for reappointment every four years, unless the judge has reached age 74, in which case a recommendation and reappointment are required every two years.

Retiring judges who wish to continue their judicial service as Senior Judges have one year from the date of retirement to request a recommendation from the Commission for an appointment to senior status. Contemporaneous with the filing of the request the judge must submit a written statement reviewing the significant aspects of his or her judicial activities, and the judge must submit a judicial medical form completed by his or her physician attesting to the judge's physical and mental health. The Commission solicits comments from the bar, Court personnel, other judges, and the lay public concerning the judge's qualifications and fitness for appointment as a Senior Judge. The Commission also conducts interviews with attorneys who have regularly appeared before the judge, and Court personnel who have worked closely with the judge over the 4-5 year period before the judge's retirement. The Commission respectively interviews the Chief Judge of the judge's court and the judge as well.

If the Commission, in the course of its fitness evaluation, receives information that raises a substantial doubt that the judge is fit for further judicial service, the Commission will provide in summary form the basis for doubt, and provide the judge an opportunity to confer with the Commission.

The Commission has 180 days from receipt of the judge's request to submit its report and make a favorable or unfavorable recommendation to the appropriate Chief Judge. The recommendation standards are as follows:

**Favorable** - The judge is physically and mentally fit and able satisfactorily to perform judicial duties.

**Unfavorable** - The judge is unfit for further judicial service.

The Chief Judge notifies the Commission and the judge of the decision regarding

appointment within 30 days of receipt of the Commission's report.

### III. 2015 STATISTICS

<b>Summary of Commission Activities</b>	
1. Complaints Regarding Conduct	79
2. Misconduct Investigations	30
3. Complaints Pending At Beginning of Year	1
4. Complaints Pending At Year End	7
5. Formal Disciplinary Proceedings	0
6. Involuntary Retirement Matters	0
7. Reappointment Proceedings	3
8. Senior Judge Recommendations	15
9. Commission Meetings	13

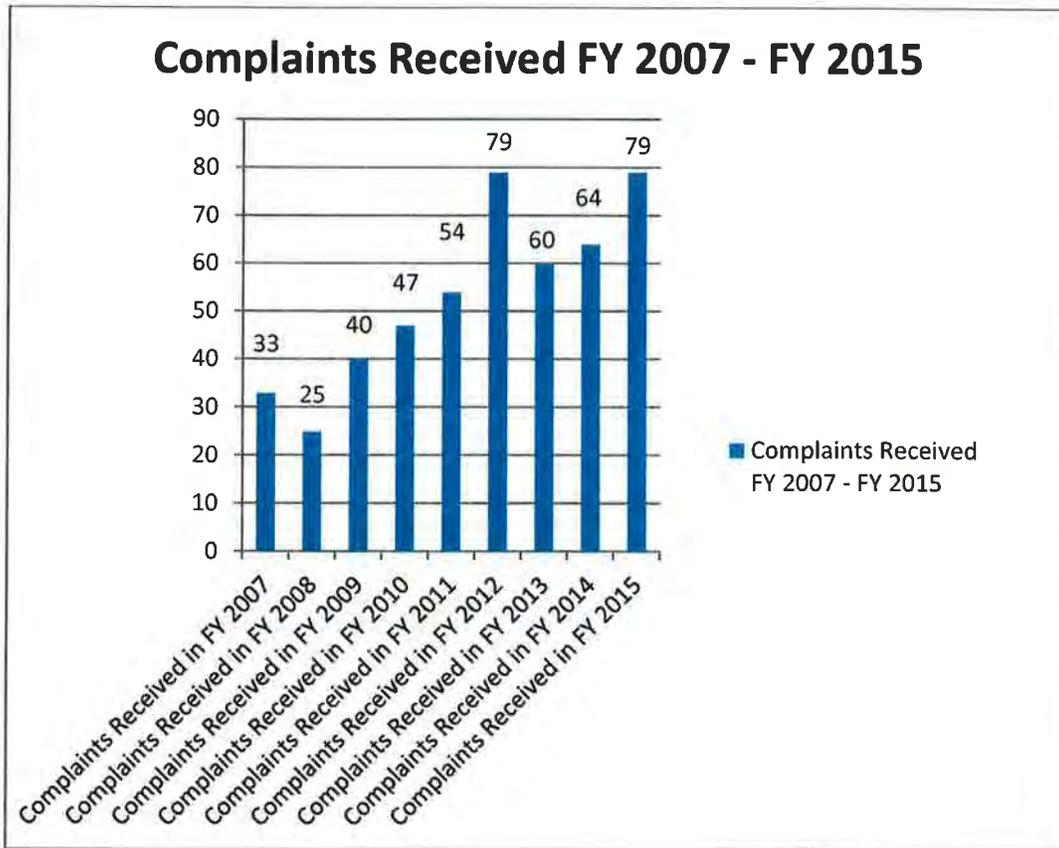
#### **Complaints Received and Investigated**

In fiscal year 2015, the Commission received 79 misconduct complaints. The great majority of complaints coming to the Commission this fiscal year as in previous years, were either unsubstantial or had to do with matters beyond the Commission's jurisdiction, rather than misconduct. In 49 cases the Commission determined after the initial review that no further inquiry was warranted and dismissed 42 matters for lack of jurisdiction, and dismissed seven matters for lack of merit. Of the 30 matters investigated, 25 were dismissed when the Commission determined that no further action was warranted. Two complaints were disposed of through an informal conference with each of the two judges involved, two complaints were deemed moot when the two judges involved issued Orders concerning pending Motions, and one complaint resulted in the Commission issuing a public reprimand to the judge concerned.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The public reprimand was issued, and the seven matters pending at the end of the fiscal year were resolved, during the first quarter of fiscal year 2016.

There was one complaint pending at the end of fiscal year 2014. The Commission completed its investigation of that complaint in fiscal year 2015, and dismissed it for lack of jurisdiction.



Though the complaint total indicates an increase from fiscal year 2014, the total does not reflect an increase in the incidence of misconduct reported to the Commission. As noted in previous Annual Reports, more citizens are using the Commission’s website and e-mail address, as well as the D.C. Bar’s website, to file complaints electronically. The electronic submission has proven to be a more convenient and expeditious method for citizens wishing to file complaints, and may be the variable responsible for the increase in complaints received over the past four years.

### **Complaint Allegations**

The 79 matters reviewed by the Commission concerned allegations of inappropriate demeanor and injudicious temperament, violation of constitutional rights, abuse of judicial discretion, administrative delays, bias and prejudice, due process issues, dissatisfaction with legal rulings, ex parte communications, and conflicts of interest. Complaints contained multiple

allegations, six complaints named more than one judge, 38 judges were identified, and more than one complaint was filed against 23 judges. The complaints concerned 23 Associate Judges and seven Senior Judges of the Superior Court, and four Associate Judges and four Senior Judges of the Court of Appeals.

<b>Complaint Allegations</b>	
1. Bias/Prejudice	11
2. Abuse of Judicial Discretion	6
3. Dissatisfaction With Legal Rulings	23
4. Inappropriate Demeanor/Injudicious Temperament	17
5. Violation of Constitutional Rights	11
6. Administrative Delays	3
7. Due Process Issues	3
8. Ex Parte Communications	2
9. Conflicts of Interest	3

### **Source of Complaints**

Litigants or their relatives filed 74 complaints, three complaints were filed by individual attorneys, one complaint was filed anonymously, and the Commission initiated one matter based on a local newspaper article.

The complaints concerned 34 civil matters, 15 criminal matters, 11 domestic relations matters, nine family matters, five probate matters, four Landlord & Tenant matters, and one complaint concerned off the bench conduct.

### **Complaint Dispositions**

The Commission disposed of 58 complaints in 30 days, 17 complaints were disposed of in 60 days, 2 complaints were disposed of in 90 days, one complaint was disposed of in 120 days, and one matter was before the Commission for five months before it was disposed of.

**Judicial Positions  
As of September 30, 2015**

Court of Appeals		
Chief Judge and Associate Judges.....		9
Senior Judges.....		12
Superior Court		
Chief Judge and Associate Judges.....		61
Senior Judges.....		<u>31</u>
	Total	113

**Associate Judge Reappointments**

The fifteen-year terms of Superior Court Associate Judges Thomas J. Motley and John M. Mott expired during the fiscal year , and each requested reappointment to another fifteen-year term. In addition, the terms of Superior Court Associate Judges John Ramsey Johnson, Michael L. Rankin, and Gerald I. Fisher expired later in the calendar year, and each requested reappointment to another fifteen-year term.<sup>1</sup>

The Commission carefully evaluated the qualifications of Judges Motley, Mott, Johnson, Rankin, and Fisher and reviewed each Judge’s record as an Associate Judge. The Commission conducted confidential interviews with attorneys who had regularly appeared before each Judge, interviewed Superior Court personnel who had worked with each Judge, and reviewed its own records concerning each candidate.

As required by the Commission’s Rules, each Judge submitted a written statement with illustrative materials summarizing their respective judicial activities and assignments, and their singular contributions to the Court and to the community. In addition, each Judge submitted a Judicial Medical Form completed by their personal physician. The Commission interviewed each Judge to discuss their record, as well as the information the Commission had received during the course of its evaluation. The Commission also met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield to discuss each Judge’s judicial performance and qualifications.

<sup>1</sup> The statute requires the Commission to submit its reappointment evaluation report to the President, 60 days in advance of a judge’s term expiration. The terms of Judges John Ramsey Johnson, Michael L. Rankin, and Gerald I. Fisher actually expired in fiscal year 2016, but the Commission had completed its evaluation of Judges Johnson and Rankin during fiscal year 2015, and completed Judge Fisher’s shortly after the end of this fiscal year.

The Commission determined Judges Motley, Mott, Johnson, Rankin, and Fisher to be well qualified for reappointment and each Judge automatically received another fifteen-year term. The Commission's evaluation reports to President Barack Obama appear under Appendix A.

In addition, the term of Superior Court Judge Herbert B. Dixon, Jr. expired during the fiscal year, and he opted to retire and seek a recommendation for an initial appointment as a Senior Judge.

### **Senior Judge Recommendations**

The terms of Court of Appeals Judges James A. Belson, Michael W. Farrell, John M. Ferren, Warren R. King, Theodore R. Newman, Jr., William C. Pryor, and John M. Steadman, and the terms of Superior Court Judges Mary Ellen Albrecht, John H. Bayly, Jr., Kaye K. Christian, Frederick D. Dorsey, Stephanie Duncan-Peters, Brook Hedge, Bruce Mencher, and Judith Retchin expired during the fiscal year and all except Judges Albrecht and Mencher requested a recommendation for reappointment to senior status. Each Judge submitted a written statement discussing their judicial and non-judicial activities since their last reappointment to senior status, and each submitted a Judicial Medical Form completed by their personal physician. The Commission met with the Chief Judges to discuss the contributions and qualifications of the Senior Judges from their respective Court. The Commission concluded the fitness evaluations of the 13 Judges, and recommended each for reappointment to senior status. The Commission was advised by Chief Judge Eric T. Washington that Judges Belson, Farrell, Ferren, King, Newman, Pryor and Steadman were reappointed to senior status on the Court of Appeals and Chief Judge Lee Satterfield advised the Commission that he had reappointed Judges Bayly, Christian, Dorsey, Duncan-Peters, Hedge, and Retchin to senior status on the Superior Court.

As noted earlier Superior Court Judge Herbert B. Dixon, Jr. retired during the fiscal year in lieu of seeking reappointment to a third term. In addition, Superior Court Judge Ann O'Regan Keary retired during the fiscal year as well. Both Judges requested a recommendation for an initial appointment as a Senior Judge, and each submitted a written statement with illustrative materials discussing their judicial activities during the present term of office, and a satisfactory Judicial Medical Form. The Commission also interviewed attorneys who had appeared before both Judges, as well as Court personnel who had worked with them individually over the few years. The Commission met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield and discussed both Judges'

qualifications and contributions to the Court. The Commission met with Judge Dixon and met with Judge Keary respectively to discuss their requests for senior status. Upon completing its fitness evaluations, the Commission recommended both Judges for initial appointments to senior status. Chief Judge Satterfield advised the Commission that he had appointed Judge Dixon and Judge Keary to four-year terms as Senior Judges.

## VI. FY 2015 EXPENDITURES

OCTOBER 1, 2014 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

Staff Salaries.....	\$208,610.29
Personnel Benefits.....	23,367.22
Legal and Investigative Services.....	27,331.82
Communication Services.....	9,134.60
Translation Services.....	7,301.04
Purchase of Office Furniture.....	6,846.32
Printing.....	6,503.00
Out of City Travel.....	4,598.63
District of Columbia Government (IT and Web Service Maintenance) .....	3,361.00
Membership Dues.....	2,050.00
Office Supplies.....	1,880.47
Local Messenger/Delivery Services.....	1,148.97
Conference Fees.....	1,125.00
Office Support.....	1,117.58
Postage Meter Rental.....	764.76
Maintenance Service Agreement.....	763.30
Subscriptions to Periodicals.....	479.88
Local Travel.....	154.42
Court Reporting Services.....	69.35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$306,607.65</b>

**APPENDIX A**  
**COMMISSION PUBLIC ACTIONS**



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

May 6, 2015

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Re: Evaluation of the Honorable Thomas J. Motley**

Dear Mr. President:

The fifteen-year term of the Honorable Thomas J. Motley, an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, expires on July 6, 2015. He is seeking reappointment to another term.

Pursuant to Section 433(c) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, 87 Stat. 744, as amended by the District of Columbia Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act of 1986, P.L. 99-573, 100 Stat. 3228, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (“the Commission”) hereby submits this evaluation of Judge Motley’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment. Section 433(c) provides:

Not less than six months prior to the expiration of his term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of his term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b). If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the declaring candidate’s term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring

candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, he shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b). If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

The Commission reserves the term “well qualified” for those judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional on the bench, and the candidate’s performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system. The Commission will determine a judge is “qualified” if he or she satisfactorily performs his or her assigned duties or whose strong positive attributes are materially offset, but not overborne, by negative traits. A finding of “unqualified” means the Commission has found the judge to be unfit for judicial service.

Judge Motley filed a timely declaration of candidacy for reappointment with the Commission on January 5, 2015. In evaluating Judge Motley’s qualifications for reappointment, the Commission carefully reviewed the extensive written statement Judge Motley submitted describing his services on the Court. This statement set forth the significant aspects of his judicial, professional, and community activities during the past 15 years. The Commission also considered a selection of judicial opinions that Judge Motley

has authored during his first term on the bench and an analysis of his record on appeal.

In addition, the Commission reviewed a confidential statement from Judge Motley's physician attesting to his "good physical" health and Judge Motley's time reports and annual financial statements. None of these documents indicates any reason why Judge Motley should not continue to serve as a judicial officer.

The Commission interviewed 19 people concerning Judge Motley's performance as a Judge, including Court personnel, Superior Court judges, and attorneys who had appeared before him representing the Government and individuals. The Commission met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield to discuss Judge Motley's request to be reappointed. The Chief Judge recommended Judge Motley's reappointment, stating that he is intelligent, works well with his colleagues, and is a productive member of the Superior Court bench. Judge Motley met personally with the Commission on April 8 and April 20, 2015, to discuss his reappointment, including the information that he filed with the Commission, as well as information the Commission had received during the course of its evaluation.

At this time, Judge Motley serves in the Civil Division of the Superior Court. During his tenure, he has served in all the Divisions of the Superior Court, except for the Probate and Tax Division. Judge Motley has served in the Family Court, the Criminal Division, the Domestic Violence Branch, and the Civil Division. He appreciates the challenge of unrepresented litigants and ensures them that their day in court is equal to represented parties. Judge Motley has written several substantial opinions concerning difficult issues. His decisions are fair and reflect his thoughtful consideration of the facts and application of the relevant law. Moreover, Judge Motley's record on appeal is sound.

Judge Motley also provides service to the Court off the bench. He has served on several Court committees. He is a member of a committee that evaluates how the Court should proceed regarding the cause of wrongful convictions. In addition, he is a member of the Rules Committee and the Landlord and Tenant Subcommittee. He previously has served as a member of the Voucher Committee. Judge Motley also has provided judicial training on a variety of topics. In addition, Chief Judge Satterfield asked Judge Motley to act as a coach to a newer Associate Judge of the Superior Court. Judge Motley agreed to perform this role, and he is currently coaching another Associate Judge.

Judge Motley is engaged in appropriate extra judicial activities. He is a member of the Washington Bar Association Judicial Council, which provides a vehicle for judges to interact with the community. As a member of the Judicial Council, Judge Motley has visited public schools to speak with students about the judiciary and has conducted forums at Howard University to educate college students about law school. Judge Motley also has represented the Court in making presentations to bar organizations and at community meetings.

Judge Motley, by virtue of his intellect, hard work, fairness, and legal scholarship, deserves the term “well qualified” for the overall exceptional service he has provided the citizens of the District of Columbia as a Superior Court Judge. He appreciates the seriousness of his job and works hard to reach the correct decision in his consideration of each case.

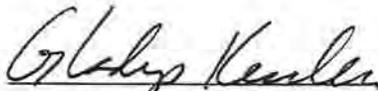
The Commission, however, received several adverse comments from attorneys concerning Judge Motley’s temperament, including recommending that he not be

reappointed. The Commission discussed this issue with Judge Motley at great length when it met with him in person, expressing the critical nature of a judge's temperament to the fair operation of the judicial system. The Commission is concerned that Judge Motley was unaware of his temperament issue and how it affects the public, and in particular, the lawyers who appear before him. However, no complaint was ever filed with the Commission prior to his application for reappointment raising any issue regarding his temperament. Thus, the Commission only learned of this issue in the course of its investigation of Judge Motley's application for reappointment. Therefore, it was only during the reappointment process that the Commission had the opportunity to discuss the issue with Judge Motley. Based on all of the information before it, including Judge Motley's response to the Commission's concerns, the Commission now believes that Judge Motley takes seriously the Commission's concerns regarding his judicial temperament and will vigorously address those concerns in the future.

In light of Judge Motley's commendable record of judicial performance and his dedication to the Court, and after a careful and thorough evaluation of all the information received and compiled, it is the view of the Commission that Judge Motley should continue his judicial service. The Commission balanced the high quality of Judge Motley's work product, legal scholarship and dedication to the Court against his need to gain insight into and to improve his temperament. For all these reasons, the Commission finds Judge Motley well qualified for reappointment, and his term shall be automatically extended for a full term of fifteen years from July 6, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

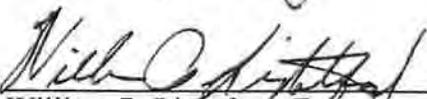
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Gladys Kessler, Chairperson

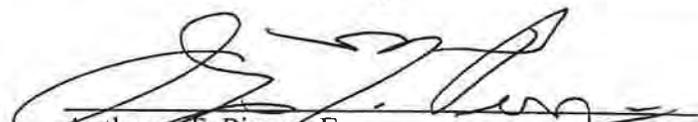
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq., Vice Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Joan L. Goldfrank

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William P. Lightfoot, Esq.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David P. Milzman, M.D.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony T. Pierce, Esq.

cc: The Honorable Thomas J. Motley

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

May 6, 2015

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Re: Evaluation of the Honorable John M. Mott**

Dear Mr. President:

The fifteen-year term of the Honorable John M. Mott, an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, expires on July 6, 2015. He is seeking reappointment to another term.

