



### Judicial Ethics Advisory Committees by state

Links to web-sites at <https://www.ncsc.org/Topics/Judicial-Officers/Ethics/State-Links.aspx>

\*Also has disciplinary responsibilities

<b>Committee establishment</b>	<b>Types of opinions</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Effect of opinions in discipline cases</b>
<b>Alabama Judicial Inquiry Commission*</b> Commission Rule 17		9 members: 1 appellate judge; 2 circuit judges; 1 district judge; 2 members of the state bar; 3 non-lawyers	Admissible on behalf of judge to whom opinion is directed
<b>Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct*</b> Commission Rule 19	Informal verbal guidance by members and staff Written formal opinions by commission	9 members: 3 judges; 3 lawyers; 3 non-lawyers	Reliance on formal opinion is an absolute defense to disciplinary proceedings concerning the identical facts; if there are distinguishing facts, reliance is good faith defense. Informal opinions have no legal effect
<b>Arizona Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Supreme Court Rule 82	Informal opinions Formal opinions	9 members: 7 judges; 1 attorney; 1 designee of administrative office of the court	Reliance on formal opinion may be raised as defense
<b>Arkansas Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Created by Judicial Discipline & Disability Commission	Oral advice Advisory opinion	3 members: no more than 2 retired judges and 1 lawyer	Advisory only; not binding on Commission or Supreme Court. Compliance by requesting individual with written opinion is evidence of good faith; compliance with oral opinion is not evidence of good faith

<b>California Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Ethics</b> California Rules of Court, Rule 9.80(e)(1)	Formal written opinions Informal written opinions Oral advice	12 active or retired justices of a court of appeal or judges of superior court, including at least 1 justice from a court of appeal and 1 subordinate judicial officer employed full-time by a superior court	Advisory only
<b>California Judges Association Ethics Committee</b>		15 judges	Do not have the force of law
<b>Colorado Judicial Ethics Advisory Board</b> Chief Justice Directive 94-01	Advisory opinion Oral opinion	7 members: 4 judges; 1 lawyer; 1 law professor; 1 non-lawyer citizen	Advisory only; not binding. Compliance with written opinion considered evidence of good faith. Compliance with oral advice not evidence of good faith
<b>Connecticut Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> Supreme court rule	Formal or informal advisory opinions Emergency staff opinion	5 members: 4 judges or judge trial referees, 1 law profession	Advisory only; not binding
<b>Delaware Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Court on the Judiciary Rule 18		7 members: 1 judge from each of the courts of chancery, superior court, family court, court of common pleas, justice of the peace court	“A judge who has requested and relied upon an opinion shall be entitled to introduce that opinion as evidence that conduct conforming to the opinion is prima facie permissible pursuant to the Delaware Judges’ Code of Judicial Conduct.”
<b>Florida Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Supreme Court order	Has election practices subcommittee	12 members: 3 district court of appeals judges; 4 circuit court judges; 3 county court judges; 2 public members	Not binding; Judicial Qualifications Commission may, in its discretion, consider actions in accordance with an opinion as evidence of a good faith but no opinion issued to one judge shall be authority for conduct, or evidence of good faith, of another judge unless facts are identical

<p><b>Georgia Judicial Qualifications Commission*</b> Commission Rule 28, adopted by the supreme court</p>	<p>Informal opinion by staff Formal opinion by hearing panel</p>	<p>3 members: 1 judge; 1 non-lawyer; 1 lawyer</p>	<p>Informal opinion is not a defense to a complaint or binding on investigative panel, hearing panel, or Supreme Court, but action in accordance with and in reasonable reliance on written informal advisory opinion considered in mitigation of discipline. Compliance with approved or modified formal advisory opinion considered evidence of good faith “to the extent that the underlying facts are identical.” Compliance with and reasonable reliance on formal advisory opinion “not reviewed by the Supreme Court shall be considered in mitigation of discipline.”</p>
<p><b>Hawaii Commission on Judicial Conduct*</b> Supreme Court Rule 8.15</p>	<p>Informal opinion Formal opinion</p>	<p>7 members: 3 lawyers; 4 non-lawyers</p>	<p>Complete defense for judge to whom opinion was issued; mitigating factor for other judges who acted reasonably in reliance on opinion</p>
<p><b>Illinois Judicial Ethics Committee</b> State Bar Association, Chicago Bar Association, and Illinois Judges Association</p>	<p>Letter opinion Formal opinion</p>	<p>12 members: 6 judges from IJA; 3 lawyers from ISBA; 3 lawyers from CBA</p>	<p>Not binding</p>
<p><b>Indiana Commission on Judicial Qualifications*</b> Indiana constitution</p>		<p>7 members: chief justice is chair ex officio; 3 lawyers; 3 non-lawyers</p>	<p>Not binding on Supreme Court; Commission considers compliance with opinion to be evidence of good faith</p>
<p><b>Kansas Judicial Ethics Advisory Panel</b> Supreme Court Rule 650</p>		<p>No more than 3 retired justices or judges</p>	<p>Not binding; request for and reliance on advisory opinion shall be taken into account by Commission on Judicial Qualifications</p>

