**Arkansas Code of Judicial Conduct**

**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 Arkansas 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 Arkansas 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 Arkansas 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**

“Aggregate,” in relation to contributions for a candidate, means not only contributions in cash or in kind made directly to a candidate’s campaign committee, but also all contributions made indirectly with the understanding that they will be used to support the election of a candidate or to oppose the election of the candidate’s opponent. See Rules 2.11 and 4.4.

“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 2.11, 2.13, 3.7, 4.1, and 4.4.

“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, 4.1, and 4.2.

“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 Canon 1 and Rule 1.2.

“Judicial candidate” means any person, including a sitting judge, who is seeking selection for or retention in judicial office by election or appointment. 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 election or appointment authority, authorizes or, where permitted, engages in solicitation or acceptance of contributions or support, or is nominated for election or appointment to office. See Rules 2.11, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.4.

“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, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 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.

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

“Political organization” means a political party or other group sponsored by or affiliated with a political party or candidate, the principal purpose of which is to further the election or appointment of candidates for political office. For purposes of this Code, the term does not include a judicial candidate’s campaign committee created as authorized by Rule 4.4. See Rules 4.1 and 4.2.

“Public election” includes primary and general elections. See Rules 4.2 and 4.4.

“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.

*Comment*

Regarding the term “judicial candidate,” in Arkansas, there are no retention elections, and selection by appointment arises in limited situations, such as to fill a newly created judgeship or a vacancy.

The Application section establishes when the various Rules apply to a judge or judicial candidate.

**I. Applicability of this Code**

1. The provisions of the Code apply to all full-time judges. Parts II through V of this section identify those provisions that apply to four distinct categories of part-time judges. The four categories of judicial service in other than a full-time capacity are necessarily defined in general terms because of the widely varying forms of judicial service. Canon 4 applies to judicial candidates.
2. A judge, within the meaning of this Code, is anyone who is authorized to perform judicial functions, including an officer such as a, magistrate, special master, referee, or member of the administrative law judiciary.

**III. Continuing Part–Time Judge**

A judge who serves repeatedly on a part-time basis by election or under a continuing appointment, including a retired judge subject to recall who is permitted to practice law (“continuing part-time judge”),

1. is not required to comply:
   1. with Rules 2.10(A) and 2.10(B) (Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases), except while serving as a judge; or
   2. at any time with Rules 3.4 (Appointments to Governmental Positions), 3.8 (Appointments to Fiduciary Positions), 3.9 (Service as Arbitrator or Mediator), 3.10 (Practice of Law), 3.11 (Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities), 3.14 (Reimbursement of Expenses and Waivers of Fees or Charges), 3.15 (Reporting Requirements); and
2. shall not practice law in the court on which the judge serves, shall not appear in any criminal matter in the county in 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.

**IV. Periodic Part–Time Judge**

A periodic part-time judge who serves or expects to serve repeatedly on a part-time basis, but under a separate appointment for each limited period of service or for each matter,

(A) is not required to comply:

1) with Rule 2.10 (Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases), except while serving as a judge; or

(2) at any time with Rules 3.4 (Appointments to Governmental Positions), 3.7 (Participation in Educational, Religious, Charitable, Fraternal, or Civic Organizations and Activities), 3.8 (Appointments to Fiduciary Positions), 3.9 (Service as Arbitrator or Mediator), 3.10 (Practice of Law), 3.11 (Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities), 3.13 (Acceptance and Reporting of Gifts, Loans, Bequests, Benefits, or Other Things of Value), 3.15 (Reporting Requirements), 4.1 (Political and Campaign Activities of Judges and Judicial Candidates in General), and 4.5 (Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Nonjudicial Office); and

B) shall not practice law in the court on which the judge serves or in any court 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.

**V. Pro Tempore Part–Time Judge**

A pro tempore part-time judge who serves or expects to serve once or only sporadically on a part-time basis under a separate appointment for each period of service or for each case heard is not required to comply:

* + 1. except while serving as a judge, with Rules 1.2 (Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary), 2.4 (External Influences on Judicial Conduct), 2.10 (Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases), or 3.2 (Appearances before Governmental Bodies and Consultation with Government Officials); or
    2. at any time with Rules 3.4 (Appointments to Governmental Positions), 3.6 (Affiliation with Discriminatory Organizations), 3.7 (Participation in Educational, Religious, Charitable, Fraternal, or Civic Organizations and Activities), 3.8 (Appointments to Fiduciary Positions), 3.9 (Service as Arbitrator or Mediator), 3.10 (Practice of Law), 3.11 (Financial, Business, or Remunerative Activities), 3.13 (Acceptance and Reporting of Gifts, Loans, Bequests, Benefits, or Other Things of Value), 3.15 (Reporting Requirements), 4.1 (Political and Campaign Activities of Judges and Judicial Candidates in General), and 4.5 (Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Nonjudicial Office).