Pursuant to Section 433(c) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, 87 Stat. 744, as amended by the District of Columbia Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act of 1986, P.L. 99-573, 100 Stat. 3228, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (“the Commission”) hereby submits this evaluation of Judge Mott’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment. Section 433(c) provides:

Not less than six months prior to the expiration of his term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of his term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b). If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the declaring candidate’s term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring

candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, he shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b). If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

The Commission reserves the term “well qualified” for those judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional on the bench, and the candidate’s performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system. The Commission will determine a judge is “qualified” if he or she satisfactorily performs his or her assigned duties or whose strong positive attributes are materially offset, but not overborne, by negative traits. A finding of “unqualified” means the Commission has found the judge to be unfit for judicial service.

Judge Mott filed a timely declaration of candidacy for reappointment with the Commission on December 14, 2014. In evaluating Judge Mott’s qualifications for reappointment, the Commission carefully reviewed the comprehensive written statement Judge Mott submitted which discussed the significant aspects of his judicial, professional, scholastic, and community activities during the past fifteen years.

A current medical statement from Judge Mott's physician has been provided to the Commission attesting to his very good health, and fitness for continued judicial service. Judge Mott's monthly time reports, annual financial statements, and the Commission's own record of complaints regarding the Judge have been reviewed. The Commission found nothing objectionable in its review to prevent Judge Mott's automatic reappointment.

The Commission interviewed individuals concerning Judge Mott's performance as a Judge, including Court personnel, and attorneys from both the public and private bar who had appeared before him. The Commission met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield on March 11, 2015, to discuss Judge Mott's request to be reappointed. The Chief Judge recommended Judge Mott's reappointment, stating that he is a very good judge, has made significant contributions to the Court through his Committee work, and cooperates with his colleagues. Judge Mott was interviewed by the Commission on April 8, 2015, for a full and candid discussion of his record, and of the information the Commission had received during the course of its evaluation.

Judge Mott currently serves in the Civil Division of the Superior Court where he has presided over a Civil II calendar for the past five years. During his tenure, he has also served in the Family Court with calendar assignments that included domestic relations, juvenile delinquency, abuse and neglect, and mental health and truancy cases, and the Criminal Division where he handled general felony and high volume Felony II calendars.

By virtue of his calendar assignments, Judge Mott has written several substantial opinions concerning an impressive range of difficult issues. The Commission considered a selection of his judicial opinions which set forth the facts and law clearly, are well-written and concise, and reflect a commitment to providing individualized, fair, and even-handed justice.

Judge Mott has received much praise for his courtroom demeanor, and for the courteous and respectful manner in which he treats all who appear before him, in particular pro se litigants. Judge Mott was described as, “one of the kindest judges I have seen in Superior Court”, “his judicial temperament is beyond reproach”, and “he is respectful to all litigants and takes the time to explain matters to unrepresented parties”. Judge Mott reflected in his written statement about the importance he places on how litigants are treated, he stated, “... Of equal importance, those who appear before the court have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, to leave feeling heard, and to actually be heard. A judge should blend proper decision-making with effective courtroom and docket management and appropriate temperament. To me, this is the essence of judicial service ...” The Commission agrees.

Judge Mott is the longest standing member of the Judicial Education Committee (since 2002) and his primary interest has been “to improve the quality of judging by those on our bench”. He has also made significant contributions to the Court through his service on the Jury Committee, the Civil Jury Instructions Committee, and his work for the past ten years on the then, newly established Mental Health/Mental Retardation Panels Committee

to create panels of attorneys qualified to represent individuals in these types of cases. In his written statement, the Judge noted that one of his primary interests at the Court has been “to improve the quality of representation of indigent persons in family cases”. Thus it was only fitting that Judge Mott was appointed to the Family Court Panels Committee where he worked to create panels of attorneys qualified to represent children and other parties financially unable to obtain adequate representation in certain Family Court cases.

In addition to his time in training colleagues, attorneys, and guardians *ad litem*, Judge Mott was appointed by Chief Judge Satterfield to participate with a small group of judges in a newly-created Superior Court Judicial Coaching Program. Judge Mott is currently coaching another Associate Judge. The goal of the program is to assist judges who volunteer for and request a judicial coach, to improve as judicial officers, through courtroom observation and out of court discussions.

Judge Mott is very active in service to the Court and community as evidenced by his off the bench activities and involvement. He is a member of the Hispanic Bar Association Judicial Council, and participates in initiatives to better prepare students of color for judicial internships and clerkships. Judge Mott has represented the Court through presentations on the legal system to bar organizations, local law schools and high schools, drug rehabilitation centers, and at community meetings. The Judge also has taught an L.L.M. class at George Washington University School of Law called “The American Jury” for the past 14 years, which consistently has received high ratings.

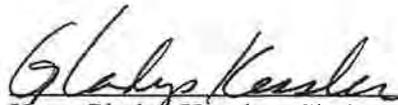
Judge Mott has demonstrated a commendable commitment to the administration of justice and to enhancing the community's understanding and respect for the legal process through his efforts on and off the bench. He takes his judicial duties most seriously and sincerely, and consistently demonstrates a sense of fairness, impartiality, and compassion. He fully understands the most fundamental and important component of being a good judge. In his statement he noted, "Judicial service is, first and foremost, public service."

The Commission has determined that Judge Mott is very deserving of reappointment. In addition to his previously discussed service and contributions, his survey evaluations from the D.C. Bar Judicial Evaluation Committee that were conducted in the sixth, tenth, and thirteenth years of his judicial term, were weighed as part of the Commission's evaluation process. He was rated above or well above average in nearly all of the twenty survey categories, and virtually all of the written comments included in the surveys were complimentary concerning Judge Mott's work product, demeanor, caring, dedication, and performance on the bench. His peers, attorneys who have appeared before him, and Court personnel highly recommend him for reappointment.

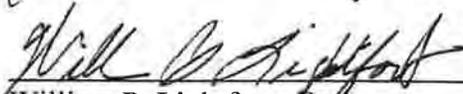
For all the foregoing reasons, the Commission finds Judge John M. Mott well qualified for reappointment, and his term shall be automatically extended for a full term of fifteen years from July 6, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

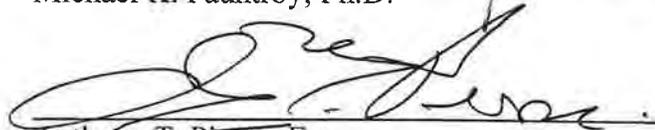
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Gladys Kessler, Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq., Vice Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William P. Lightfoot, Esq.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony T. Pierce, Esq.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Joan L. Goldfrank

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David P. Milzman, M.D.

cc: The Honorable John M. Mott

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

September 15, 2015

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Re: Evaluation of the Honorable John Ramsey Johnson**

Dear Mr. President:

The fifteen-year term of the Honorable John Ramsey Johnson, an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, expires on November 16, 2015. He is seeking reappointment for another term.

Pursuant to Section 433(c) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, 87 Stat. 744, as amended by the District of Columbia Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act of 1986, P.L. 99-573, 100 Stat. 3228, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (“the Commission”) hereby submits this evaluation of Judge Johnson’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment. Section 433(c) provides:

Not less than six months prior to the expiration of his [or her] term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of his [or her] term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b). If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the declaring candidate’s term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate’s

performance during his [or her] present term of office and his fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to the mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, he shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b). If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

The Commission reserves the term “well qualified” for those judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional on the bench, and the candidate’s performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system. The Commission will determine a judge is “qualified” if he or she satisfactorily performs his or her assigned duties or whose strong positive attributes are materially offset, but not overborne, by negative traits. A finding of “unqualified” means the Commission has found the judge to be unfit for judicial service.

Judge Johnson filed his timely declaration of candidacy for reappointment with the Commission on April 2, 2015. In evaluating Judge Johnson’s qualifications for reappointment, the Commission carefully reviewed the extensive written statement he submitted describing his

services on the Court. This statement set forth the significant aspects of his judicial, professional, and community activities during the past 15 years. Judge Johnson met personally with the Commission on August 12, 2015, to discuss his record, as well as information the Commission had received during the course of its evaluation from Court personnel, members of the D.C. Bar engaging in private practice who were familiar with his performance, and government attorneys. The Commission met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield on August 12, 2015, as well. He, too, strongly supports the reappointment of Judge Johnson. The Commission also reviewed a detailed, confidential statement from Judge Johnson's physician attesting to his excellent health and the absence of any medical reason why he cannot continue to perform his judicial duties.

During the 15 years that Judge Johnson has served on Superior Court, he has served on all its major divisions except for Probate. He served four years at Family Court, four years in the Criminal Division, and four and one-half years in the Civil Division, where he is now sitting as the Deputy Presiding Judge.

Judge Johnson received glowing reports from the Court's Administrative Staff, as well as from the lawyers who regularly practice in Superior Court. Everyone commented on how good a Judge he is, and how kind and empathetic he is with pro se litigants in particular.

The Commission also reviewed Judge Johnson's complaint file. Over 15 years, there were nine complaints filed: one was dismissed immediately for lack of merit, two were

dismissed after the first review, and six were dismissed after the Preliminary Investigation. Four of the nine complaints were brought by the same prisoner in a criminal case.

Judge Johnson was evaluated by the Bar in 2010-2011 and in 2013-2014. Both times, his overall evaluation score was well above the average for all Judges, and the raters wrote about his excellent demeanor in Court.

Judge Johnson served for about 14 years on an extremely important Commission, namely, the Advisory District of Columbia Sentencing Guidelines Commission. The mandate of the Advisory Commission was to make recommendations regarding the District's sentencing laws for felony offenses committed on or after August 5, 2000. The Advisory Commission conducted extensive research on the sentencing practices in other jurisdictions, as well as the District of Columbia, and, in April 2000, issued recommendations to the Council of the District of Columbia. In 2003, the Advisory Commission recommended that the District adopt voluntary sentencing guidelines. That recommendation was adopted by the City Council when it enacted the Advisory Commission on Sentencing Structured Sentencing System Pilot Program Amendment Act of 2004. In addition to creating the Guidelines, the City Counsel made the Commission a permanent District of Columbia Government Agency, naming it the District of Columbia Sentencing Commission. The Guidelines went into effect in June 2004, and are applicable to all felony pleas or verdicts entered on or after June 14, 2004. In his submission, Judge Johnson indicates that the compliance rate of the new voluntary guidelines was 97 percent, meaning that virtually all felony sentencing by Superior Court Judges followed the Guidelines.

That figure is a reflection of how satisfied the Superior Court Judges were with the delicate and difficult task the Commission undertook.

Judge Johnson has been very active in other Court activities. He was a member of the Magistrate Judge Committee for several years. That Committee interviews all candidates, recommends three of them to the Chief Judge, and the Chief Judge selects one to recommend to the Board of Judges for approval.

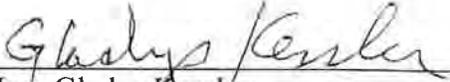
In 2004, the Court established the Family Court Panel's Committee which had the onerous and sensitive task of designating those lawyers who were sufficiently talented and committed to handle various cases in juvenile, neglect, child abuse, and special education cases. As Judge Johnson summarized: "[t]he work was arduous, but important to the quality of the outcome of every case."

At the Chief Judge's request, Judge Johnson served as a mentor in the District of Columbia Superior Court Judicial Coaching Program. That assignment required intensive training over the course of two full days. At this time, Judge Johnson is coaching two Judges, and has also participated in a number of training and mentoring opportunities. He has taught District of Columbia high school students in mock trials in the Courthouse.

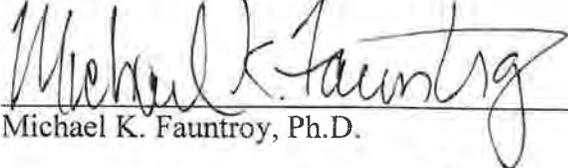
For all these reasons, the Commission unanimously finds Judge Johnson well qualified for reappointment and his term shall automatically extend for a full term of 15 years from November 16, 2015.

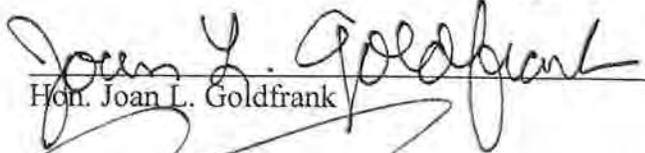
Respectfully submitted,

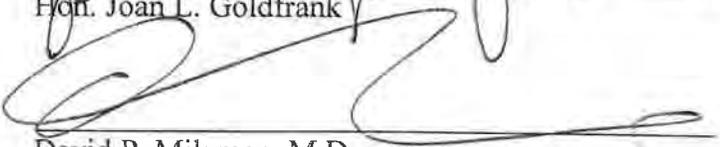
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION ON  
JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

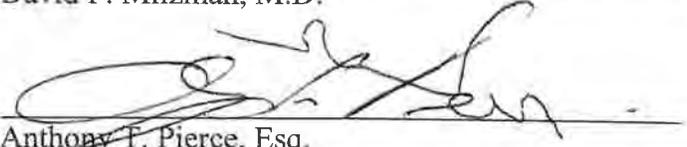
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Gladys Kessler  
Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq.  
Vice Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Joan L. Goldfrank

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David P. Milzman, M.D.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony T. Pierce, Esq.

Cc: The Honorable John Ramsey Johnson

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

October 16, 2015

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Re: Evaluation of the Honorable Michael L. Rankin**

Dear Mr. President:

The fifteen-year term of the Honorable Michael L. Rankin, an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, expires on December 16, 2015. He is seeking reappointment to another term.

Pursuant to Section 433(c) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, 87 Stat. 744, as amended by the District of Columbia Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act of 1986, P.L. 99-573, 100 Stat. 3228, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (“the Commission”) hereby submits this evaluation of Judge Rankin’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment. Section 433(c) provides:

Not less than six months prior to the expiration of his [or her] term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of his [or her] term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b). If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the

declaring candidate's term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate's performance during his [or her] present term of office and his fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to the mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, he shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b). If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

The Commission reserves the term "well qualified" for those judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional on the bench, and the candidate's performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system. The Commission will determine a judge is "qualified" if he or she satisfactorily performs his or her assigned duties or whose strong positive attributes are materially offset, but not overborne, by negative traits. A finding of "unqualified" means the Commission has found the judge to be unfit for judicial service.

The Commission received Judge Rankin's declaration of candidacy for reappointment on May 8, 2015. In evaluating Judge Rankin's qualifications for reappointment, the Commission

carefully considered the written statement he submitted which provided a detailed review of his judicial assignments and participation with Court administrative matters, as well as his scholastic and community activities since his reappointment in 2000. Judge Rankin met with the Commission on September 9, 2015, to discuss his record, as well as information the Commission had received during the course of its evaluation from Court personnel and members of the D.C. Bar. The Commission met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield on August 12, 2015. He praised Judge Rankin for his skill in handling all of his judicial assignments and for his cooperation and collegiality. Chief Judge Satterfield wholeheartedly supported Judge Rankin's reappointment. The Commission also reviewed the Judicial Medical Form from Judge Rankin's physician attesting to his overall good health and his physical and mental fitness to continue performing judicial duties.

The Commission was provided with a sampling of orders and opinions authored by Judge Rankin in diverse Civil and Criminal cases. A review of these orders and opinions indicated that they were well reasoned, clearly written, and of a superior professional quality. In addition, Judge Rankin submitted the appellate decisions from a selection of interesting Civil and Criminal cases he had presided over where he had been affirmed, and in some instances, remanded on appeal.

Judge Rankin was first appointed to the Superior Court in 1985, and he was reappointed by the Commission in 2000 to another 15-year term. The Commission applauds Judge Rankin for his thirty years of service on the Superior Court, and for his desire and commitment to

continue his judicial activities and public service. He is only the second judge in Superior Court history to request and receive a third term. Judge Rankin's reasons for requesting another appointment are reflected in his written statement, "...I still find the work of a judicial officer to be intellectually challenging and emotionally satisfying, which is simply to say that when a case is handled correctly and decided fairly, there is a great deal of satisfaction that comes with doing the job well."

Judge Rankin served as Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division from 2000 until the close of 2001. In 2002 he began a three-year assignment in the Civil Division managing a Civil II calendar of approximately 350-370 cases on the docket. These cases concerned a variety of issues including breach of contract real estate transactions, mortgage foreclosures, medical negligence, employment law, bank fraud, and real property cases involving landlord and tenant actions.

In 2005 Judge Rankin was designated Presiding Judge of the Superior Court Drug Intervention Program, better known as Drug Court. The Drug Court is one of several problem solving Courts that the Court operates to offer pre-trial diversion in nonviolent misdemeanor cases and alternatives to prison sentences in certain felony cases. Judge Rankin described his work in Drug Court as a, "unique and challenging assignment for a judicial officer...", "The work is non-traditional and requires the judge to take on a leadership role in managing the progress of the individuals participating in the program." It is clear that he relished this

assignment and the opportunity to engage “each individual participant in a motivational discussion aimed at achieving a successful outcome for the participant.”

In 2008 Judge Rankin was assigned to the Felony I criminal calendar where he presided over numerous highly contested trials oftentimes with multiple defendants charged with the most heinous crimes. It is a challenging assignment that requires a judge to deftly manage every aspect of the case from jury selection to sentencing. Judge Rankin presided over this calendar with great skill.

Since 2011 Judge Rankin has been assigned to the Civil Division, first on the Civil II calendar and most recently on the Civil I calendar where the cases tend to have more complex issues, multiple parties, counter claims and cross claims, and all of the asbestos litigation. The Judge realizes that this assignment also required a certain skill set, namely “good calendar management skills and the ability to motivate counsel to work harmoniously in resolving discovery disputes.”

Judge Rankin continues to be an active member of the Superior Court Rules Committee, and he remains active in the field of legal education participating in the National Judicial College and teaching at Howard University School of Law and George Washington University School of Law. Since his reappointment in 2000, Judge Rankin served two three-year terms as a voting member of the District of Columbia Officers Standards and Training Board, having been appointed by former Mayor Anthony Williams. The Judge did note in his statement that he has

engaged in fewer activities off the bench over the past 15 years, than in his initial term, in order to focus his efforts on being a better trial judge and family man.

Judge Rankin received many accolades concerning his excellent knowledge of the law and understanding of judicial procedure, and for being pleasant and compassionate. He was described as “one of the best judges I’ve tried a case before”, “excellent judge”, and “an exceptional jurist”. He also received high marks from some attorneys and Court personnel for his patience and good judicial temperament.