<p><b>Ethics Committee of the Kentucky Judiciary</b> Supreme Court Rule 4.310</p>	<p>Informal opinion Formal opinion</p>	<p>5 members: 1 court of appeals judge; 1 circuit court judge; 1 district court judge; 2 lawyers</p>	<p>Advisory only; Judicial Retirement and Removal Commission and supreme court “shall consider reliance by a justice, judge, or trial commissioner upon the Ethics Committee opinion.”</p>
<p><b>Louisiana Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> Addendum to code of judicial conduct adopted by supreme court</p>		<p>11 members: chief justice and 1 other member of supreme court; chair of conference of court of appeals judges and 1 other court of appeals judge; president of district judges association and 2 other district judges; 1 juvenile or family court judge; president of city judges association; judicial administrator; president of bar association</p>	<p>Not binding</p>
<p><b>Maine Judicial Ethics Committee</b> Administrative order of Supreme Judicial Court</p>	<p>Formal opinions Informal opinions</p>	<p>7 members: currently, 1 district court judge; 1 superior court judge; 1 probate court judge; 1 lawyer from department of attorney general; 1 other lawyer; 2 non-lawyers</p>	<p>Advisory only; not binding on judicial official who submitted request, Committee on Judicial Responsibility or Disability, or any court. Reliance on opinion by requesting judicial official given substantial weight in evaluating conduct in disciplinary proceedings. Reliance on and compliance with informal advisory opinion is factor to be taken into consideration in subsequent disciplinary proceedings. Formal opinions may be received in evidence and considered on interpretation of code of judicial conduct in any proceeding in Maine courts or before the Committee on Judicial Responsibility and Disability</p>

<p><b>Maryland Judicial Ethics Committee</b> Rule 16-812.1</p>	<p>Letter of advice Written opinion</p>	<p>9 members: 1 judge of the court of special appeals; 2 circuit court judges; 2 judges of the district court; 1 judge of an orphans' court; 1 clerk of a circuit court; 1 judicial appointee as defined in Rule 16-814; 1 non judge or other officer or employee of the judicial branch</p>	<p>Judge who requests and complies with opinion or letter of advice "is protected from a charge of violation of that ethics provision."</p>
<p><b>Massachusetts Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> Supreme Judicial Court Rule 3:11</p>	<p>Informal opinions Letter opinions Emergency letter opinions</p>	<p>5 members: at least 3 judges or former judges</p>	<p>Reliance on an informal opinion is mitigating factor if judge did not omit or misstate any material fact in request. "A judge shall not be disciplined for conduct undertaken in reasonable reliance on a Letter Opinion issued to that judge . . ."</p>
<p><b>Michigan State Bar Standing Committee on Judicial Ethics</b></p>		<p>10 members: members nominated by judges association, probate judges association, district judges association, referees association, and association of district court magistrates; 3 additional judge members, 1 commissioner liaison, 1 state bar liaison</p>	<p>Opinions "do not have the force and effect of law and may not be relied upon as an absolute defense to a charge of ethical misconduct."</p>
<p><b>Minnesota Board on Judicial Standards*</b> Created by statute; rules promulgated by supreme court</p>		<p>10 members: 1 court of appeals judge; 3 district court judges; 2 lawyers; 4 non-lawyers</p>	<p>Not binding; considered as having precedential weight</p>
<p><b>Missouri Commission on Retirement, Removal &amp; Discipline*</b> Created by constitution</p>		<p>6 members: 1 appellate court judge; 1 circuit court judge; 2 lawyers; 2 non-lawyers</p>	<p>Not binding; compliance is evidence of good faith</p>
<p><b>Nebraska Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Appendix A to code of judicial conduct</p>		<p>7 members: 2 district court judges; 2 county court judges; 1 court of appeals judge; 2 judges from courts other than supreme court</p>	<p>Not binding; judge who requested and relied on opinion may offer opinion in disciplinary proceeding</p>
<p><b>Nevada Standing Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> Supreme Court order</p>		<p>30 members: 12 attorneys; 12 non-attorneys; 6 judges</p>	<p>Not binding</p>