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

**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 Arkansas Code of Judicial Conduct.

[**Rule 1.2: Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-12-promoting-confidence-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.

[**Rule 1.3: Avoiding Abuse of the Prestige of Judicial Office**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-13-avoiding-abuse-prestige-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.

**Canon 2: A Judge Shall Perform the Duties of Judicial Office Impartially, Completely, and Diligently.**

[**Rule 2.1: Giving Precedence to the Duties of Judicial Office**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-21-giving-precedence-duties-judicial-office)

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

[**Rule 2.2: Impartiality and Fairness**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-22-impartiality-and-fairness)

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

[**Rule 2.3: Bias, Prejudice, and Harassment**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-23-bias-prejudice-and-harassment)

1. A judge shall perform the duties of judicial office, including administrative duties, without bias or prejudice.
2. A judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, or engage in harassment, and shall not permit court staff, court officials, or others subject to the judge’s direction and control to do so.
3. A judge shall require lawyers in proceedings before the court to refrain from manifesting bias or prejudice, or engaging in harassment, against parties, witnesses, lawyers, or others.
4. The restrictions of paragraphs (B) and (C) do not preclude judges or lawyers from making legitimate reference to personal characteristics when they are relevant to an issue in a proceeding.

[**Rule 2.4: External Influences on Judicial Conduct**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-24-external-influences-judicial-conduct)

1. A judge shall not be swayed by public clamor or fear of criticism.
2. A judge shall not permit family, social, political, financial, or other interests or relationships to influence the judge’s judicial conduct or judgment.
3. 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.

[**Rule 2.5: Competence, Diligence, and Cooperation**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-25-competence-diligence-and-cooperation)

1. A judge shall perform judicial and administrative duties, competently and diligently.
2. A judge shall cooperate with other judges and court officials in the administration of court business.

[**Rule 2.6: Ensuring the Right to Be Heard**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-26-ensuring-right-be-heard)

1. 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.
2. 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.

[**Rule 2.7: Responsibility to Decide**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-27-responsibility-decide)

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

[**Rule 2.8: Decorum, Demeanor, and Communication With Jurors**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-28-decorum-demeanor-and-communication-jurors)

1. A judge shall require order and decorum in proceedings before the court.
2. 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.
3. A judge shall not commend or criticize jurors for their verdict other than in a court order or opinion in a proceeding.

[**Rule 2.9: Ex Parte Communications**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-29-ex-parte-communications)

1. 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:
2. When circumstances require it, ex parte communication for scheduling, administrative, or emergency purposes, which does not address substantive matters, is permitted, provided:
3. the judge reasonably believes that no party will gain a procedural, substantive, or

tactical advantage as a result of the ex parte communication; and

1. 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. [Reserved]
5. A judge may initiate, permit, or consider any ex parte communication when expressly authorized by law to do so.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

[**Rule 2.10: Judicial Statements on Pending and Impending Cases**](https://courts.arkansas.gov/rules-and-administrative-orders/court-rules/rule-210-judicial-statements-pending-and-impending-cases)

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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).
4. 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.
5. 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.

## Rule 2.11 - Disqualification

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

* 1. The judge has a personal bias or prejudice concerning a party or a party’s lawyer, or personal knowledge of facts that are in dispute in the proceeding.
  2. The judge knows that the judge, the judge’s spouse or domestic partner, or a person within the third degree of relationship to either of them, or the spouse or domestic partner of such a person is:

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

b) acting as a lawyer in the proceeding;

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

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

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

4) [Reserved]

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.

1. 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;

1. served in governmental employment, and in such capacity participated personally and
2. 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.

1. 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.

**Rule 2.12: Supervisory Duties**

A)

B) A judge with supervisory authority 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.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.

**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) [Reserved]

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

D) No judge shall employ a spouse or other relative unless it has been affirmatively demonstrated to the Arkansas Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission that it is impossible for the judge to hire any other qualified person to fill the position.

**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.

**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 Arkansas 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 Arkansas Rules of Professional Conduct shall take appropriate action.

**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.

**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:

1. participate in activities that will interfere with the proper performance of the judge’s judicial duties;
2. participate in activities that will lead to frequent disqualification of the judge;
3. participate in activities that would appear to a reasonable person to undermine the judge’s independence, integrity, or impartiality;
4. engage in conduct that would appear to a reasonable person to be coercive; or
5. make use of court premises, staff, stationery, equipment, or other resources, except for incidental use for activities that concern the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice, or unless such additional use is permitted by law.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Rule 3.6: Affiliation with Discriminatory Organizations**

A) A judge shall not hold membership in any organization that practices invidious discrimination.