All of the comments the Commission received were not complimentary. The Commission heard such comments as, “He does not treat attorneys with respect in the courtroom.”, “very volatile”, “appears to have as a goal to humiliate litigants and counsel alike”, and “regularly insults litigants before him and brings disrepute to the bench.” In addition, the Commission received four complaints during the past fifteen years concerning Judge Rankin and demeanor issues. The Commission found the allegations troubling and of such a serious nature that it met with Judge Rankin on two occasions to discuss his comments, conduct, and temperament during the four unrelated proceedings. The Commission was satisfied at the conclusion of the two informal conferences that Judge Rankin understood that his comments were inappropriate, and gave the Commission cause for concern.

The Commission discussed the issue of demeanor and temperament at length with Judge Rankin during his September 9, 2015, reappointment interview. The Commission listened to

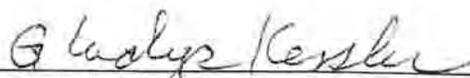
Judge Rankin's reflections of how he continues to strive for improvement in this area, and the progress he has made since his last informal conference with the Commission in 2008. The Commission expects Judge Rankin to remain vigilant in his efforts to be patient, courteous, and dignified at all times in the course of his judicial activities.

The Commission believes that Judge Rankin has made several noteworthy contributions to the Superior Court and the community, and that his positive attributes are not overborne by the demeanor issues discussed above. He has consistently handled difficult and challenging assignments over the past fifteen years, and in light of his dedication and commitment to the Court, the Commission believes that Judge Rankin should continue his judicial service.

For the foregoing reasons, the Commission has determined that Judge Michael L. Rankin is "well qualified" for reappointment and his term shall be automatically extended from December 16, 2015.

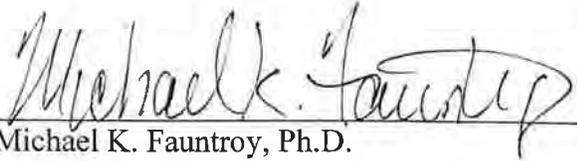
Respectfully submitted,

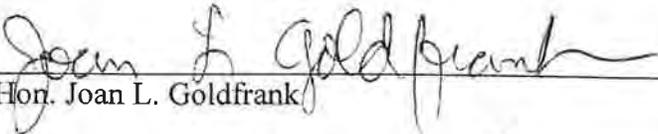
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION ON  
JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Gladys Kessler, Chairperson

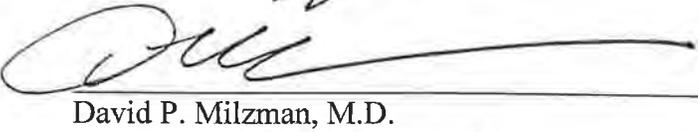
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq., Vice Chairperson

Report on Judge Michael L. Rankin

  
Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D.

  
Hon. Joan L. Goldfrank

  
William P. Lightfoot, Esq.

  
David P. Milzman, M.D.

  
Anthony T. Pierce, Esq.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

November 16, 2015

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Re: Evaluation of the Honorable Gerald I. Fisher**

Dear Mr. President:

The fifteen-year term of the Honorable Gerald I. Fisher, an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, expires on January 15, 2016. He is seeking reappointment to another term.

Pursuant to Section 433(c) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, 87 Stat. 744, as amended by the District of Columbia Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act of 1986, P.L. 99-573, 100 Stat. 3228, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (“the Commission”) hereby submits this evaluation of Judge Fisher’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment. Section 433(c) provides:

Not less than six months prior to the expiration of his term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of his term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b). If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the declaring candidate’s term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate’s performance during

his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, he shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) and (b). If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

The Commission reserves the term “well qualified” for those judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional on the bench, and the candidate’s performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system. The Commission will determine a judge is “qualified” if he or she satisfactorily performs his or her assigned duties or whose strong positive attributes are materially offset, but not overborne, by negative traits. A finding of “unqualified” means the Commission has found the judge to be unfit for judicial service.

Judge Fisher filed a timely declaration of candidacy for reappointment with the Commission on May 24, 2015, and completed his submission of the required materials on September 14, 2015. The Judge’s submission included a comprehensive written statement which provided a thorough and very interesting discussion of his service on the Court and his personal

assessment of specific contributions he has made to the Court and the community. Judge Fisher also provided a sampling of written orders he had authored concerning a variety of criminal, civil, and probate law issues which displayed legal scholarship and sensitivity in dealing with challenging and sometimes competing legal principles.

The Commission reviewed the Judicial Medical Form completed by Judge Fisher's physician attesting to his good health and physical and mental fitness to continue performing judicial duties. Judge Fisher's monthly time reports and annual financial statements were reviewed for accuracy and statutory compliance. The Commission met with Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield on October 14, 2015, who enthusiastically endorsed Judge Fisher's reappointment due to his exemplary qualifications, and the Commission met with Judge Fisher on November 10, 2015, for an interview to discuss his record over the past 14½ years.

Attorneys who have appeared before Judge Fisher and Court personnel who have worked closely with him during his tenure were interviewed. Judge Fisher received broad and resounding support for his reappointment. Evaluative comments received by the Commission describe Judge Fisher as "smart, fair, and unfailingly polite to litigants and counsel", "one of the finest judges on the Superior Court bench", and, "a diligent, very astute, and attentive jurist". He was praised for "issuing decisions and orders that are well written and well researched", for being "a good listener who is responsive to both sides in a given case", and for being "very capable and good at handling whatever litigants throw at him".

The Commission also reviewed Judge Fisher's complaint file which contained four complaints that had been filed against him since his appointment. The Commission dismissed

three of the complaints at first review: two for lack of merit, one for lack of jurisdiction, and dismissed the fourth complaint after a preliminary investigation.

Judge Fisher was evaluated by the D.C. Bar in 2014-2015 and in 2007-2008. His overall evaluation scores exceeded the average scores for all Judges in the two surveys, in virtually all of the 20 ranking factors. The written comments in both surveys were overwhelmingly complimentary.

Judge Fisher was appointed to the Superior Court in 2001 by President William Jefferson Clinton, and he has served with distinction in all divisions of the Court except the Family Court. He was first assigned to the Traffic and D.C. Branch of the Criminal Division, which was followed by a two-year assignment on a Misdemeanor Calendar. In 2004, Judge Fisher spent most of the year in the Domestic Violence Unit, which is a very challenging experience for any trial judge, due to the volatility of the issues presented and the large number of pro se litigants. Judge Fisher's outstanding judicial temperament served him well during this assignment. In his statement he remarked, "I believe I was successful in lowering the tension of the proceedings and bringing about just and long-lasting results by treating everyone respectfully and neutrally." Judge Fisher was praised by Court staff and attorneys for being "very kind to and patient with all parties", in his handling of these cases.

Judge Fisher served in the Civil Division from 2005 through 2008. He returned to the Criminal Division in 2009, where he was assigned to a Felony I calendar for two years and a Felony II calendar for two years. He participated in the certification list system whereby all

Criminal Division judges not in trial agree to take and complete trials and hearings of their colleagues, in order to prevent Misdemeanor and Felony II trials and preventive detention hearings from being continued because a judge is unavailable. Not only did Judge Fisher take many of these trials and hearings in addition to his assigned Calendar, he was also asked to run the certification list on several occasions by the Presiding Judges of the Division.

In 2013 Judge Fisher was assigned to the Probate & Tax Division, and earlier this year he was appointed Deputy Presiding Judge. The Probate & Tax Division has the fastest-growing caseload of any Division in Superior Court due to demographic changes in the community and a greater awareness of the community's need to help those suffering from mental illness. As the Deputy Presiding Judge, Judge Fisher carries a sizeable caseload, but he also has become immersed in the administrative work of the Division. He has joined the Tax Rules Advisory Committee, and he participated as a member of the Probate Fiduciary Panel Selection Committee which recently completed the first revision of the Fiduciary Panel in several years. He will also chair a committee to study the payment practices for Fiduciary Panel members appointed in intervention and estate cases.

Judge Fisher has also made significant contributions to the Superior Court by serving on various Court Committees in addition to those mentioned above. He has been Chair of the CJA Continuing Legal Education Committee since 2001, and as Chair he oversees compliance by CJA Panel Members with the annual requirement of completing 8 hours of CLE classes related to the practice of criminal law. He has served on the Criminal Jury Instructions Committee since

2011, the Civil Jury Instructions Committee since 2013, and he was recently appointed to the Superior Court Rules Committee.

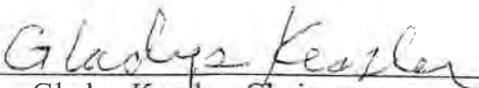
Judge Fisher has participated extensively in other projects and activities designed to further the administration of justice; he has been affiliated with the D.C. Law Students in Court Program for nearly 20 years, training and supervising third-year law students who were permitted to practice law before the Superior Court; teaching trial advocacy at Georgetown University Law Center since 1984; conducting Evidence training with a judicial colleague for all new Associate and Magistrate Judges since 2001, and for the entire Court since 2013; and conducting Evidence and Criminal Law training for Bar organizations and the Office of the Attorney General. Judge Fisher is to be applauded for his leadership and continuing efforts in this area.

The Commission also notes that in 2001 Judge Fisher was the recipient of the Lever Award from the D.C. Law Students in Court Program in recognition of his work promoting the quality of criminal defense representation for indigent citizens in the District of Columbia.

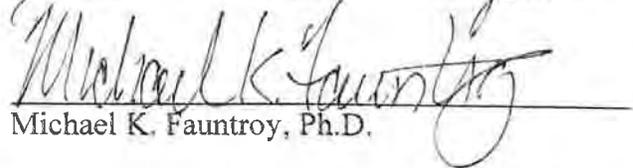
For the foregoing reasons, and based upon the data assembled, the Commission is pleased to report that it unanimously finds Judge Gerald I. Fisher well qualified for reappointment. His work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and most notably his demeanor have been exceptional and his performance has reflected credit on the judicial system. His term shall be automatically extended for a full term of 15 years from January 15, 2016.

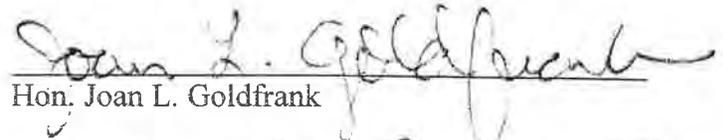
Respectfully submitted,

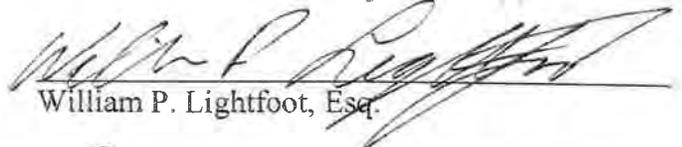
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION ON  
JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

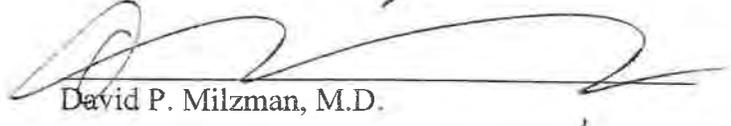
  
Hon. Gladys Kessler, Chairperson

  
Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq., Vice Chairperson

  
Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D.

  
Hon. Joan L. Goldfrank

  
William P. Lightfoot, Esq.

  
David P. Milzman, M.D.

  
Anthony T. Pierce, Esq.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

DETERMINATION AND UNDERTAKING

Re: The Honorable Yvonne Williams  
Associate Judge  
Superior Court of the District of Columbia

The case of U.S. vs. Christopher Lucas and Christina Lucas, Criminal Action Nos. 2013-CF3-2098 and 2014-CF3#-6253 came to the Commission's attention on July 22, 2015. The Commission initiated an investigation which included a review of relevant Court documents that focused on the colloquy and actions of Judge Yvonne Williams during a sentencing hearing on June 29, 2015, and a post sentencing hearing on July 15, 2015.

The Commission met with Judge Williams, discussed the facts, and listened to her reasons and explanations for her conduct.

The Commission's investigation revealed that during the hearing on June 29, 2015, Judge Williams sentenced two defendants, Christopher Lucas and Christina Lucas. Subsequent to the hearing's adjournment the Judge, reduced the sentence for Christina Lucas without notifying counsel for the defendant or the government. The Judge then summoned the parties to appear for a hearing on July 15, 2015, some two weeks later, to explain her reasons for changing Ms. Lucas's sentence. During the hearing Judge Williams advised the parties of her decision concerning Ms. Lucas, and then provided her rationale for the reduction in sentence. Counsel noted that the change in sentence was done outside the presence of the defendant and the government and without giving the parties any opportunity to brief the issue or for the victim to address the change. The Judge, in response, stated that the change in sentence was on the record. However, Judge Williams' sentencing modification took place after the original sentencing hearing concluded. The Judge directed the courtroom clerk to change the judgment and commitment Order to reduce the original sentence for Ms. Lucas. While this modification may have been captured on the automatic recording system in the courtroom, it was not "on the record" because it was not done in the presence of the parties in the Lucas case.

At the conclusion of the July 15, 2015, hearing the parties sought to brief the issues related to Ms. Lucas's sentencing modification. Judge Williams granted their request. On July 29 2015, the government filed a Motion to Reconsider Sentence and on August 3, 2015, Ms. Lucas filed her Opposition. On August 3, 2015, Judge Williams granted the government's Motion, reversed the sentencing reduction and recused herself from further proceedings in the case. The former action is reflected in the docket entry of the following day with the notation of the filing of an amended judgment and commitment Order. Thus, granting the government's motion, Judge Williams reversed the reduction of the sentence originally imposed on Ms. Lucas.

The Commission therefore concludes that Judge Williams' conduct violated Canon 1, Rule 1.2 in that her modification of the sentence outside the presence of the parties erodes public confidence in the judiciary, and Canon 2, Rule 2.6 (A) of the 2012 Code of Judicial Conduct as adopted by the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration of the District of Columbia Courts which read as follows:

Canon 1, Rule 1.2:

"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."

Canon 2, Rule 2.6(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."

Judge Williams accepts the Commission's determinations and conclusions expressed above and recognizes that her conduct was inappropriate and a violation of the applicable Canons and Rules of the Code of Judicial Conduct. Judge Williams assures the Commission that her conduct henceforth will strictly follow and adhere to the standards prescribed by the Code.

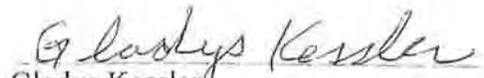
The Commission makes this document public with the agreement of Judge Williams.



Yvonne Williams  
Associate Judge  
Superior Court of the District of Columbia

Date: 1/20/16

For The Commission:

  
Gladys Kessler  
Chairperson

Date: Jan. 27, 2016

**APPENDIX B**  
**GOVERNING PROVISIONS**



**STATUTE CREATING THE COMMISSION  
D.C. CODE TITLE 11 §11-1521**

**§ 11-1521. Establishment of Commission.**

There shall be a District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (hereafter in this subchapter referred to as the “Commission”). The Commission shall have power to suspend, retire, or remove a judge of a District of Columbia court, as provided in this subchapter.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 492, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111.)

**§ 11-1522. Membership.**

(a) The Commission shall consist of five members appointed as follows:

(1) The President of the United States shall appoint three members of the Commission. Of the members appointed by the President –

(A) at least one member must be a member of the District of Columbia bar who has been actively engaged in the practice of law in the District of Columbia for at least five of the ten years immediately before appointment; and

(B) at least two members must be residents of the District of Columbia.

(2) The Commissioner [Mayor] of the District of Columbia shall appoint one member of the Commission. The member appointed by the Commissioner [Mayor] must be a resident of the District of Columbia and not an attorney.

(3) The chief judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia shall appoint one member of the Commission. The member appointed by the chief judge shall be an active or retired Federal judge serving in the District of Columbia.

The President shall designate as Chair of the Commission one of the members appointed pursuant to paragraph (1) who is a member of the District of Columbia bar who has been actively engaged in the practice of law in the District of Columbia for at least five of the ten years before the member's appointment.

(b) There shall be three alternate members of the Commission, who shall serve as members pursuant to rules adopted by the Commission. The alternate members shall be appointed as follows:

(1) The President shall appoint one alternate member, who shall be a resident of the District of Columbia and a member of the bar of the District of Columbia who has been actively engaged in the practice of law in the District of Columbia for at least five of the ten years immediately before appointment.

(2) The Commissioner [Mayor] shall appoint one alternate member who shall be a resident of the District of Columbia and not an attorney.

(3) The chief judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia shall appoint one alternate member who shall be an active or retired Federal judge serving in the District of Columbia.

(c) No member or alternate member of the Commission shall be a member, officer, or employee of the legislative branch or of an executive or military department of the United States Government (listed in section 101 or 102 of title 5, United States Code); and no member or alternate member (other than a member or alternate member appointed by the chief judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia) shall be an officer or employee of the judicial branch of the United States Government. No member or alternate member of the

Commission shall be an officer or employee of the District of Columbia government (including its judicial branch).

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 492, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 1(b)(25)-(27), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 11-1523. Terms of office; vacancy; continuation of service by a member.**

(a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the term of office of members and alternate members of the Commission shall be six years.

(2) Of the members and alternate members first appointed to the Commission --

(A) one member and alternate member appointed by the President shall be appointed for a term of six years, one member appointed by the President shall be appointed for a term of four years, and one such member shall be appointed for a term of two years, as designated by the President at the time of appointment;

(B) the member and alternate member appointed by the chief judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia shall be appointed for a term of four years; and

(C) the member and alternate member appointed by the Commissioner [Mayor] of the District of Columbia shall be appointed for a term of two years.

(b) A member or alternate member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term of that member's predecessor shall serve only for the remainder of that term. Any vacancy on the Commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

(c) If approved by the Commission, a member may serve after the expiration of that member's term for purposes of participating until conclusion in a matter, relating to the suspension, retirement, or removal of a judge, begun before the expiration of that member's term. A member's successor may be appointed without regard to the member's continuation in service, but that member's successor may not participate in the matter for which the member's continuation in service was approved.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 493, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 1(b)(28), (29), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 11-1524. Compensation.**

Members of the Tenure Commission shall serve without compensation for services rendered in connection with their official duties on the Commission.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 493, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; Apr. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. [210], Pub. L. 104-134, § 133(a).)

**§ 11-1525. Operations; personnel; administrative services.**

(a) The Commission may make such rules and regulations for its operations as it may deem necessary, and such rules and regulations shall be effective on the date specified by the Commission. The District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act (D.C. Official Code, secs. 2-501 to 2-510) shall be applicable to the Commission only as provided by this subsection. For the purposes of the publication of rules and regulations, judicial notice, and the filing and compilation of rules, sections 5, 7, and 8 of that Act (D.C. Official code, secs. 2-504, 2-505, and 2-507), insofar as consistent with this subchapter, shall be applicable to the Commission; and for purposes of those sections, the Commission shall be deemed an independent agency as defined in

section 3(5) of that Act (D.C. Official Code, sec. 2-502). Nothing contained herein shall be construed to require prior public notice and hearings on the subject of rules adopted by the Commission.

(b) The Commission is authorized, without regard to the provisions governing appointment and classification of District of Columbia employees, to appoint and fix the compensation of, or to contract for, such officers, assistants, reporters, counsel, and other persons as may be necessary for the performance of its duties. It is authorized to obtain the services of medical and other experts in accordance with the provisions of section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, but at rates not to exceed the daily equivalent of the rate provided for GS-18 of the General Schedule.