<p><b>New Hampshire Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> Supreme Court rule 38-A</p>		<p>5 members: at least 3 judges or retired judges</p>	<p>Not binding. Judicial Conduct Committee and Supreme Court, “may, in their discretion, consider compliance with an advisory opinion by the requesting individual to be evidence of a good faith effort to comply with the Code of Judicial Conduct.”</p>
<p><b>New Jersey Advisory Committee on Extrajudicial Activities</b> Court Rule 1:18A</p>	<p>Informal opinion Formal opinion</p>	<p>At least 9 members: composition is not set except that committee must include 1 lawyer and 1 non-lawyer</p>	<p>Not binding</p>
<p><b>New Mexico Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Conduct</b> Supreme Court order</p>		<p>Not set</p>	<p>Not binding</p>
<p><b>New York State Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> State Judiciary Law</p>	<p>There is a subcommittee on judicial campaign ethics</p>	<p>26 judges or former judges, selected statewide</p>	<p>Actions in accordance with advisory opinion shall be presumed proper</p>
<p><b>North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission*</b> Commission Rule 8</p>	<p>Verbal or written informal opinion Formal opinion</p>	<p>7 members: 1 court of appeals judge, 1 superior court judge, 1 district court judge, 2 attorneys, 2 citizen members</p>	<p>Actions in conformity with informal opinion shall be deemed to have been in good faith. “Formal advisory opinions shall have precedential value in determining whether similar conduct conforms to the Code of Judicial Conduct, but shall not constitute controlling legal authority.” Action in conformity with formal advisory opinion deemed to have been in good faith</p>
<p><b>North Dakota Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Resolution of judicial conference pursuant to legislative mandate</p>		<p>5 members: 2 district judges; 1 additional judge; 2 lawyers</p>	<p>Not binding; compliance is evidence of good faith</p>
<p><b>Ohio Board of Professional Conduct*</b> Supreme Court Governing Bar Rule 5, Section 2(c)</p>	<p>Informal advisory opinion letters</p>	<p>28 members: 7 active or retired judges; 17 lawyers; 4 non-lawyers; opinions prepared by subcommittee of 5 or more members</p>	<p>Not binding</p>

<b>Oregon Judicial Conference Judicial Conduct Committee</b> Judicial conference		9 members: district and circuit court judges, geographically represented	Not binding
<b>Judicial Ethics Committee of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges</b>	Informal opinions Formal opinions	16 judges: state divided into 12 zones; 3 judges from zone 1; 2 from zone 9; 2 from zone 12; 1 judge from each other zone	Not binding; reliance on opinion "shall be taken into account in determining whether discipline should be recommended or imposed."
<b>Rhode Island Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Addendum to code of judicial conduct adopted by supreme court		5 judges: no more than 2 may be from same court	"An opinion from the advisory committee that it is proper for the judge to participate in...event [to honor the judge] will give rise to a conclusive presumption that the judge has acted properly. Any judge who acts in accordance with an opinion given by the advisory committee shall be presumed to have abided by the Canons of Judicial Ethics."
<b>South Carolina Advisory Committee on Standards of Judicial Conduct</b> Appellate Court Rule 503		3 members: 1 circuit court judge; 1 family court judge; 1 lawyer	Advisory only; not binding. Commission on Judicial Conduct, in its discretion, may consider opinion as evidence of good faith
<b>South Dakota Judicial Ethics Committee</b> Supreme Court Rule 98-4	Informal opinion Formal opinion	3 members: 2 circuit court judges; 1 magistrate judge	Advisory only; Judicial Qualifications Commission and supreme court shall consider reliance
<b>Tennessee Judicial Ethics Committee</b> Supreme Court Rule 10A		7 members: 1 judge from the court of appeals or court of criminal appeals; 1 trial judge from each grand division of the state; 1 general sessions judge licensed to practice law in this state; 1 juvenile court judge licensed to practice law in this state; 1 municipal court judge licensed to practice law in this state	Not binding. "A Formal Ethics Opinion shall constitute a body of principles and objectives upon which judges can rely for guidance"
<b>Texas Committee on Judicial Ethics</b> Judicial Section of State Bar of Texas		9 judges	Not binding