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. 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.

**Rule 3.7: Participation In Educational, Religious, Charitable, Fraternal, Or Civic Organizations And Activities**

1. 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:
2. 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;
3. 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;
4. 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, as long as the solicitation cannot reasonably be perceived as coercive;
5. 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;
6. 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
7. serving as an officer, director, trustee, or nonlegal advisor of such an organization or entity, unless it is likely that the organization or entity:
8. will be engaged in proceedings that would ordinarily come before the judge; or
9. 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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;

1. lead to frequent disqualification of the judge;
2. 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.

**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.

**Rule 3.13: Acceptance And Reporting Of Gifts, Loans, Bequests, Benefits, Or Other Things Of Value**

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

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

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

2) gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, or other things of value from friends, relatives, or other persons, including lawyers, whose appearance or interest in a proceeding pending or impending before the judge would in any event require disqualification of the judge under Rule 2.11;

3) ordinary social hospitality;

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

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

6) scholarships, fellowships, and similar benefits or awards, if they are available to similarly situated persons who are not judges, based 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; or

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

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

1) gifts incident to a public testimonial;

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

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

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

3) 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.

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

**Rule 3.15: Reporting Requirements**

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

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

2) gifts and other things of value as permitted by Rule 3.13(C), and

3) reimbursement of expenses and waiver of fees or charges as permitted by Rule 3.14(A).

B) The scope of reporting, the time for reporting, the manner of reporting, and other issues shall be as determined by state law.

**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**

1. Except as permitted by law, or by Rules 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4, a judge or a judicial candidate shall not:
2. act as a leader in, or hold an office in, a political organization;
3. make speeches on behalf of a political organization;
4. publicly endorse or oppose a candidate for any public office;
5. solicit funds for, pay an assessment to, or make a contribution to a political organization or a candidate for public office;
6. [Reserved]
7. publicly identify himself or herself as a candidate of a political organization;
8. seek, accept, or use endorsements from a political organization;
9. personally solicit or accept campaign contributions other than through a campaign committee authorized by Rule 4.4;
10. use or permit the use of campaign contributions for the private benefit of the judge, the candidate, or others;
11. use court staff, facilities, or other court resources in a campaign for judicial office;
12. knowingly, or with reckless disregard for the truth, make any false or misleading statement;
13. 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
14. 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.
15. 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).

**Rule 4.2: Political and Campaign Activities of Judicial Candidates In Public Elections**

A) A judicial candidate in a public election shall:

1) act at all times in a manner consistent with the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary;

2) comply with all applicable election, election campaign, and election campaign fund-raising laws and regulations of this jurisdiction;

3) review and approve the content of all campaign statements and materials produced by the candidate or his or her campaign committee, as authorized by Rule 4.4, before their dissemination; and

4) take reasonable measures to ensure that other persons do not undertake on behalf of the candidate activities, other than those described in Rule 4.4, that the candidate is prohibited from doing by Rule 4.1.

B) A judicial candidate in a public election may, unless prohibited by law, and not earlier than 365 days before the first applicable election:

1) establish a campaign committee pursuant to the provisions of Rule 4.4;

2) speak on behalf of his or her candidacy through any medium, including but not limited to advertisements, websites, or other campaign literature;

3) [Reserved]

4) attend or purchase tickets for dinners or other events sponsored by a political organization;

5) seek, accept, or use endorsements from any person or organization other than a partisan political organization; and

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

A candidate for appointment to judicial office may:

1. communicate with the appointing or confirming authority, including any selection, screening, or nominating commission or similar agency; and
2. seek endorsements for the appointment from any person or organization other than a partisan political organization.

**Rule 4.4: Campaign Committees**

A) A judicial candidate subject to public election may establish a campaign committee to manage and conduct a campaign for the candidate, subject to the provisions of this Code. The candidate is responsible for ensuring that his or her campaign committee complies with applicable provisions of this Code and other applicable law.

B) A judicial candidate subject to public election shall direct his or her campaign committee:

1) to solicit and accept only such campaign contributions as are permitted by state law.

2) not to solicit or accept contributions for a candidate’s current campaign more than 180 days before the applicable election, nor more than 45 days after the last election in which the candidate participated; and

3) to comply with all applicable statutory requirements for disclosure and divestiture of campaign contributions.

C) Any campaign fund surplus shall be returned to the contributors or turned over to the State Treasurer as provided by law.

**Rule 4.5: Activities of Judges Who Become Candidates for Non–Judicial Office**

1. Upon becoming a candidate for a non–judicial elective office, a judge shall resign from judicial office, unless permitted by law to continue to hold judicial office.
2. Upon becoming a candidate for a non–judicial appointive office, a judge is not required to resign from judicial office, provided that the judge complies with the other provisions of this Code.