(c) The District of Columbia is authorized to detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of its personnel to assist in carrying out the duties of the Commission.

(d) Financial and administrative services (including those related to budgeting and accounting, financial reporting, personnel, and procurement) shall be provided to the Commission by the District of Columbia, for which payment shall be made in advance, or by reimbursement, from funds of the Commission in such amounts as may be agreed upon by the Chair of the Commission and the District of Columbia government. Regulations of the District of Columbia for the administrative control of funds shall apply to funds appropriated to the Commission.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 493, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, § 1(b)(30), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 11-1526. Removal; involuntary retirement; proceedings.**

(a)(1) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be removed from office upon the filing in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by the Commission of an order of removal certifying the entry, in any court within the United States, of a final judgment of conviction of a crime which is punishable as a felony under Federal law or which would be a felony in the District of Columbia.

(2) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall also be removed from office upon affirmance of an appeal from an order of removal filed in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by the Commission (or upon expiration of the time within which such an appeal may be taken) after a determination by the Commission of –

(A) willful misconduct in office,

(B) willful and persistent failure to perform judicial duties, or

(C) any other conduct which is prejudicial to the administration of justice or which brings the judicial office into disrepute.

(b) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be involuntarily retired from office when (1) the Commission determines that the judge suffers from a mental or physical disability (including habitual intemperance) which is or is likely to become permanent and which prevents, or seriously interferes with, the proper performance of the judge's judicial duties, and (2) the Commission files in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals an order of involuntary retirement and the order is affirmed on appeal or the time within which an appeal may be taken from the order has expired.

(c)(1) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be suspended, without salary –

(A) upon --

(i) proof of conviction of a crime referred to in subsection (a)(1) which has not become final, or

(ii) the filing of an order of removal under subsection (a)(2) which has not become final; and

(B) upon the filing by the Commission of an order of suspension in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Suspension under this paragraph shall continue until termination of all appeals. If the conviction is reversed or the order of removal is set aside, the judge shall be reinstated and shall recover salary and all rights and privileges pertaining to the judge's office.

(2) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be suspended from all judicial duties, with such retirement salary as the judge may be entitled to pursuant to subchapter III of this chapter, upon the filing by the Commission of an order of involuntary retirement under subsection (b) in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Suspension shall continue until termination of all appeals. If the order of involuntary retirement is set aside, the judge shall be reinstated and shall recover the judge's judicial salary less any retirement salary received and shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of office.

(3) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be suspended from all or part of judicial duties, with salary, if the Commission, upon the concurrence of three members, (A) orders a hearing for the removal or retirement of the judge pursuant to this subchapter and determines that suspension is in the interest of the administration of justice, and (B) files an order of suspension in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. The suspension shall terminate as specified in the

order (which may be modified, as appropriate, by the Commission) but in no event later than the termination of all appeals.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 494, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 1(b)(31)-(35), 108 Stat. 713.)

### **§ 11-1527. Procedures.**

(a)(1) On its own initiative, or upon complaint or report of any person, formal or informal, the Commission may undertake an investigation of the conduct or health of any judge. After such investigation as it deems adequate, the Commission may terminate the investigation or it may order a hearing concerning the health or conduct of the judge. No order affecting the tenure of a judge based on grounds for removal set forth in section 11-1526(a)(2) or 11-1530(b)(3) shall be made except after a hearing as provided by this subchapter. Nothing in this subchapter shall preclude any informal contacts with the judge, or the chief judge of the court in which the judge serves, by the Commission, whether before or after a hearing is ordered, to discuss any matter related to its investigation.

(2) A judge whose conduct or health is to be the subject of a hearing by the Commission shall be given notice of such hearing and of the nature of the matters under inquiry not less than thirty days before the date on which the hearing is to be held. The judge shall be admitted to such hearing and to every subsequent hearing regarding the judge's conduct or health. The judge may be represented by counsel, offer evidence in his or her own behalf, and confront and cross-examine witnesses against the judge.

(3) Within ninety days after the adjournment of hearings, the Commission shall make findings of fact and a determination regarding the conduct or health of a judge who was

the subject of the hearing. The concurrence of at least four members shall be required for a determination of grounds for removal or retirement. Upon a determination of grounds for removal or retirement, the Commission shall file an appropriate order pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) of section 11-1526. On or before the date the order is filed, the Commission shall notify the judge, the chief judge of the court in which the judge serves, and the President of the United States.

(b) The Commission shall keep a record of any hearing on the conduct or health of a judge and one copy of such record shall be provided to the judge at the expense of the Commission.

(c)(1) In the conduct of investigations and hearings under this section the Commission may administer oaths, order and otherwise provide for the inspection of books and records, and issue subpoenas [subpoenas] for attendance of witnesses and the production of papers, books, accounts, documents, and testimony relevant to any such investigation or hearing. It may order a judge whose health is in issue to submit to a medical examination by a duly licensed physician designated by the Commission.

(2) Whenever a witness before the Commission refuses, on the basis of the witness's privilege against self-incrimination, to testify or produce books, papers, documents, records, recordings, or other materials, and the Commission determines that the testimony or production of evidence is necessary to the conduct of its proceedings, it may order the witness to testify or produce the evidence. The Commission may issue the order no earlier than ten days after the day on which it served the Attorney General with notice of its intention to issue the order. The witness may not refuse to comply with the order on the basis of the witness's privilege against self-incrimination, but no testimony or other information compelled under the order (or any information directly or indirectly

derived from the testimony or production of evidence) may be used against the witness in any criminal case, nor may it be used as a basis for subjecting the witness to any penalty or forfeiture contrary to constitutional right or privilege. No witness shall be exempt under this subsection from prosecution for perjury committed while giving testimony or producing evidence under compulsion as provided in this subsection.

(3) If any person refuses to attend, testify, or produce any writing or things required by a subpoena [subpoena] issued by the Commission, the Commission may petition the United States district court for the district in which the person may be found for an order compelling that person to attend and testify or produce the writings or things required by subpoena [subpoena]. The court shall order the person to appear before it at a specified time and place and then and there shall consider why that person has not attended, testified, or produced writings or things as required. A copy of the order shall be served upon that person. If it appears to the court that the subpoena [subpoena] was regularly issued, the court shall order the person to appear before the Commission at the time or place fixed in the order and to testify or produce the required writings or things. Failure to obey the order shall be punishable as contempt of court.

(4) In pending investigations or proceedings before it, the Commission may order the deposition of any person to be taken in such form and subject to such limitation as may be prescribed in the order. The Commission may file in the Superior Court a petition, stating generally, without identifying the judge, the nature of the pending matter, the name and residence of the person whose testimony is desired, and directions, if any, of the Commission requesting an order requiring the person to appear and testify before a designated officer. Upon the filing of the petition the Superior Court may order the

person to appear and testify. A subpoena [subpoena] for such deposition shall be issued by the clerk of the Superior Court and the deposition shall be taken and returned in the manner prescribed by law for civil actions.

(d) It shall be the duty of the United States marshals upon the request of the Commission to serve process and to execute all lawful orders of the Commission.

(e) Each witness, other than an officer or employee of the United States or the District of Columbia, shall receive for attendance the same fees, and all witnesses shall receive the allowances, prescribed by section 15-714 for witnesses in civil cases. The amount shall be paid by the Commission from funds appropriated to it.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 495, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 1(b)(36)-(41), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 11-1528. Privilege; confidentiality.**

(a)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the filing of papers with, and the giving of testimony before, the Commission shall be privileged. Subject to paragraph (2), hearings before the Commission, the record thereof, and materials and papers filed in connection with such hearings shall be confidential.

(2)(A) The judge whose conduct or health is the subject of any proceedings under this chapter may disclose or authorize the disclosure of any information under paragraph (1).

(B) With respect to a prosecution of a witness for perjury or on review of a decision of the Commission, the record of hearings before the Commission and all papers filed in connection with such hearing shall be disclosed to the extent required for such prosecution or review.

(C) Upon request, the Commission shall disclose, on a privileged and confidential basis, to the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission any information under paragraph (1) concerning any judge being considered by such nomination commission for elevation to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals or for chief judge of a District of Columbia court.

(b) If the Commission determines that no grounds for removal or involuntary retirement exist it shall notify the judge and inquire whether the judge desires the Commission to make available to the public information pertaining to the nature of its investigation, its hearings, findings, determinations, or any other fact related to its proceedings regarding the judge's health or conduct. Upon receipt of such request in writing from the judge, the Commission shall make such information available to the public.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 497, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3228, Pub. L. 99-573, § 11; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, § 1(b)(42), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 11-1529. Judicial review.**

(a) A judge aggrieved by an order of removal or retirement filed by the Commission pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) of section 11-1526 may seek judicial review thereof by filing notice of appeal with the Chief Justice of the United States. Notice of appeal shall be filed within 30 days of the filing of the order of the Commission in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

(b) Upon receipt of notice of appeal from an order of the Commission, the Chief Justice shall convene a special court consisting of three Federal judges designated from among active or retired judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

(c) The special court shall review the order of the Commission appealed from and, to the extent necessary to decision and when presented, shall decide all relevant questions of law and interpret constitutional and statutory provisions. Within 90 days after oral argument or submission on the briefs if oral argument is waived, the special court shall affirm or reverse the order of the Commission or remand the matter to the Commission for further proceedings.

(d) The special court shall hold unlawful and set aside a Commission order or determination found to be --

- (1) arbitrary, capricious, and abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law;
- (2) contrary to constitutional right, power, privilege, or immunity;
- (3) in excess of statutory jurisdiction, authority, or limitations, or short of statutory right;
- (4) without observance of procedure required by law; or
- (5) unsupported by substantial evidence.

In making the foregoing determinations, the special court shall review the whole record or those parts of it cited by the judge or the Commission, and shall take due account of the rule of prejudicial error.

(e) As appropriate and to the extent consistent with this chapter, the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure governing appeals in civil cases shall apply to appeals taken under this section.

(f) Decisions of the special court shall be final and conclusive.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 497, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111.)

**§ 11-1530. Financial statements.**

(a) Pursuant to such rules as the Commission shall promulgate, each judge of the District of Columbia courts shall, within one year following the date of enactment of the District of Columbia Court Reorganization Act of 1970 and at least annually thereafter, file with the Commission the following reports of the judge's personal financial interests:

(1) A report of the judge's income and the judge's spouse's income for the period covered by the report, the sources thereof, and the amount and nature of the income received from each such source.

(2) The name and address of each private foundation or eleemosynary institution, and of each business or professional corporation, firm, or enterprise in which the judge was an officer, director, proprietor, or partner during such period;

(3) The identity of each liability of \$5,000 or more owed by the judge or by the judge and the judge's spouse jointly at any time during such period.

(4) The source and value of all gifts in the aggregate amount or value of \$50 or more from any single source received by the judge during such period, except gifts from the judge's spouse or any of the judge's children or parents.

(5) The identity of each trust in which the judge held a beneficial interest having a value of \$10,000 or more at any time during such period, and in the case of any trust in which the judge held any beneficial interest during such period, the identity, if known, of each interest in real or personal property in which the trust held a beneficial interest having a value of \$10,000 or more at any time during such period. If the judge cannot obtain the identity of the trust interest, the judge shall request the trustee to report that information to the Commission in such manner as the Commission shall by rule prescribe.

(6) The identity of each interest in real or personal property having a value of \$10,000 or more which the judge owned at any time during such period.

(7) The amount or value and source of each honorarium of \$300 or more received by the judge during such period.

(8) The source and amount of all money, other than that received from the United States Government, received in the form of an expense account or as reimbursement for expenditures during such period.

(b)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection the content of any report filed under this section shall not be open to inspection by anyone other than (A) the person filing the report, (B) authorized members, alternate members, or staff of the Commission to determine if this section has been complied with or in connection with duties of the Commission under this subchapter, or (C) a special court convened under section 11-1529 to review a removal order of the Commission.

(2) Reports filed pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (7) of subsection (a) shall be made available for public inspection and copying promptly after filing and during the period they are kept by the Commission, and shall be kept by the Commission for not less than three years.

(3) The intentional failure by a judge of a District of Columbia court to file a report required by this section, or the filing of a fraudulent report, shall constitute willful misconduct in office and shall be grounds for removal from office under section 11-1526(a)(2).

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 498, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 1(b)(43)-(50), 108 Stat. 713.)



**STATUTE REESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION AND  
ENLARGING ITS JURISDICTION TO INCLUDE THE  
REAPPOINTMENT OF ASSOCIATE JUDGES  
D.C. CODE TITLE 1 §1-204.31(d)(1)**

**§ 1-204.31. Judicial powers**

(d)(1) There is established a District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (hereinafter referred to as the “Tenure Commission”). The Tenure Commission shall consist of seven members selected in accordance with the provisions of subsection (e). Such members shall serve for terms of six years, except that the member selected in accordance with subsection (e)(3)(A) shall serve for five years; of the members first selected in accordance with subsection (e)(3)(B), one member shall serve for three years and one member shall serve for six years; of the members first selected in accordance with subsection (e)(3)(C), one member shall serve for a term of three years and one member shall serve for five years; the member first selected in accordance with subsection (e)(3)(D) shall serve for six years; and the member first appointed in accordance with subsection (e)(3)(E) shall serve for six years. In making the respective first appointments according to subsections (e)(3)(B) and (e)(3)(C), the Mayor and the Board of Governors of the unified District of Columbia Bar shall designate, at the time of such appointments, which member shall serve for the shorter term and which member shall serve for the longer term.

(2) The Tenure Commission shall act only at meetings called by the Chairman or a majority of the Tenure Commission held after notice has been given of such meeting to all Tenure Commission members.

(3) The Tenure Commission shall choose annually, from among its members, a Chairman and such other officers as it may deem necessary. The Tenure Commission may adopt

such rules of procedures not inconsistent with this chapter as may be necessary to govern the business of the Tenure Commission.

(4) The District government shall furnish to the Tenure Commission, upon the request of the Tenure Commission, such records, information, services, and such other assistance and facilities as may be necessary to enable the Tenure Commission properly to perform its functions. Information so furnished shall be treated by the Tenure Commission as privileged and confidential.

(e)(1) No person may be appointed to the Tenure Commission unless such person --

(A) is a citizen of the United States;

(B) is a bona fide resident of the District and has maintained an actual place of abode in the District for at least ninety days immediately prior to appointment; and

(C) is not an officer or employee of the legislative branch or of an executive or military department or agency of the United States (listed in sections 101 and 102 of title 5 of the United States Code); and (except with respect to the person appointed or designated according to paragraph (3) (E)) is not an officer or employee of the judicial branch of the United States, or an officer or employee of the District government (including its judicial branch).

(2) Any vacancy on the Tenure Commission shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. Any person so appointed to fill a vacancy occurring other than upon the expiration of a prior term shall serve only for the remainder of the unexpired term of such person's predecessor.

(3) In addition to all other qualifications listed in this section, lawyer members of the Tenure Commission shall have the qualifications prescribed for persons appointed as judges of the District of Columbia courts. Members of the Tenure Commission shall be appointed as follows:

(A) One member shall be appointed by the President of the United States.

(B) Two members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors of the unified District of Columbia Bar, both of whom shall have been engaged in the practice of law in the District for at least five successive years preceding their appointment.

(C) Two members shall be appointed by the Mayor, one of whom shall not be a lawyer.

(D) One member shall be appointed by the Council, and shall not be a lawyer.

(E) One member shall be appointed by the chief judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, and such member shall be an active or retired Federal judge serving in the District.

No person may serve at the same time on both the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission and on the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure.

(f) Any member of the Tenure Commission who is an active or retired Federal judge shall serve without additional compensation. Other members shall receive the daily equivalent at the rate provided by grade 18 of the General Schedule, established under section 5332 of title 5 of the United States Code, while actually engaged in service for the Commission.

(g) The Tenure Commission shall have the power to suspend, retire, or remove a judge of a District of Columbia court as provided in § 1-204.32 and to make recommendations regarding

the appointment of senior judges of the District of Columbia courts as provided in § 11-1504. (Dec. 24, 1973, 87 Stat. 792, Pub. L. 93-198, title IV, § 431; Oct. 13, 1977, 91 Stat. 1155, Pub. L. 95-131, § 3(a); Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 3142, Pub. L. 98-598, § 2(b); Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3228, Pub. L. 99-573, § 4; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 2(b)(1), 2(b)(2), 2(b)(3), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 1-204.32. Removal, suspension, and involuntary retirement.**

(a)(1) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be removed from office upon the filing in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by the Tenure Commission of an order of removal certifying the entry, in any court within the United States, of a final judgment of conviction of a crime which is punishable as a felony under Federal law or which would be a felony in the District.

(2) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall also be removed from office upon affirmance of an appeal from an order of removal filed in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by the Tenure Commission (or upon expiration of the time within which such an appeal may be taken) after a determination by the Tenure Commission of--

(A) willful misconduct in office,

(B) willful and persistent failure to perform judicial duties, or

(C) any other conduct which is prejudicial to the administration of justice or which brings the judicial office into disrepute.

(b) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be involuntarily retired from office when (1) the Tenure Commission determines that the judge suffers from a mental or physical disability (including habitual intemperance) which is or is likely to become permanent and which prevents, or seriously interferes with, the proper performance of judicial duties, and (2) the Tenure

Commission files in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals an order of involuntary retirement and the order is affirmed on appeal or the time within which an appeal may be taken from the order has expired.

(c)(1) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be suspended, without salary --

(A) upon --

(i) proof of conviction of a crime referred to in subsection (a)(1) which has not become final, or

(ii) the filing of an order of removal under subsection (a)(2) which has not become final; and

(B) upon the filing by the Tenure Commission of an order of suspension in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Suspension under this paragraph shall continue until termination of all appeals. If the conviction is reversed or the order of removal is set aside, the judge shall be reinstated and shall recover any salary and all other rights and privileges of office.

(2) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be suspended from all judicial duties, with such retirement salary as the judge may be entitled, upon the filing by the Tenure Commission of an order of involuntary retirement under subsection (b) in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Suspension shall continue until termination of all appeals. If the order of involuntary retirement is set aside, the judge shall be reinstated and shall recover judicial salary less any retirement salary received and shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of office.

(3) A judge of a District of Columbia court shall be suspended from all or part of the judge's judicial duties, with salary, if the Tenure Commission, upon concurrence of five

members, (A) orders a hearing for the removal or retirement of the judge pursuant to this part and determines that such suspension is in the interest of the administration of justice, and (B) files an order of suspension in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. The suspension shall terminate as specified in the order (which may be modified, as appropriate, by the Tenure Commission) but in no event later than the termination of all appeals.

(Dec. 24, 1973, 87 Stat. 794, Pub. L. 93-198, title IV, § 432; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 2(b)(4), (5), 108 Stat. 713.)

**§ 1-204.33. Nomination and appointment of judges.**

(a) Except as provided in § 1-204.34(d)(1), the President shall nominate, from the list of persons recommended by the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission established under § 1-204.34, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint all judges of the District of Columbia courts.