<p><b>Utah Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Code of Judicial Administration Rules 1-205 and 3-109</p>	<p>Informal opinion Formal opinion by Judicial Council</p>	<p>6 members: 1 judge from the court of appeals, 1 district court judge from judicial districts 2, 3, or 4, 1 district court judge from judicial districts 1, 5, 6, 7, or 8, 1 juvenile court judge, 1 justice court judge, 1 attorney from either the bar or a college of law</p>	<p>Compliance with informal opinion shall be considered evidence of good faith. Formal opinions are binding interpretation of code</p>
<p><b>Vermont Judicial Ethics Committee</b> Administrative Order 35 of Supreme Court</p>		<p>5 members: 3 judges; 2 other members</p>	<p>Compliance with advisory opinion is factor to be taken into account in any disciplinary proceeding</p>
<p><b>Virginia Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Supreme Court order</p>	<p>Opinions must be approved by Supreme Court Provisional oral or written advice in emergency</p>	<p>11 members: 6 active or retired judges; 4 lawyers; 1 non-lawyer</p>	<p>Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission and Supreme Court “may, in their discretion, consider compliance with an advisory opinion by the requesting individual to be a good faith effort to comply with the Canons of Judicial Conduct provided that compliance with an opinion issued to one judge shall not be considered evidence of good faith of another judge unless the underlying facts are substantially the same.”</p>
<p><b>Washington Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Supreme Court Rule 10</p>		<p>7 members: 1 court of appeals judge; 2 superior court judges; 2 courts of limited jurisdiction judges; 1 lawyers; administrator of courts</p>	<p>Compliance with opinion shall be considered evidence of good faith</p>
<p><b>West Virginia Judicial Investigation Commission*</b> Rule 2.13 of rules of judicial disciplinary procedure adopted by Supreme Court of Appeals</p>		<p>9 members: 3 circuit judges; 1 magistrate; 1 family law master; 1 mental hygiene commissioner; 3 non-lawyers</p>	<p>Not binding: admissible in any disciplinary proceeding involving requesting judge</p>
<p><b>Wisconsin Judicial Conduct Advisory Committee</b> Code of judicial conduct, adopted by Supreme Court</p>	<p>Informal advice Formal opinion</p>	<p>9 members: 6 judges; 1 lawyer; 1 court commissioner; 1 non-lawyer</p>	<p>Not binding. Compliance with formal opinion by judge who requested it shall constitute evidence of good faith. Reliance on informal advice may not constitute evidence of good faith</p>



<p><b>Wyoming Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee</b> Supreme Court order</p>		<p>5 members: 3 judges, retired judges, or retired justices; 2 attorneys. No current justice</p>	<p>Advisory only; not binding on Commission on Judicial Conduct and Ethics. Commission may consider compliance by requesting individual evidence of good faith effort to comply with code of judicial conduct; compliance with an opinion issued to one judge shall not be considered evidence of good faith of another judge unless the underlying facts are substantially the same and the other judge had actual knowledge of and acted in reliance upon the opinion</p>
<p><b>District of Columbia Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct</b></p>	<p>Order of Joint Committee on Judicial Administration</p>	<p>5 members: 3 appellate court judges; 2 superior court judges</p>	<p>Action in accordance with an advisory opinion may be considered evidence of good faith</p>