(b) No person may be nominated or appointed a judge of a District of Columbia court unless the person --

(1) is a citizen of the United States;

(2) is an active member of the unified District of Columbia Bar and has been engaged in the active practice of law in the District for the five years immediately preceding the nomination or for such five years has been on the faculty of a law school in the District, or has been employed as a lawyer by the United States or the District of Columbia government;

(3) is a bona fide resident of the District of Columbia and has maintained an actual place of abode in the District for at least ninety days immediately prior to the nomination, and shall retain such residency while serving as such judge, except judges appointed prior to the effective date of this part who retain residency as required by § 11-1501(a) shall not be required to be residents of the District to be eligible for reappointment or to serve any term to which reappointed;

(4) is recommended to the President, for such nomination and appointment, by the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission; and

(5) has not served, within a period of two years prior to the nomination, as a member of the Tenure Commission or of the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission.

(c) Not less than six months prior to the expiration of the judge's term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of the term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this section. If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the declaring candidate's term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate's performance during the present term of office and the candidate's fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate

for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, the President shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

(Dec. 24, 1973, 87 Stat. 795, Pub. L. 93-198, title IV, § 433; Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3228, Pub. L. 99-573, §§ 12, 13; June 13, 1994, Pub. L. 103-266, §§ 2(b)(6), 2(b)(7), 2(b)(8), 108 Stat.713; Sept. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 2369, Pub. L. 104-194, § 131(b); Apr. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. 1321 [210], Pub. L. 104-134, § 133(b).)

**STATUTE ENLARGING THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION  
TO INCLUDE REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
RETIRED AND SENIOR JUDGES  
D.C. CODE TITLE 11 §11-1504**

**§ 11-1504. Services of retired judges.**

(a)(1) A judge, retired for reasons other than disability, who has been favorably recommended and appointed as a senior judge, in accordance with subsection (b), may perform such judicial duties as such senior judge is assigned and willing and able to undertake. A senior judge shall be subject to reappointment every four years, unless the Senior Judge has reached his or her seventy-fourth birthday, whereupon review shall be at least every two years, in accordance with subsection (b). Except as provided under this section, retired judges may not perform judicial duties in District of Columbia courts.

(2) At any time prior to or not later than one year after retirement, a judge may request recommendation from the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (hereinafter in this section referred to as the "Commission") to be appointed as a senior judge in accordance with this section; except that any retired judge shall have not less than 180 days from the effective date of this Act to file a request for an initial recommendation from the Commission.

(b)(1) A retired judge willing to perform judicial duties may request a recommendation as a senior judge from the Commission. Such judge shall submit to the Commission such information as the Commission considers necessary to a recommendation under this subsection.

(2) The Commission shall submit a written report of its recommendations and findings to the appropriate chief judge and the judge requesting appointment within 180 days of the date of the request for recommendation. The Commission, under such criteria as it

considers appropriate, shall make a favorable or unfavorable recommendation to the appropriate chief judge regarding an appointment as senior judge. The recommendation of the Commission shall be final.

(3) The appropriate chief judge shall notify the Commission and the judge requesting appointment of such chief judge's decision regarding appointment within 30 days after receipt of the Commission's recommendation and findings. The decision of such chief judge regarding such appointment shall be final.

(c) A judge may continue to perform judicial duties upon retirement, without appointment as a senior judge, until such judge's successor assumes office.

(d) A retired judge, actively performing judicial duties as of the date of enactment of the District of Columbia Retired Judge Service Act, may continue to perform such judicial duties as he or she may be willing and able to assume, subject to the approval of the appropriate chief judge, for a period not to exceed one year from the date of enactment of such Act, without appointment as a senior judge.

(July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 491, Pub. L. 91-358, title I, § 111; Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 3142, Pub. L. 98-598, § 2(a); Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3228, Pub. L. 99-573, §§ 14(a), (b).)

**APPENDIX C**  
**COMMISSION RULES**



COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

NOTICE OF FINAL RULEMAKING

The District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (the Commission) hereby amends its Rules, Title 28, D.C.M.R., Chapter 20. This amendment to the Commission's Rules is promulgated pursuant to D.C. Official Code, §11-1525(a)(2001) and §431(d)(3), of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, P.L. 93-198, but does not purport to restate all applicable procedural and substantive provisions of the pertinent statutes. The amended rule is §2001.7. It shall be effective immediately upon publication in the D.C. Register. D.C. Official Code §11-1525(a)(2001) provides that the Commission is an independent agency, therefore, prior public notice and hearings are not required on the subject of rules adopted by the Commission.

**2000                    COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**

- 2000.1            The Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (also referred to in this chapter as "the Commission") is established and shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of Pub. L. 91-368 (D.C. Code, §11-1521, et seq.).
- 2000.2            The Chairperson of the Commission shall be elected annually by the members of the Commission from among the members of the Commission.
- 2000.3            The Commission may select a Vice Chairperson and other officers as the Commission, from time to time, may deem appropriate.
- 2000.4            The Chairperson shall preside at each meeting of the Commission.
- 2000.5            Officers, special counsel, and other personnel who are selected by the Commission shall perform the duties assigned to them by the Commission.
- 2000.6            The Commission may retain medical or other experts to assist it.

**2001 TRANSACTION OF COMMISSION BUSINESS**

- 2001.1 The Commission shall act only at a meeting. The actions of the Commission may be implemented by any appropriate means directed by the Commission.
- 2001.2 Meetings of the Commission shall be held at times agreed upon by the members of the Commission, or upon call by the Chairperson, or by a majority of the members of the Commission and after notice to all members of the Commission.
- 2001.3 Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of the Commission. The minutes shall record the names of those present, the actions taken, and any other matters that the Commission may deem appropriate.
- 2001.4 A quorum for Commission action shall consist of four (4) members.
- 2001.5 Commission action shall be taken only upon concurrence of four (4) members; Provided, that the concurrence of five (5) members shall be required to suspend a judge from all or part of his or her judicial duties pursuant to §432(c)(3) of the Self-Government Act.
- 2001.6 The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Acting Chairperson, or a member designated by one of them may carry out the routine of Commission business (such as the granting of postponements pursuant to this chapter, authorization of preliminary inquiry into complaints or information regarding a judge's conduct or health, and authorization of informal and non-determinative communications with a judge or the judge's counsel).
- 2001.7 A member shall disqualify himself or herself from consideration of matters before the Commission in the following circumstances:
- (a) when involved as a litigant or an attorney in a proceeding pending before a judge who is both the subject of and is aware of a complaint before the Commission;
  - (b) when involved as a litigant or attorney in a proceeding pending before an associate judge seeking reappointment, a retiring judge requesting a favorable recommendation for appointment as a senior judge, or a senior judge seeking favorable recommendation for reappointment to senior status.

**2002                    PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND MEDICAL INFORMATION**

- 2002.1            At the Commission's request, a judge shall submit to a physical or mental examination by a physician designated by the Commission after consultation with the judge. The examination and report shall be made at the Commission's expense.
- 2002.2            The physician's report shall be given in writing to the Commission.
- 2002.3            At the Commission's request, a judge shall provide the Commission with all waivers and releases necessary to authorize the Commission to receive all medical records, reports, and information from any medical person, medical institution, or other facility regarding the judge's physical or mental condition.
- 2002.4            The failure of a judge to submit to a physical or mental examination or to provide waivers and releases required under this section may be considered by the Commission adversely to the judge.
- 2002.5            Copies of all medical records, reports, and information received by the Commission shall be provided to the judge at his or her request.

**2003                    FINANCIAL REPORTS**

- 2003.1            Each judge shall file with the Commission on or before the first (1st) day of June of each year, on forms provided by the Commission, the reports of personal financial interest required by D. C. Code, §11-1530 for the preceding calendar year.
- 2003.2            The Commission from time to time may require a judge to file pertinent supplemental information.

**2004                    COMPLAINTS**

- 2004.1            Subject to the confidentiality provisions of §2044, the Commission may receive information or a complaint from an individual or an organization regarding a judge's conduct or health.

**2005                    PRECEDENTS**

- 2005.1            The provisions of this section shall apply to determinations by the Commission of grounds for removal under §432(a)(2) of the Self-

Government Act, and to evaluations by the Commission of judges who are candidates for renomination.

2005.2 Each judge shall be deemed to be on notice of the following; Provided, that copies of the decisions, evaluations, reports, or communications have been filed by the Commission with the Chief Judge of each court:

- (a) The Commission's decisions in proceedings;
- (b) The Commission's evaluations of judges who have been candidates for re-nomination;
- (c) The annual reports of the Commission; and
- (d) Any communication by the Commission to either of the Chief Judges of the courts of the District of Columbia specifying that the judges are to take notice of the communication.

2005.3 Expressions by the Commission in the decisions, evaluations, and communications listed in §2005.2 shall be pertinent precedents to be taken into account by the Commission.

2005.4 Each judge shall be deemed to be on notice of provisions promulgated by the Advisory Committee on Judicial Activities of the Judicial Conference of the United States regarding the Code of Judicial Conduct for United States Judges.

2005.5 Insofar as the opinions of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Activities deal with provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct that are similar to requirements applicable to judges of District of Columbia courts, the Commission shall regard them as persuasive.

**§§2006 – 2009: RESERVED**

**2010 INVESTIGATIONS**

2010.1 The Commission may investigate to determine whether a proceeding should be instituted on charges of misconduct, failure to perform judicial duties, or disability, upon receiving information regarding the following by complaint or otherwise:

- (a) That a judge may have been guilty of willful misconduct in office or willful and persistent failure to perform his or her judicial duties; or

- (b) That a judge engaged in other conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice or which brings the judicial office into disrepute; or
  - (c) That a judge may have a mental or physical disability (including habitual intemperance) which is or is likely to become permanent and which prevents, or seriously interferes with, the proper performance of his or her judicial duties.
- 2010.2 The investigation may be carried out in a manner that the Commission deems appropriate, including the taking of evidence at Commission meetings or by deposition.
- 2010.3
- (a) A respondent judge shall cooperate with the Commission in the course of its investigation and shall, within such reasonable time as the Commission may require, respond to any inquiry concerning the conduct of the judge, whether the questioned conduct occurred during the course of a concluded case or matter, a pending case or matter or in an extrajudicial context. The failure or refusal of the judge to respond may be considered a failure to cooperate.
  - (b) The failure or refusal of a judge to cooperate in an investigation, or the use of dilatory practices, frivolous or unfounded responses or argument, or other uncooperative behavior may be considered a violation of Canon 1 of the Code of Judicial Conduct and, therefore, an independent ground for disciplinary action.
- 2010.4 After investigation, if the Commission determines that a proceeding should not be instituted, the Commission shall so inform the judge if he or she was previously informed of the pendency of the complaint by either the complainant or the Commission and shall give notice to the complainant either that there is insufficient cause to proceed or that the complaint poses a legal issue over which the Commission has no jurisdiction, as appropriate.
- 2011 NOTICE OF A PROCEEDING**
- 2011.1 If, after investigation, the Commission determines that a proceeding is warranted, the Commission, except for good reason, shall notify the judge of its determination.
- 2011.2 If immediately requested by a judge who has been notified under §2011.1, the Commission, or a member of the Commission, or a special counsel

may, if the circumstances warrant, confer with the judge for the purpose of considering whether the matter may be disposed of without a proceeding.

2011.3 If the matter is disposed of without a proceeding, notice shall be given to the complainant that the matter has been resolved.

2011.4 If notification under §2011.1 is not given or, if given, if a disposition without a proceeding does not result, the Commission shall issue a written notice to the judge advising him or her of the institution of a proceeding to inquire into the charges.

2011.5 Each proceeding shall be titled as follows:

BEFORE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE

Inquiry Concerning A Judge, No. \_\_\_\_\_

2011.6 The notice of proceeding shall specify concisely the charges and the alleged basis for the charges, and shall advise the judge of the following rights:

- (a) The right to counsel; and
- (b) The right to file a written answer to the notice within twenty (20) days after service of the notice.

2011.7 The notice shall be served by personal service upon the judge.

2011.8 If it appears to the Chairperson of the Commission upon affidavit that, after reasonable effort for a period of ten (10) days, personal service could not be made, service may be made upon the judge by mailing the notice by registered or certified mail, addressed to the judge at his or her chambers or at his or her last known residence.

**2012 OFFICIAL RECORD**

2012.1 The Commission shall keep a complete record of each proceeding.

**2013 ANSWER AND HEARING DATE**

2013.1 Within twenty (20) days after service of a notice of proceeding, the judge may file an answer with the Commission.

- 2013.2 Upon the filing of an answer, unless good reason to the contrary appears in the answer, or if no answer is filed within the time for its filing, the Commission shall order a hearing to be held before it concerning the matters specified in the notice of proceeding.
- 2013.3 The Commission shall set a time and place for the hearing and shall mail a notice of the hearing time and place to the judge by registered or certified mail addressed to the judge at his or her chambers at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set.
- 2013.4 The Chairperson may extend the time either for filing an answer or for the commencement of a hearing for periods not to exceed thirty (30) days in the aggregate.
- 2013.5 The notice of proceeding and the answer shall constitute the pleadings. No further pleadings or motions shall be filed.
- 2013.6 The judge shall include in the answer all procedural and substantive defenses and challenges which the judge desires the Commission to consider.
- 2013.7 The Commission may rule on the defenses and challenges at the outset of the hearing or may take them under advisement to be determined during, at the close of, or at a time subsequent to the hearing.

**2014 AMENDMENT OF NOTICE OF PROCEEDING**

- 2014.1 The Commission at any time prior to its final decision in a proceeding may amend the notice of proceeding to conform to proof or otherwise.
- 2014.2 The judge shall be given a reasonable time to answer an amendment and to present his or her defense against any matter charged in an amendment.

**2015 HEARINGS**

- 2015.1 At the time and place set for hearing, the Commission shall proceed with the hearing whether or not the judge has filed an answer or appears at the hearing.
- 2015.2 The failure of the judge to answer or to appear at the hearing shall not, standing alone, be taken as evidence of the truth of facts alleged to constitute grounds for removal or involuntary retirement.

- 2015.3 The hearing shall be held before the Commission.
- 2015.4 Evidence at a hearing shall be received only when a quorum of the Commission is present.
- 2015.5 A verbatim record of each hearing shall be kept.

**2016 PROCEDURAL RIGHTS OF JUDGES**

- 2016.1 In a proceeding the judge shall be admitted to all hearing sessions.
- 2016.2 A judge shall be given every reasonable opportunity to defend himself or herself against the charges, including the introduction of evidence, representation by counsel, and examination and cross-examination of witnesses.
- 2016.3 A judge shall have the right to the issuance of subpoenas for attendance of witnesses at the hearing to testify or produce material evidentiary matter.
- 2016.4 A copy of the hearing record of a proceeding shall be provided to the judge at the expense of the Commission.
- 2016.5 If it appears to the Commission at any time during a proceeding that the judge is not competent to act for himself or herself, the Commission shall seek the appointment of a guardian ad litem unless the judge has a legal representative who will act for him or her.
- 2016.6 The guardian ad litem or legal representative may exercise any right and privilege and make any defense for the judge with the same force and effect as if exercised or made by the judge, if he or she were competent. Whenever the provisions of this chapter provide for notice to the judge, that notice shall be given to the guardian ad litem or legal representative.

**2017 OATHS OR AFFIRMATIONS**

- 2017.1 Each witness who appears before the Commission in an investigation or proceeding shall swear or affirm to tell the truth and not to disclose the nature of the investigation or of the proceeding or the identity of the judge involved unless or until the matter is no longer confidential under the provisions of this chapter.
- 2017.2 The provisions of §2017.1 shall apply to witnesses at Commission meetings or testifying by deposition. Individuals interviewed by a

member of the Commission or its staff shall be requested to keep the matter confidential.

2017.3 Each member of the Commission shall be authorized to administer oaths or affirmations to all witnesses appearing before the Commission.

**2018 SUBPOENAS AND ORDERS FOR INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS**

2018.1 In aid of any investigation or proceeding, the Commission may order and otherwise provide for the inspection of papers, books, records, accounts, documents, transcriptions, and other physical things, and may issue subpoenas for attendance of witnesses and for the production of papers, books, records, accounts, transcriptions, documents, or other physical things, and testimony.

2018.2 Whenever a person fails to appear to testify or to produce any papers, books, records, accounts, documents, transcriptions, or other physical things, as required by a subpoena issued by the Commission, the Commission may petition the United States District Court for the district in which the person may be found for an order compelling him or her to attend, testify, or produce the writings or things required by subpoena, pursuant to D.C. Code, §11-1527(c)(3).

**2019 DEPOSITIONS**

2019.1 The Commission may order the deposition of any person in aid of any investigation or proceeding.

2019.2 The deposition shall be taken in the form prescribed by the Commission, and shall be subject to any limitations prescribed by the Commission.

2019.3 To compel a deposition, the Commission may petition the Superior Court of the District of Columbia requesting an order requiring a person to appear and testify and to produce papers, books, records, accounts, documents, transcriptions, or other physical things before a member of the Commission or a special counsel or other officer designated by the Commission.

2019.4 The petition to the Superior Court shall state, without identifying the judge, the general nature of the pending matter, the name and residence of the person whose testimony or other evidence is desired, and any special directions the Commission may prescribe.

2019.5 Depositions shall be taken and returned in the manner prescribed by law for civil actions.

**2020 GRANTS OF IMMUNITY**

2020.1 Whenever a witness refuses, on the basis of his or her privilege against self-incrimination, to testify or produce papers, books, records, accounts, documents, transcriptions, or other physical things and the Commission determines that his or her testimony, or production of evidence, is necessary, it may order the witness to testify or to produce the evidence under a grant of immunity against subsequent use of the testimony or evidence, as prescribed by D.C. Code, §11-1527(c)(2).

**2021 COMPENSATION OF WITNESSES**

2021.1 Each witness, other than an officer or employee of the United States or the District of Columbia, shall receive for his or her attendance the fees prescribed by D.C. Code, §15-714 for witnesses in civil cases.

2021.2 All witnesses shall receive the allowances prescribed by D.C. Code, §15-714 for witnesses in civil cases.

**2022 FINDINGS OF FACT AND DECISIONS**

2022.1 Within ninety (90) days after the conclusion of the hearing or the conclusion of any reopened hearing in a proceeding, the Commission shall make written findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a determination regarding the conduct or health of the judge.

2022.2 The findings, conclusions, and determination shall be set forth in an order, as the Commission deems appropriate. A copy of the order shall be sent to the judge and his or her counsel, if any.

2022.3 If the Commission determines that grounds for removal or involuntary retirement of the judge have been established and orders removal or retirement, the Commission shall file its decision, including a transcript of the entire record, with the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

2022.4 If the Commission determines that grounds for removal or involuntary retirement of the judge have been established, but that removal or retirement should not be ordered, it shall include in its decision a statement of reasons for not so ordering, and, as it deems appropriate under the circumstances, shall order that the record of the proceeding either shall be made public or shall remain confidential.

- 2022.5 If the record of the proceedings remains confidential under §2022.4, and if the judge within ten (10) days after a copy of the decision is sent to him or her requests that the record be made public, the Commission shall so order.
- 2022.6 If the record is to be made public, the Commission shall file its decision, including a transcript of the entire record, with the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.
- 2022.7 When a decision and transcript of the record are filed with the District of Columbia Court of Appeals pursuant to §§2022.3 or 2022.6, the Commission shall provide the judge with a copy of the entire record at the expense of the Commission except for those portions that it previously may have provided to him or her, and it shall notify the Chief Judge of the judge's court of its decision.
- 2022.8 If the Commission determines that grounds for removal or involuntary retirement of a judge have not been established, it shall ask the judge whether he or she desires the Commission to make public disclosure of information pertaining to the nature of its investigation, its hearing, findings, determination, or other facts related to its proceedings.
- 2022.9 If the judge, in writing, requests disclosure under §2022.8, the Commission shall make the information available to the public except for the identity of an informant or complainant other than a witness at the hearing.

**2023 CONVICTION OF A FELONY**

- 2023.1 The Commission shall not file in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals an order of removal certifying the entry of a judgment of a criminal conviction, as provided in §432(a)(1) of the Self-Government Act, without giving to the judge concerned at least ten (10) days notice of its intention to do so.

**§§2024 – 2029: RESERVED**

**2030 EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR RENOMINATION**

- 2030.1 Not less than six (6) months prior to the expiration of his or her term of office, a judge seeking reappointment shall file with the Commission a declaration in writing of candidacy for reappointment.

2030.2 Judges shall be urged to file the declaration well in advance of the six (6) month minimum, and shall, if possible, file the declaration nine (9) months prior to the expiration of his or her term.

2030.3 Not less than six (6) months prior to expiration of his or her term, the candidate shall submit to the Commission a written statement, including illustrative materials, reviewing the significant aspects of his or her judicial activities that the judge believes may be helpful to the Commission in its evaluation of his or her candidacy.

### **2031 EVALUATION STANDARDS**

2031.1 A judge declaring candidacy for reappointment shall be evaluated by the Commission through a review of the judge's performance and conduct during the judge's present term of office.

2031.2 The evaluation categories shall include the following:

- (a) Well Qualified – The candidate's work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional, and the candidate's performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system.
- (b) Qualified – The candidate satisfactorily performs the judicial function or, if there are negative traits, they are overcome by strong positive attributes.
- (c) Unqualified – The candidate is unfit for further judicial service.

### **2032 COMMUNICATIONS FROM INTERESTED PERSON**

2032.1 The lay public, the bar, court personnel, and other judges may communicate to the Commission, preferably in writing, any information they may have that is pertinent to the candidacy of a judge for renomination.

### **2033 INTERVIEWS WITH INFORMED PERSONS**

2033.1 Ordinarily the Commission shall interview the Chief Judge of the candidate's court.

2033.2 In addition, the Commission may seek pertinent information by interviews with others conducted by the full Commission, by one (1) or more members, or by a special counsel or others of its staff.

**2034                    DISCLOSURE OF TAX INFORMATION**

- 2034.1            At the Commission's request, the candidate shall execute all waivers and releases necessary for the Commission to secure tax information concerning him or her, including copies of tax returns.
- 2034.2            The failure of a candidate to provide the waivers and releases required under §2034.1 may be considered by the Commission adversely to the candidate.
- 2034.3            Copies of all records received from the taxing authorities shall be provided to the candidate.

**2035                    CONFERENCES WITH CANDIDATES**

- 2035.1            At the Commission's request, the candidate shall confer with the Commission in person and in private on reasonable notice.
- 2035.2            At the candidate's request, the Commission shall confer with him or her in person and in private on reasonable notice.
- 2035.3            At any conference with the candidate, the Commission may allow attendance by one (1) or more special counsel or others of its staff. The candidate may be accompanied by counsel.
- 2035.4            All members of the Commission shall endeavor to be present at any conference with a candidate, but the failure of a member to attend shall not prevent the Commission member from participating in the Commission's evaluation.
- 2035.5            If the Commission has information which, if uncontroverted, the Commission feels would raise a substantial doubt that the candidate is at least qualified, it shall inform the candidate of the nature of the questions raised.
- 2035.6            To the extent feasible, subject to the limitations of §§2004 and 2036, the Commission shall provide to the candidate in summary form the basis for doubt under §2035.5.
- 2035.7            Prior to concluding its evaluation, the Commission shall afford the candidate a reasonable opportunity to confer with it, in accordance with the provisions of §§2035.1 through 2035.4, regarding the doubt, and to submit to the Commission any material information not previously presented bearing on the candidacy.

**2036 EVALUATION REPORTS**

- 2036.1 The Commission shall prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the candidate's performance during his or her present term and his or her fitness for reappointment to another term, not less than sixty (60) days prior to the expiration of the candidate's term of office.
- 2036.2 The Commission's evaluation report to the President of the United States shall be furnished, simultaneously, to the candidate.
- 2036.3 The Commission's evaluation report shall be made public immediately after it has been furnished to the President and the candidate.

**2037 EVALUATION OF RETIRED JUDGES REQUESTING RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR JUDGES**

- 2037.1 At any time prior to or not later than one (1) year after retirement, a judge seeking favorable recommendation for appointment as a senior judge shall file with the Commission a request in writing for such recommendation. The term of such appointment shall be for a term of four (4) years unless the judge has reached his or her seventy-fourth birthday in which case the appointment shall be for a term of two (2) years.
- 2037.2 Contemporaneous with the filing of the request, such judge shall submit to the Commission a written statement, including illustrative materials, reviewing such significant aspects of his or her judicial activities as he or she believes may be helpful to the Commission in its evaluation of his or her request.
- 2037.3 A judge requesting recommendation for appointment as a senior judge not more than four (4) years subsequent to the date of his or her appointment or reappointment as a judge of a District of Columbia Court pursuant to §433 of the Self-Government Act shall submit a written statement as prescribed by §2037.2 but may limit the matters addressed in his or her statement to those judicial activities performed since the date of such appointment or reappointment.
- 2037.4 A retired judge who did not file a request for an initial recommendation from the Commission prior to April 29, 1985, and who is now willing to perform judicial duties shall file with the Commission not later than April 27, 1987, a request in writing for a recommendation for appointment as a senior judge and, contemporaneous with such request, shall submit a written statement, as prescribed by §2037.2.

- 2037.5 Not more than one hundred eighty (180) days nor less than ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of each term, a senior judge willing to continue to perform judicial duties shall file with the Commission a request in writing for recommendation for reappointment to an additional term.
- 2037.6 Contemporaneous with the filing of the request prescribed by §2037.5, such judge shall submit to the Commission a written statement reviewing such significant aspects of his or her judicial activities performed since the date of his or her last appointment or reappointment as he or she believes may be helpful to the Commission in its evaluation of his or her request.
- 2037.7 A judge who does not file a request within the time periods prescribed in §§2037.1, 2037.4 and 2037.5 shall not be eligible for appointment as a senior judge at any time thereafter, except for good cause shown.

**2038 PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND MEDICAL INFORMATION**

- 2038.1 A judge seeking favorable recommendation for appointment or reappointment as a senior judge shall, contemporaneous with his or her request, submit on a form provided by the Commission a report of an examination by a physician together with a statement of such physician which attests to the physical and mental fitness of the judge to perform judicial duties.
- 2038.2 When deemed appropriate by the Commission, a judge seeking favorable recommendation for appointment or reappointment to a term as a senior judge shall submit to a physical or mental examination by a physician designated by it after consultation with the judge. The physician's report shall be given in writing to the Commission. Such examination and report shall be at the Commission's expense.
- 2038.3 At the Commission's request, a judge required to submit to a medical examination as prescribed in §§2038.1 and 2038.2 shall provide the Commission with all waivers and releases necessary to authorize the Commission to receive all medical records, reports, and information from any medical person, medical institution or other facility regarding the judge's physical or mental condition.
- 2038.4 The failure of a judge to submit to a physical or mental examination or to provide waivers and releases as required by §§2038.1, 2038.2 and 2038.3 may be considered by the Commission adversely to the judge.
- 2038.5 Copies of all medical records, reports, and information received by the Commission shall be provided to the judge at his or her request.

**2039 RECOMMENDATION STANDARDS**

2039.1 A retired judge seeking a favorable recommendation for appointment or reappointment to a term as a senior judge shall be evaluated by the Commission through a review of the judge's physical and mental fitness and his or her ability to perform judicial duties.

2039.2 The recommendation standards are as follows:

- (a) Favorable – The judge is physically and mentally fit and able satisfactorily to perform judicial duties.
- (b) Unfavorable – The judge is unfit for further judicial service.

**2040 COMMUNICATIONS FROM INTERESTED PERSONS**

2040.1 The lay public, the bar, court personnel, and other judges are invited to communicate to the Commission, preferably in writing, any information they may have that is pertinent to a request for recommendation for appointment or reappointment as a senior judge.

**2041 INTERVIEWS WITH INFORMED PERSONS**

2041.1 The Commission shall interview the Chief Judge of the requesting judge's court.

2041.2 The Commission may seek pertinent information by interviews with others conducted by the full Commission, by one or more members, or by a special counsel or others of its staff.

**2042 CONFERENCES WITH THE CANDIDATE**

2042.1 At the Commission's request, the judge shall confer with it in person and in private on reasonable notice; and, at the judge's request, the Commission shall confer with the judge in person and in private on reasonable notice.

2042.2 At any such conference the Commission may allow attendance by one or more special counsel or others of its staff.

2042.3 The judge may be accompanied by counsel.

2042.4 All members of the Commission will endeavor to be present at any such conference, but the failure of a member to attend will not prevent his or her participation in the Commission's evaluation.

**2043 NOTICE OF SPECIAL CONCERN AND OPPORTUNITY TO CONFER**

2043.1 In the event the Commission has information which the Commission feels, if uncontroverted, would raise a substantial doubt that the judge is fit for further judicial service, it shall inform the judge of the nature of the questions raised and, to the extent feasible and subject to the limitation of §§2044.2 and 2044.3, the Commission shall provide to the judge in summary form the basis for doubt.

2043.2 Prior to concluding its evaluation the Commission shall afford the judge a reasonable opportunity to confer with it, in accordance with §2042.1, regarding the doubt, and to submit to the Commission any material information not previously presented bearing on the request.

**2044 CONFIDENTIALITY**

2044.1 Commission records shall not be available for public inspection, except the following;

- (a) Time and attendance data reported pursuant to the provisions of D.C. Code §§11-709 and 11-909; and
- (b) Financial data reported pursuant to the provisions of D.C. Code §§11-1530(a)(2) and (a)(7).

2044.2 The record of investigations, proceedings, evaluations, and recommendations conducted or made by the Commission, as well as all financial and medical information received by the Commission pursuant to this chapter, other than the financial data referred to in §2044.1, shall be confidential, except:

- (a) when disclosed, in the Commission's discretion or as provided by this chapter, to the judge who is the subject of the information, investigation, proceeding, evaluation, or recommendation; or
- (b) where the judge who is the subject of the information, investigation, proceeding, evaluation, or recommendation, consents to disclosure; or

- (c) when disclosed in a proceeding, or in a Commission decision in a proceeding; or
- (d) when disclosed in a Commission evaluation of a judge who is a candidate for reappointment, or to the President of the United States in connection therewith; or
- (e) when disclosed to the Chief Judge of a District of Columbia court in connection with a judge who has requested the Commission's recommendation for appointment as a senior judge; or
- (f) when disclosed, on a privileged and confidential basis, to the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission in response to a request concerning a judge whose elevation to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals or for Chief Judge of a District of Columbia court is being considered; or
- (g) when disclosed, to the extent required, on judicial review of a Commission decision or in the prosecution of a witness for perjury.

For purposes of this Rule, the record of an investigation, proceeding, evaluation, or recommendation shall include all papers filed or submitted and all information furnished to or considered by the Commission in connection therewith (including, but not limited to, the substance of any complaint by or communications with individuals or organizations, financial and medical information obtained pursuant to this chapter, depositions, grants of immunity, and the notice and transcript of proceedings, if any).

2044.3

Notwithstanding any provision of §2044.2, the identity of any individual or organization submitting a complaint, or furnishing information to the Commission in connection with an investigation, proceeding, evaluation of a candidacy for reappointment, or request for recommendation for appointment as a senior judge, shall not be disclosed to anyone, including the judge who is the subject of the complaint or information, except:

- (a) where the individual or organization consents to such disclosure; or
- (b) when disclosed in a proceeding where the individual or a person connected with the organization is called as a witness; or
- (c) when disclosed by the Commission to the President of the United States at his or her request when it concerns a judge evaluated by the Commission as "qualified" whose possible renomination the President is considering; or

- (d) when disclosed, upon request, on a privileged and confidential basis, to the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission, concerning a judge being considered by such Nomination Commission for elevation to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals or for Chief Judge of a District of Columbia Court; or
- (e) when disclosed, to the extent required, on judicial review of a Commission decision or in the prosecution of a witness for perjury.

2044.4 Hearings in proceedings shall be conducted in closed session, unless the judge who is the subject of the proceeding shall consent to make the hearing open to the public.

**2099 DEFINITIONS**

2099.1 When used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed:

Chairperson – The Chairperson of the Commission, or the Vice Chairperson or Acting Chairperson designated by the Commission when acting as Chairperson.

Evaluation – The process whereby the Commission, pursuant to §433(c) of the Self-Government Act, prepares and submits to the President of the United States a written report evaluating the performance and fitness of a candidate for reappointment to a District of Columbia court.

Investigation – an inquiry to determine whether a proceeding should be instituted.

Judge – a judge, senior judge, or retired judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals or of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Proceeding – a formal proceeding, initiated by a Notice of Proceeding, to hear and determine charges as to a judge's conduct or health pursuant to §432 (a)(2) or (b) of the Self-Government Act.

Recommendation – The process whereby the Commission, pursuant to D.C. Code, Title 11, §11-1504, prepares and submits a written report of its recommendation and findings to the chief judge of a District of Columbia court regarding the appointment of senior judges to the court.

Self-Government Act – the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act of 1973, Pub. L. 93-198.

Special Counsel – any member of the District of Columbia Bar retained by the Commission to assist it.

**APPENDIX D**

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS**



## PREFACE

The Code of Judicial Conduct of the District of Columbia was adopted by the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration of the District of Columbia Courts on November 15, 2011, with an effective date of January 1, 2012. The 2012 Code replaces the 1995 Code of Judicial Conduct.

The 2012 Code is based on the American Bar Association's 2007 Model Code of Judicial Conduct. At the request of the Chief Judges of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct reviewed the ABA Model Code to recommend whether (and, if so, with what modifications) it should be adopted by the District of Columbia Courts. In doing so, the Advisory Committee followed procedures similar to those followed in studying the ABA's 1990 Model Code, on which the now-superseded 1995 Code of Judicial Conduct for District of Columbia judges was based.

The Advisory Committee's review of the 2007 Model Code spanned three-and-a-half years, from mid-2007 through 2011. The Committee undertook a thorough comparison of the Model Code with the 1995 Code and considered the reasons for the various stylistic and substantive changes proposed by the ABA after extensive deliberations and public hearings. A guiding principle of the Committee's deliberations was to hew to the Model Code insofar as practicable to further consistency and ease of interpretation and implementation. As part of its line-by-line review, however, the Advisory Committee considered modifications that would be necessary or advisable to adapt the Model Code to the particular laws and circumstances of the District of Columbia. Following this review, the Committee prepared a draft Code based on the 2007 Model Code.

In May 2011, the Advisory Committee held meetings in both courts and sought and received comments on the proposed draft Code from all active and senior judges and magistrate judges of the District of Columbia Courts, and from the Auditor-Master. The Advisory Committee also solicited comments from the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure and the District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission. The comments garnered from these sources led the Advisory Committee to revise the draft Code in significant respects. The Advisory Committee then forwarded the draft to the Joint Committee, which directed that it be released for public comment. To that end, the draft was published to the courts and the public at large in various print and electronic media in September, with a request that any comments be submitted by October 31, 2011. Comments were received from sections of the District of Columbia Bar Association, the Access to Justice Commission, several legal services organizations, and one member of the public. After considering those comments, the Advisory Committee further revised the draft Code and recommended to the Joint Committee that it be approved. The Joint Committee accepted that recommendation on November 15, 2011.

**CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS  
2012**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Preamble</b> .....	112
<b>Scope</b> .....	113
<b>Terminology</b> .....	114
<b>Application</b> .....	117
I.    Applicability of This Code .....	117
II.   [Not Adopted] [Retired Judge Subject to Recall] .....	119
III.  [Not Adopted] [Continuing Part-Time Judge] .....	119
IV.  [Not Adopted] [Periodic Part-Time Judge] .....	119
V.   [Not Adopted] [Pro Tempore Part-Time Judge] .....	119
VI.  Time for Compliance .....	119
<b>Canon 1</b> .....	120
<b>A JUDGE SHALL UPHOLD AND PROMOTE THE INDEPENDENCE, INTEGRITY, AND IMPARTIALITY OF THE JUDICIARY, AND SHALL AVOID IMPROPRIETY AND THE APPEARANCE OF IMPROPRIETY.</b>	
Rule	
1.1  Compliance with the Law .....	120
1.2  Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary .....	120
1.3  Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office .....	121

**Canon 2** .....122

**A JUDGE SHALL PERFORM THE DUTIES OF JUDICIAL OFFICE IMPARTIALLY, COMPETENTLY, AND DILIGENTLY.**

Rule

2.1 Giving Precedence to the Duties of Judicial Office .....122

2.2 Impartiality and Fairness.....122

2.3 Bias, Prejudice, and Harassment.....123

2.4 External Influences on Judicial Conduct .....124

2.5 Competence, Diligence, and Cooperation .....124

2.6 Ensuring the Right to Be Heard .....125

2.7 Responsibility to Decide .....126

2.8 Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication with Jurors.....126

2.9 Ex Parte Communications.....127

2.10 Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases .....129

2.11 Disqualification.....130

2.12 Supervisory Duties.....132

2.13 Administrative Appointments.....133

2.14 Disability and Impairment .....133

2.15 Responding to Judicial and Lawyer Misconduct .....134

2.16 Cooperation with Disciplinary Authorities .....135

<b>Canon 3</b> .....	136
----------------------	-----

**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.....	136
3.2 Appearances before Governmental Bodies and Consultation with Government Officials .....	137
3.3 Testifying as a Character Witness.....	138
3.4 Appointments to Governmental Positions .....	138
3.5 Use of Nonpublic Information.....	138
3.6 Affiliation with Discriminatory Organizations.....	139
3.7 Participation in Educational, Religious, Charitable, Fraternal, or Civic Organizations and Activities.....	140
3.8 Appointments to Fiduciary Positions.....	142
3.9 Service as Arbitrator or Mediator .....	142
3.10 Practice of Law .....	143
3.11 Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities .....	143
3.12 Compensation for Extrajudicial Activities.....	144
3.13 Acceptance of Gifts, Loans, Bequests, Benefits, or Other Things of Value.....	145
3.14 Reimbursement of Expenses and Waivers of Fees or Charges.....	147
3.15 Reporting Requirements .....	149

<b>Canon 4</b> .....	150
----------------------	-----

**A JUDGE OR CANDIDATE FOR JUDICIAL OFFICE SHALL NOT ENGAGE IN POLITICAL OR CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY THAT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE INDEPENDENCE, INTEGRITY, OR IMPARTIALITY OF THE JUDICIARY.**

Rule

4.1 Political and Campaign Activities of Judges and Judicial Candidates in General.....	150
--	-----

4.2 [Not Adopted] [Political and Campaign Activities of Judicial Candidates in Public Elections.....	153
---	-----

4.3 Activities of Candidates for Appointive Judicial Office.....	153
--	-----

4.4 [Not Adopted] [Campaign Committees .....	154
--	-----

4.5 Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Nonjudicial Office .....	154
---	-----

<b>Appendix</b> .....	155
-----------------------	-----

Order creating Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct.....	156
--	-----

Resolution of November 15, 2011, adopting Code of Judicial Conduct for the District of Columbia Courts .....	160
---	-----

**CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT**  
**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS**  
**2012**

**Preamble**

[1] An independent, fair and impartial judiciary is indispensable to our system of justice. The United States legal system is based upon 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 and judicial candidates. It is not intended as an exhaustive guide for the conduct of judges and judicial candidates, who are governed in their judicial and personal conduct by general ethical standards as well as by the Code. The Code is intended, however, to provide guidance and assist judges in maintaining the highest standards of judicial and personal conduct, and to provide a basis for regulating their conduct through disciplinary agencies.

## Scope

[1] The Code of Judicial Conduct consists of four Canons, numbered Rules 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 or judicial candidate.

[2] The Canons state overarching principles of judicial ethics that all judges must observe. Although a judge may be disciplined 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 personal and professional discretion of the judge or candidate in question, and no disciplinary action should 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.

[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 consistent with constitutional requirements, statutes, other court rules, and decisional law, and with due regard for all relevant circumstances. The Rules should not be interpreted to impinge upon the essential independence of judges in making judicial decisions.

[6] Although the black letter of the Rules is binding and enforceable, it is not contemplated that every transgression will 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 upon 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 upon the judicial system or others.

[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

**The first time any term listed below is used in a Rule in its defined sense, it is followed by an asterisk (\*).**

**“Appropriate authority”** means the authority having responsibility for initiation of disciplinary process in connection with the violation to be reported. See Rules 2.14 and 2.15.

**“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 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 person to whom he or she is legally married. 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 and 2.11.

**“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, and 4.1.

**“Impending matter”** is a matter that is imminent or expected to occur in the near future. See Rules 2.9, 2.10, 3.13, and 4.1.

**“Impropriety”** includes conduct that violates the law, court rules, 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, and 3.13.

**“Judicial candidate”** means any person, including a sitting judge, who is seeking selection for or retention in judicial office. A person becomes a candidate for judicial office as soon as he or she makes a public announcement of candidacy, declares or files as a candidate with the appointment authority, authorizes or, where permitted, engages in solicitation or acceptance of support, or is nominated for appointment to office. See Rules 2.11, 4.1, and 4.3

**“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, 2.13, 2.15, 2.16, 3.6, and 4.1.

**“Law”** encompasses court rules as well as statutes, constitutional provisions, and decisional law. See Rules 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.6, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.4, 3.6, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 4.1, and 4.5.

**“Member of the candidate’s family”** means a spouse, domestic partner, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, or other relative or person with whom the candidate maintains a close familial relationship.

**“Member of the judge’s family”** means a spouse, domestic partner, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, or other relative or person with whom the judge maintains a close familial relationship. See Rules 3.7, 3.8, 3.10, and 3.11.

**“Member of a judge’s family residing in the judge’s household”** means any relative of a judge by blood or marriage, or a 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.

**“Nonpublic information”** means information that is not available to the public. Nonpublic information may include, but is not limited to, information that is sealed by statute or court order

or impounded or communicated in camera, and information offered in grand jury proceedings, presentencing reports, dependency cases, or psychiatric reports. See Rule 3.5.

**“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.

**“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 4.3.

**“Retired Judge”** means a former judge of the Superior Court or of the Court of Appeals who is no longer performing or eligible to perform judicial duties upon retirement, pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-1504 (2001). See Application Section I(B).

**“Senior Judge”** means a former active judge of the Superior Court or of the Court of Appeals who has retired from active service and has been favorably recommended by the Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure and appointed as senior judge by the appropriate chief judge, pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-1504 (a) and (b) (2001). See Application Section I(C) and (D).

**“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 the various Rules apply to a judge or judicial candidate.

### I. Applicability of This Code

**(A) All active and senior judges, judges who continue to serve pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-1504 (c) (2001), magistrate judges and the Auditor-Master shall comply with this Code except as provided below. Canon 4 applies also to judicial candidates.**

**(B) Retired Judge.\* A retired judge is not required to comply with this Code.**

**(C) Senior Judge.\* A senior judge:**

**(1) is not required to comply with Rules 3.4 (Appointments to Governmental Positions), 3.8(A) (Appointments to Fiduciary Positions), 3.9 (Service as Arbitrator or Mediator), 3.10 (Practice of Law), and 3.11(B) (Financial, Business or Remunerative Activities); and**

**(2) shall not practice law in the court on which the judge serves or in any court or administrative agency subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the court on which the judge serves, and shall not act as a lawyer in a proceeding in which the judge has served as a judge or in any other proceeding related thereto.**

**(D) Senior Judge, Inactive. For purposes of application of this code:**

**(1) A senior judge may declare himself or herself “inactive” from the date of initial appointment or reappointment as a senior judge, or at any time thereafter, by notifying the appointing chief judge and the Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure, in writing, of that decision before the inactive status is to take effect;**

**(2) While a senior judge is inactive pursuant to section (D)(1), he or she shall comply with section (C)(2) but shall not otherwise be required to comply with this code.**

**(3) A senior judge in inactive status may not perform judicial duties. An inactive senior judge may resume active senior judge status by furnishing evidence satisfactory to the Commission on Disabilities and Tenure, as well as to the chief judge of the court on which the judge serves, that the judge has discontinued all activities that would be ethically proscribed for an active senior judge.**

## Comment

[1] While a retired judge continues to serve as a judge pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-1504 (c) (2001), until the retired judge's successor assumes office, the judge shall fully comply with the Code. Thereafter, the retired judge, who by definition is not permitted to perform further judicial service, shall no longer be required to comply with this code unless he or she is appointed a senior judge, in which case the rules applicable to senior judges shall apply for as long as the appointment is in effect.

[2] When a person is a retired judge who no longer serves under D.C. Code § 11-1504 (c) (2001), or who has been a continuing part-time senior judge but is no longer under appointment as a continuing part-time senior judge, including a retired judge no longer subject to recall, that person may act as a lawyer in the District of Columbia in a proceeding in which he or she has served as a judge or in any other proceeding related thereto only with the express consent of all parties pursuant to Rule 1.12 (a) of the District of Columbia Rules of Professional Conduct. However, a person who is under appointment as a senior judge but has elected inactive senior judge status shall fully comply with section (C)(2), as more fully set forth in section (D).

[3] The exceptions under section (C)(1) making Rules 3.9 and 3.10 inapplicable and thereby permitting a senior judge to act as an arbitrator or mediator and to practice law are subject to Advisory Opinion No. 3 (June 25, 1992), "When Senior Judges May Act As Arbitrators," and Advisory Opinion No. 10 (March 28, 2002), "'Practice of Law' by Senior Judges," issued by the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct of the District of Columbia Courts.

[4] In accordance with the reporting requirements of Rule 3.15, senior judges shall file financial statements with the Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure as required by D.C. Code § 11-1530 (2001) and the regulations of such Commission.

[5] The creation of "Senior Judge, Inactive" status is intended to help meet a very important need: to encourage retiring judges to take senior status. Senior judges perform invaluable service to the Superior Court and the Court of Appeals, often handling regular calendars for substantial periods of time, as well as filling in for active judges who are temporarily absent. And yet some judges who retire may be unsure whether they want to remain available to serve from time to time as senior judges – with the attendant ethical restrictions on their other activities – or instead desire to embark on another career or on other activities that are incompatible with the ethical restrictions on senior judges.

The "Senior Judge, Inactive" category, therefore, is intended to provide an almost ethically unfettered opportunity for a retired judge, sooner or later, to embark on alternative career or activity explorations, without becoming forever barred thereafter from sitting as a senior judge. The inactive senior judge, however, like all senior judges, must comply with section (C)(2) precluding, among other things, the practice of law in any court on which the judge has served. See Advisory Opinion No. 10 (March 28, 2002), "'Practice of Law' by Senior Judges."

A practical reason for creating this inactive senior judge status is the fact that, according to D.C. Code § 11-1504 (2001), a retiring judge must apply for senior judge status within one year from retirement. The Commission on Disabilities and Tenure must act on the application within 180 days thereafter, and the appropriate chief judge must make a decision on the Commission's recommendation within 30 days after its receipt. Accordingly, a retiring judge must elect to pursue – and as a result must receive – senior judge status relatively soon after retirement or forever lose that opportunity. If inactive senior status is not available, therefore, a retiring judge will not be able to pursue a full range of options for a temporary alternative career or other activity, unless the judge elects not to seek senior judge status, with its ethical limitations. If, on the other hand, inactive senior status is available, a retiring judge will not have to choose between limiting temporary alternative career choices and electing senior status; the opportunity for beginning or resuming active senior judge status at an appropriate time will remain.

The judicial system of the District of Columbia will significantly benefit from the availability of as many active senior judges as possible. This goal is likely to be achieved, therefore, only if the inactive senior status – call it a sabbatical option – is permitted without significant limitation, as an incentive to retiring judges to seek senior status upon retirement.

**II. [Not Adopted] [Retired Judge Subject to Recall]**

**III. [Not Adopted] [Continuing Part-Time Judge]**

**IV. [Not Adopted] [Periodic Part-Time Judge]**

**V. [Not Adopted] [Pro Tempore Part-Time Judge]**

**VI. 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 practicable, but in no event later than one year after the Code becomes applicable to the judge.**

**Comment**

[1] 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.

## **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,\* including the Code of Judicial Conduct.**

### **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.**

#### **Comment**

[1] Public confidence in the judiciary is eroded by improper conduct and conduct that creates the appearance of impropriety. 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 or appears to compromise 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 should 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] Actual improprieties include violations of law, court rules or provisions of this Code. 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.

[6] A judge should initiate and participate in community outreach 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 abuse the prestige of judicial office to advance the personal or economic interests\* of the judge or others, or allow others to do so.**

#### **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 upon the judge's personal knowledge. The judge may use official letterhead if the judge indicates that the reference is personal and if there is no likelihood that the use of the letterhead would 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 Rule 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.**

#### **Comment**

[1] To ensure that judges are available to fulfill their judicial duties, judges must conduct their personal and extrajudicial activities to minimize the risk of conflicts that would result in frequent disqualification. See Canon 3.

[2] Although it is not a duty of judicial office unless prescribed by law, judges are encouraged to 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.\***

#### **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 litigants who do not have the assistance of counsel the opportunity to have their matters fairly heard. See Comment [1A] to Rule 2.6, which describes the judge's affirmative role in facilitating the ability of every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding to be 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 upon race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation, and shall not permit court staff, court officials, or others subject to the judge's direction and control to do so.**

**(C) A judge shall require lawyers in proceedings before the court to refrain from manifesting bias or prejudice, or engaging in harassment, based upon 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 paragraphs (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.**

#### **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 upon stereotypes; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; suggestions of connections between race, ethnicity, or nationality and crime; 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 paragraphs (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**

**(A) A judge shall not be swayed 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.**

**Comment**

[1] 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. Confidence in the judiciary is eroded if judicial decision making is perceived to be subject to 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.**

**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.**

#### **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.

[1A] The judge has an affirmative role in facilitating the ability of every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding to be fairly heard. Pursuant to Rule 2.2, the judge should not give self-represented litigants an unfair advantage or create an appearance of partiality to the reasonable person; however, in the interest of ensuring fairness and access to justice, judges should make reasonable accommodations that help litigants who are not represented by counsel to understand the proceedings and applicable procedural requirements, secure legal assistance, and be heard according to law. In some circumstances, particular accommodations for self-represented litigants may be required by decisional or other law. Steps judges may consider in facilitating the right to be heard include, but are not limited to, (1) providing brief information about the proceeding and evidentiary and foundational requirements, (2) asking neutral questions to elicit or clarify information, (3) modifying the traditional order of taking evidence, (4) refraining from using legal jargon, (5) explaining the basis for a ruling, and (6) making referrals to any resources available to assist the litigant in the preparation of the case.

[2] The judge plays an important role in overseeing the settlement of disputes, but should be careful that efforts to further settlement 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 upon an appropriate settlement practice for a case are (1) whether the parties have requested or voluntarily consented to a certain level of participation by the judge in settlement discussions, (2) whether the parties and their counsel are relatively sophisticated in legal matters, (3) whether the case will be tried by the judge or a jury, (4) whether the parties participate with their counsel in

settlement discussions, (5) whether any parties are unrepresented by counsel, and (6) 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.\***

#### **Comment**

[1] 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 upon 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) A judge shall not commend or criticize jurors for their verdict other than in a court order or opinion in a proceeding, but may express appreciation to jurors for their service to the judicial system and the community.**

## **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 should be careful not to discuss the merits of the case.

### **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 respond to the notice and to the 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 upon 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 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.**

### **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] This Rule applies to judges serving on therapeutic or problem-solving courts, including family treatment courts, drug courts, mental health courts, and community courts. Although judges of these non-traditional courts may assume a more interactive role with parties, treatment providers, and others than is usual for judges, they may not initiate, permit or consider ex parte communications unless expressly authorized to do so by law (including applicable court rules), as stated in Rule 2.9 (A)(5).

[4A] The Auditor-Master, to whom this rule also applies, may initiate, permit or consider ex parte communications, and may investigate facts, to the extent authorized by Rule 53 of the Superior Court Rules of Civil Procedure or other applicable court rule, or by any order of reference that the Auditor-Master is required to execute by D.C. Code § 11-1724 (2001).

[5] A judge may consult with other judges on pending matters, but must avoid ex parte discussions of a case with judges who have previously been 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 on-line databases and the Internet generally.

[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 paragraph (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 impair the fairness of a matter pending\* or impending\* in any court, or make any nonpublic 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 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 paragraphs (A) and (B).**

**(D) Notwithstanding the restrictions in paragraph (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.**

**(E) Subject to the requirements of paragraph (A), a judge may respond directly or through a third party to allegations in the media or elsewhere concerning the judge's conduct in a matter. A judge shall not discuss the rationale for a decision in a pending case unless the judge is relating what was already made part of the public record.**

#### **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.

[3] A judge may respond to criticism by reiterating without elaboration what is set forth in the public record in a case, including pleadings, documentary evidence, and the transcript of proceedings held in open court. Depending upon the circumstances, the judge should consider whether it may be preferable for a third party, rather than the judge, to respond or issue statements in connection with allegations concerning the judge's conduct in a matter.

### **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, wherever residing, 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) [Not Adopted]**

**(5) The judge, while a judge or a judicial candidate,\* 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.**

**(6) 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;**

**(c) was a material witness concerning the matter; or**

**(d) previously presided as a judge over the matter in another court.**

**(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 paragraph (A)(1), may disclose on the record the basis of the judge's disqualification and may ask the parties and their lawyers to consider, outside the presence of the judge and court personnel, whether to waive disqualification. If, following the disclosure, the parties and lawyers agree, without participation by the judge or court personnel, that the judge should not be disqualified, the judge may participate in the proceeding. The agreement shall be incorporated into the record of the proceeding.**

**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 paragraphs (A)(1) through (6) apply. For example, if a judge were in the process of negotiating for employment with a law firm, the judge would be disqualified from any matters in which that law firm appeared, unless the disqualification was waived by the parties after disclosure by the judge.

[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, or might be the only judge available in a matter requiring immediate judicial action, such as a hearing on probable cause or a temporary restraining order. 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 paragraph (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 paragraph (A)(2)(c), the judge's disqualification is required.

[5] A judge should disclose on the record information that the judge believes the parties or their lawyers might reasonably consider relevant to a possible motion for disqualification, even if the judge believes there is no basis for disqualification.

[6] [Not Adopted]

[7] The procedure described in Rule 2.11 (C) provides the parties an opportunity to proceed without delay if they wish to waive the judge's disqualification. To assure that consideration of the question of waiver is made independently of the judge, a judge must not solicit, seek or hear comment on possible waiver of the disqualification unless the lawyers jointly propose waiver after consultation as provided in the rule. A party may act through counsel if counsel represents on the record that the party has been consulted and consents. As a practical matter, a judge may wish to have all parties and their lawyers sign the waiver agreement.

### **Rule 2.12: Supervisory Duties**

**(A) A judge shall require court staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control to 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.**

#### **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 upon 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 administrative appointments, a judge:**

**(1) shall exercise the power of appointment impartially\* and on the basis of merit; and**

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

**(B) [Not Adopted]**

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

#### **Comment**

[1] Appointees of a judge include assigned counsel, officials such as referees, commissioners, special masters, receivers, and guardians, and personnel such as clerks, secretaries, and bailiffs. Consent by the parties to an appointment or an award of compensation does not relieve the judge of the obligation prescribed by paragraph (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.

[3] [Not Adopted]

### **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 a confidential referral to a lawyer or judicial assistance program.**

## Comment

[1] “Appropriate action” means action intended and reasonably likely to help the judge or lawyer in question address the problem and prevent harm to the justice system. Depending upon 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 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 upon 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.

### **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 inform 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 inform 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.**

## Comment

[1] Taking action to address known misconduct is a judge’s obligation. Paragraphs (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 paragraphs (C) and (D). 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. 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.**

#### **Comment**

[1] Cooperation with investigations and proceedings of judicial and lawyer discipline agencies, as required in paragraph (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\* or this Code. However, when engaging in extrajudicial activities, a judge shall not:**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **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 upon 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 invidious 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 upon 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:**

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

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

**(C) when the judge is acting pro se in a matter involving the judge's legal or economic interests, or when the judge is acting in a fiduciary\* capacity.**

#### **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(C), 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, judges must not refer to their judicial positions, 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.**

#### **Comment**

[1] A judge who, without being subpoenaed, 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.**

#### **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.

### **Rule 3.5: Use of Nonpublic Information**

**A judge shall not intentionally disclose or use nonpublic information\* acquired in a judicial capacity for any purpose unrelated to the judge's judicial duties.**

## **Comment**

[1] 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.

[2] This rule is not intended, however, to affect a judge's ability to act on information as necessary to protect the health or safety of the judge or a member of a judge's family, court personnel, or other judicial officers if consistent with other provisions of this Code.

### **Rule 3.6: Affiliation with Discriminatory Organizations**

**(A) A judge shall not hold membership in any organization that practices invidious discrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual orientation or engages in any discriminatory practice prohibited by the law of the District of Columbia.**

**(B) A judge shall not use the benefits or facilities of an organization if the judge knows\* or should know that the organization practices invidious discrimination on one or more of the bases identified in paragraph (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.**

## **Comment**

[1] A judge's public manifestation of approval of invidious discrimination on any basis gives rise to the appearance of impropriety and diminishes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary. A judge's membership in an organization that practices invidious discrimination creates the perception that the judge's impartiality is impaired.

[2] An organization is generally said to discriminate invidiously if it arbitrarily excludes from membership on the basis of race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual orientation persons who would otherwise be eligible for admission. Whether an organization practices invidious discrimination is a complex question to which judges should be attentive. The answer cannot be determined from a mere examination of an organization's current membership rolls, but rather, depends upon how the organization selects members, as well as other relevant factors, such as whether the organization is dedicated to the preservation of religious, ethnic, or cultural values of legitimate common interest to its members, or whether it is an intimate, purely private organization whose membership limitations could not constitutionally be prohibited.

[3] When a judge learns that an organization to which the judge belongs engages in invidious discrimination, the judge must resign immediately from the organization.

[4] A judge's membership in a religious organization as a lawful exercise of the freedom of religion is not a violation of this Rule.

[5] This Rule does not apply to national or state military service.

**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.**

### **Comment**

[1] The activities permitted by paragraph (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 upon a judge's independence, integrity, and impartiality. A judge should not accept an award or other recognition from an organization whose members frequently represent or are on the same side in litigation.

[3] Mere attendance at an event, whether or not the event serves a fund-raising purpose, does not constitute a violation of paragraph (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 public 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 public legal work, and participating in events recognizing lawyers who have done pro bono public 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.**

#### **Comment**

[1] 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.

[2] Judges are cautioned that, pursuant to D.C. Code § 20-303 (2001), a judge of "any court established under the laws of the United States" is prohibited from serving as a personal representative of a decedent's estate in the District of Columbia unless the judge is "the surviving spouse or domestic partner of the decedent or is related to the decedent within the third degree."

### **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.\* This rule does not prohibit a judge from performing judicial functions pursuant to military service.**

## **Comment**

[1] This Rule does not prohibit a judge from participating in arbitration, mediation, or settlement conferences performed as part of assigned 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.

[2] Advisory Opinion No. 3 (June 25, 1992) of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct addresses the circumstances under which Senior Judges may act as arbitrators.

### **Rule 3.10: Practice of Law**

**A judge shall not practice law. A judge may act pro se 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.**

## **Comment**

[1] A judge may act pro se 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, advisor, or employee of any business entity except that a judge may manage or participate in:**

**(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 paragraphs (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.**

**(D) A person to whom this Code becomes applicable shall comply with this Rule as soon as reasonably practicable, but in no event later than one year after the Code becomes applicable to the person.**

#### **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 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 this Code or other law\* unless such acceptance would appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's independence,\* integrity,\* or impartiality.\***

#### **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 the reporting requirements of Rule 3.15.

**Rule 3.13: Acceptance 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 paragraph (A), a judge may accept the following:**

**(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 upon 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;**

**(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;**

**(9) gifts incident to a public testimonial; or**

**(10) 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.**

### **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. This risk is especially high when the donor is a party or other person, including a lawyer, who has come or is likely to come before the judge, or whose interests have come or are likely to come before the judge. In such an instance, the acceptance will be appropriate only in rare circumstances, and only after the judge has determined under Rule 3.13 (A) that the receipt would not appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge's integrity, impartiality, or independence.

[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. Paragraph (B) (2) places no restrictions upon 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 upon 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 upon judges, and urge them to take these restrictions into account when making decisions about accepting such gifts or benefits.

[5] [Not Adopted]

[6] The acceptance of gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, or other things of value may be subject to reporting requirements as set forth in Rule 3.15, which requires compliance with D.C. Code § 11-1530 (2001) and the Rules of the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure.

[7] This Rule departs in two, related respects from Model Rule 3.13. First, Model Rule 3.13 divides things of value a judge may accept into two categories (in paragraphs (B) and (C)) depending on whether the judge must publicly report their acceptance, but as the preceding comment states, the duty publicly to report acceptance of things of value is set forth instead in Rule 3.15, which refers to disclosure obligations established in D.C. Code § 11-1530 (2001) and the Rules of the Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure. Second, although Model Rule 3.13 (C)(3) expressly permits a judge to accept "gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, or other things of value, if the source is a party or other person, including a lawyer, who has come or is likely to come before the judge, or whose interests have come or are likely to come before the judge," acceptance of gifts from such sources is subject to a public reporting requirement. Because D.C. Code § 11-1530 and the Rules of the Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure do not require public reporting of gifts from such sources, a District of Columbia judge should not accept them, except in rare circumstances, as provided in Comment [1]. Paragraph (B) of this Rule permits a judge to accept, unless prohibited by law or by paragraph (A), all other items set forth in Model Rule 3.13(B) and (C).

#### **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 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 report such acceptance as required by Rule 3.15.**

### **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 upon an assessment of all the circumstances. 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 judge shall comply with the requirements of D.C. Code § 11-1530 (2001) and the rules of the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure in reporting the amount and value of compensation received as permitted by Rule 3.12; gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, and other items of value received as permitted by Rule 3.13; and reimbursement and waivers or partial waivers of fees received as permitted by Rule 3.14.**

## Canon 4

**A JUDGE OR CANDIDATE FOR JUDICIAL OFFICE SHALL NOT ENGAGE IN POLITICAL OR CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY THAT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE INDEPENDENCE, INTEGRITY, OR IMPARTIALITY OF THE JUDICIARY.**

### **Rule 4.1: Political and Campaign Activities of Judges and Judicial Candidates in General**

**(A) Except as permitted by law,\* or by Rule 4.3, a judge or a judicial candidate\* 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) publicly identify himself or herself as a candidate of a political organization;**
- (7) seek, accept, or use endorsements from a political organization;**
- (8) [Not Adopted]**
- (9) [Not Adopted]**
- (10) use court staff, facilities, or other court resources in a campaign for judicial office;**
- (11) knowingly,\* or with reckless disregard for the truth, make any false or misleading statement;**
- (12) 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**

**(13) 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 or judicial candidate shall take reasonable measures to ensure that other persons do not undertake, on behalf of the judge or judicial candidate, any activities prohibited under paragraph (A).**

## **Comment**

### *General Considerations*

[1] A judge plays a role different from that of a legislator or executive branch official. Rather than making decisions based upon the expressed views or preferences of the electorate, a judge makes decisions based upon the law and the facts of every case. Therefore, in furtherance of this interest, judges and judicial candidates 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 upon the political and campaign activities of all judges and judicial candidates, taking into account the various methods of selecting judges.

[2] When a person becomes a judicial candidate, this Canon becomes applicable to his or her conduct.

[2A] The prohibition of paragraph (A)(10) on the use of court staff, facilities and other resources is subject to a rule of reason, see Scope [5], and permits incidental use. See Rule 3.1 (E).

### *Participation in Political Activities*

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

[4] Paragraphs (A)(2) and (A)(3) prohibit judges and judicial candidates 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. This Rule does not prohibit judges or judicial candidates from participating in the process of judicial selection by cooperating with appointing authorities and screening committees. See Rule 1.3, Comments [2] & [3].

[5] Although members of the families of judges and judicial candidates are free to engage in their own political activity, including running for public office, there is no “family exception” to the prohibition in paragraph (A)(3) against a judge or candidate publicly endorsing candidates for public office. A judge or judicial candidate 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 and judicial candidates 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.

[6] Judges and judicial candidates retain the right to participate in the political process as voters in both primary and general elections.

*Statements by Candidates for Judicial Office*

[7] Judicial candidates must be scrupulously fair and accurate in all statements. Paragraph (A)(11) obligates candidates 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.

[8] If a judicial candidate is the subject of false, misleading, or unfair allegations, the candidate may make a factually accurate response, as long as the candidate does not violate paragraphs (A) (12) or (A) (13). If the allegation was made publicly, the candidate may respond publicly.

[9] Subject to paragraph (A)(12), a judicial candidate is permitted to respond directly to false, misleading, or unfair allegations made against him or her, although the candidate should consider whether it is preferable for someone else to respond if the allegations relate to a pending case.

[10] Paragraph (A)(12) prohibits judicial candidates from making comments that might impair the fairness of pending or impending judicial proceedings. This provision does not restrict arguments or statements to the court or jury by a lawyer who is a judicial candidate, or 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.*

[11] [Not Adopted]

[12] Paragraph (A)(13) makes applicable to both judges and judicial candidates 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.

[13] The making of a pledge, promise, or commitment is not dependent upon, 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 candidate for judicial office 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.

[14] A judicial candidate 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 candidate 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.

[15] Judicial candidates 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. Paragraph (A)(13) does not specifically address responses to such inquiries. Depending upon the wording and format of such questionnaires, candidates' 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 Rule 2.10 (B) and paragraph (A)(13) of this Rule, therefore, candidates 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 if appointed. Candidates 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 successful candidate's independence or impartiality, or that it might lead to frequent disqualification. See Rule 2.11.

**Rule 4.2: [Not Adopted] [Political and Campaign Activities  
of Judicial Candidates in Public Elections]**

**Rule 4.3: Activities of Candidates for Appointive Judicial Office**

**A candidate for appointment to 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.**

## **Comment**

[1] When seeking support or endorsement, or when communicating directly with an appointing or confirming authority, a candidate for appointive judicial office 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)(13).

### **Rule 4.4: [Not Adopted] [Campaign Committees]**

### **Rule 4.5: Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Nonjudicial Office**

**(A) Upon becoming a candidate for a nonjudicial elective office, a judge shall resign from judicial office, unless permitted by law\* to continue to hold judicial office.**

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

## **Comment**

[1] In campaigns for nonjudicial 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 nonjudicial 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 nonjudicial elective 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 paragraph (A) ensures that a judge cannot use the judicial office to promote his or her candidacy, and prevents post-campaign retaliation from the judge in the event the judge is defeated in the election. When a judge is seeking appointive nonjudicial office, however, the dangers are not sufficient to warrant imposing the “resign to run” rule.

# Appendix



**District of Columbia Courts  
Joint Committee on Judicial Administration  
Washington, D. C. 20001**



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

**O R D E R**

Upon consideration of the proceedings before the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration on this 1st day of October, 1990, it is

**ORDERED that:**

An Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct (hereinafter "the Committee") is hereby created, which shall provide informal advice and formal advisory opinions to judges and judicial officers of the District of Columbia court system pursuant to the procedures contained in this order.

**I. MEMBERS:**

(A) The Committee shall consist of five members, appointed by the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration chosen from among the members of the judiciary of the District of Columbia courts. Three members will be chosen from the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and two members will be chosen from the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. The chair of the Committee shall be an appellate judge, to be designated by the chair of the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration. Each member shall serve a three year term, except for those members first appointed to the Committee. Initially, the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration shall appoint one member from the Court of Appeals to a four year term, two members, one from the Court of Appeals and one from the Superior Court, to three year terms, and two members, one from the Court of Appeals and one from the Superior Court, to two year terms so that subsequent appointments will be staggered.

(B) No member may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. If a vacancy occurs during a member's service, the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration shall appoint a new member who will complete the term of the member whose service was interrupted. A member shall serve until a successor is appointed.

**II. DUTIES:**

(A) A judge or judicial officer may direct a request to the Committee as to whether or not specified action, either

contemplated or proposed to be taken, would constitute a violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct for the District of Columbia. The Code is the American Bar Association Code of Judicial Conduct, as adopted by the Joint Committee. See 1973 Resolution of the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration, reprinted in full in Scott v. United States, 559 A.2d 745 (D.C. 1989) (appendix).

(1) A judge or judicial officer, seeking informal, unwritten advice, may direct such a request to any one or more members of the Committee as to whether or not specified action, either contemplated or proposed to be taken, would constitute a violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct for the District of Columbia.

(2) A judge or judicial officer seeking a formal, written advisory opinion, may direct such a request to the Committee as to whether or not specified action, either contemplated or proposed to be taken, would constitute a violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct for the District of Columbia.

(B) A request shall state in detail the facts involved, and specify the question sought to be answered. The request should, whenever possible, also include reference to any legal authority, such as canons of the American Bar Association Code of Judicial Conduct, or advisory opinions from this or any other jurisdiction, or decisions of the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure. If additional factual information is required in order to provide either informal, unwritten advice or a formal written opinion, it may be requested from the judge or judicial officer making the request.

(C) The Committee will not provide either informal, unwritten advice or a formal written opinion concerning the conduct of others or conduct which has already occurred, unless the conduct is of an ongoing nature.

III. PROCEDURES: The actions of the Committee shall conform to the following procedures:

(A) When a judge or judicial officer has made a request for informal, unwritten advice to any one or more members of the Committee, that member or members may respond orally. In responding informally, the Committee member or members may call the attention of the judge or judicial officer making the request to particular provisions of the American Bar Association Code of Judicial Conduct, as adopted by the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration, or advisory opinions for this or any other jurisdiction, or decisions of the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure. Moreover, such Committee member or members may present the substantive issue to the full

Committee for its consideration and issuance of a formal written opinion, if the issue is of continuing concern to the judiciary.

(B) When a judge or judicial officer has made a request for a formal, written, advisory opinion the Committee shall respond issuing a formal written opinion. A formal opinion shall be prepared in cases where a prior opinion does not answer the question presented in the request. Where it appears that an already existing opinion answers the question presented in the request, the Committee shall forward a copy of that opinion to the judge or judicial officer making the inquiry.

(C) The Committee shall not issue an opinion in a matter that is the subject of a pending disciplinary proceeding, unless the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure requests such an opinion.

(D) Opinions shall be limited to the facts stated in the request, and such supplemental facts provided at the Committee's request, if any, and shall include a statement indicating this limitation.

(E) Opinions shall be published and circulated to the members of the judiciary and judicial officers of the District of Columbia court system and the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure.

(F) In order to preserve confidentiality for the judges and judicial officers seeking advisory opinions, the opinions shall not name the judge or judicial officer or disclose the judge's or the judicial officer's identity in any other way.

(G) Written opinions will provide a body of guidance for the judges. Action in accordance with an advisory opinion may be considered by the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure as evidence of good faith in the course of any proceeding or investigation conducted by the Commission.

(H) The Committee shall develop appropriate procedures for the processing and consideration of both informal, unwritten advice and formal written advisory opinions.

#### IV. CODE REVIEW:

(A) The Committee may receive suggestions or proposals from the Board of Judges of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, the Board of Judges of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, any individual judge, judicial officer, or employee, the organized or voluntary Bar, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure, or the Committee may initiate its own proposals for necessary or advisable changes to the Code of Judicial Conduct. After

reviewing these suggestions, the Committee may submit its recommendations to the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for its consideration and action.

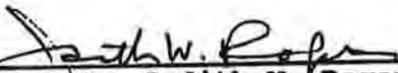
(B) The Committee and the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration shall confer at such times as either shall determine to be appropriate.

(C) The Committee shall confer from time to time with the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure when each shall determine such a meeting is appropriate.

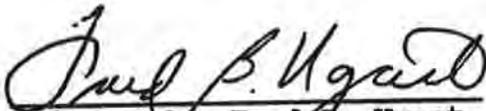
**V. STAFF SUPPORT:**

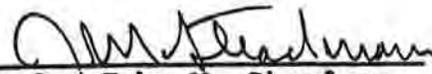
(A) The Executive Officer of the District of Columbia Courts shall provide administrative support for the Committee.

(B) The Executive Officer shall provide a complete set of the Committee's written opinions to each newly appointed judge and judicial officer of the District of Columbia court system. The Executive Officer shall maintain official copies of all written opinions of the Committee and make them available to all judicial officers and the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Judge Judith W. Rogers

District of Columbia Court of Appeals  
and Chair, Joint Committee on Judicial Administration

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Judge Fred B. Ugast  
Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge John M. Steadman  
District of Columbia  
Court of Appeals

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge George Herbert Goodrich  
Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge Gladys Kessler  
Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia

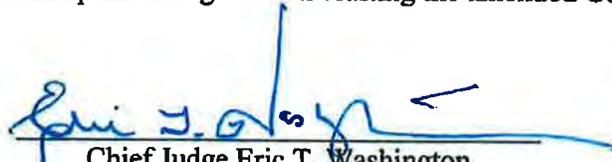


**District of Columbia Courts  
Joint Committee on Judicial Administration  
Washington, D.C. 20001-2131**

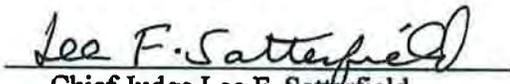


Resolution

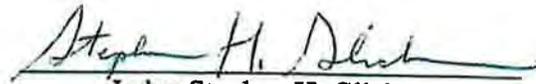
The Joint Committee on Judicial Administration hereby adopts on this day, November 15, 2011, the 2007 ABA Model Code of Judicial Conduct, as amended by the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct. The Code of Conduct as adopted shall be entitled "Code of Judicial Conduct for the District of Columbia Courts," and shall take effect on January 1, 2012. The Joint Committee wishes to express its gratitude to the Advisory Committee for its diligent and painstaking work in drafting the amended Code.



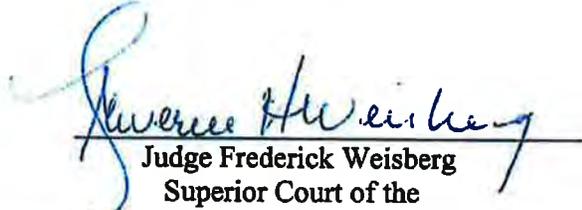
Chief Judge Eric T. Washington  
District of Columbia Court of Appeals and  
Chair, Joint Committee on Judicial Administration



Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield  
Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia



Judge Stephen H. Glickman  
District of Columbia  
Court of Appeals



Judge Frederick Weisberg  
Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia



Judge Rhonda Reid Winston  
Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia



Anne B. Wicks  
Executive Officer  
Secretary to the Joint Committee

**Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All**

**APPENDIX E**  
**COMPLAINT FORM**



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION  
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE  
Building A, Room 246 515 Fifth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363**

In response to your request, we are providing this form for your use in making a complaint about an Associate, Retired, or Senior Judge of the District of Columbia Courts.

**COMPLAINT ABOUT A JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS**

Confidential under D.C. Code §11-1528(a)

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Telephone: (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name And Telephone Of Your Attorney (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Name Of Judge(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Court Of Appeals [  ]

Superior Court [  ]

Case Name and Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Of Action Which Forms Basis Of This Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify exactly, in your own words, what action or behavior of the judge is the reason(s) of your complaint. Please provide relevant dates, the name of others present, and copies of any papers or pleadings which may assist the Commission in its review of your complaint. Use the back of this form and additional sheets if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>
Complaint No. _____
Reviewed _____
Investigation _____
Disposition _____

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**District of Columbia Commission on  
Judicial Disabilities and Tenure**

515 Fifth Street, N.W., Building A, Suite 246  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 727-1363

<http://www.cjdt.dc.gov>

