



Committee on Judicial Ethics

Annual Report for January 1 - December 31, 2025

Membership and Terms. The Committee on Judicial Ethics, which began operating on August 1, 2008, continued its work throughout the 2025 calendar year. The membership for 2025 underwent changes in October and November of 2025.

From January 1, 2025 to October 8, 2025, the Committee's membership consisted of the following:

Hon. Kimberly A. Knox (Chair)
Hon. Robert B. Shapiro
Prof. Carolyn W. Kaas
Hon. Karen A. Goodrow
Hon. Daniel J. Klau
Alternate: Hon. Wendy A. Grispin

From October 9, 2025 to November 25, 2025, the membership and terms were as follows:

Justice Nora R. Dannehy (Chair until October 8, 2026; 3-year term expires October 8, 2028)
Hon. Kimberly A. Knox (3-year term expires October 8, 2028)
Hon. Karen A. Goodrow (3-year term expires October 8, 2028)
Hon. Daniel J. Klau (3-year term expires October 8, 2028)
Hon. Wendy A. Grispin (3-year term expires October 8, 2028)
Alternate: vacant

On November 25, 2025, Judge Patrick F. Caruso was appointed to succeed Judge Karen A. Goodrow, who will retire from the bench in February 2026. The membership remained unchanged for the remainder of the year, except for Judge Caruso replacing Judge Goodrow. On January 28, 2026, Professor Leslie Levin was appointed to serve as a member through January 28, 2029.

The Committee extends its sincere gratitude to Judge Robert B. Shapiro, Judge Karen A. Goodrow, and Professor Carolyn W. Kaas for their many years of dedicated service and to Judge Kimberly Knox for her professionalism and strong leadership as Chair. The Committee is very pleased that Judge Knox will remain a member.

Staff to the Committee. Attorney Viviana L. Livesay continued to serve as Secretary and Attorneys Cynthia A. Theran, Steven Bidwell, and Kevin J. DiAdamo continued to serve as Assistant Secretaries. Ms. Carolina Marin, Administrative Services Coordinator, continued to provide staff with administrative support.

Policy and Rules. No policy or rule changes took place during 2025.

Committee Webpage. No substantial changes were made to the webpage during 2025. Notice of all meetings, agendas and minutes continued to be made available on the Committee's website, as well as on the "State Agency Public Meeting Calendar" website portal found at: <https://egov.ct.gov/pmc>. The "Alert" feature was used once in 2025.

New Judge Training. On Friday, March 14, 2025, Judge Daniel J. Klau and Attorneys Cynthia A. Theran, and Kevin J. DiAdamo conducted ethics training for new judges during the pre-bench orientation.

Activity. During 2025, the Committee met via *Microsoft Teams* four (4) times to discuss pending inquiries. Members of the public who were interested in attending meetings were given access via *Microsoft Teams*. Staff to the Committee assisted several Judicial Officials by providing them with copies of relevant prior advisory opinions, thereby eliminating the need to seek an informal advisory opinion. The Committee received five (5) requests for an informal advisory opinion. The following is a brief description of the issues presented:

- 2025-01: What qualifies as the "appropriate authority" under Rule 2.15 (a)?
 - Does Rule 2.15 (a) obligate a Judicial Official to report alleged judicial misconduct directly to the CCA or is it sufficient that the AJ reported the conduct to the CCA?
 - Does Rule 2.15 (a) obligate the Judicial Official to report the conduct to the Judicial Review Council?
- 2025-02: May a Judicial Official accept an invitation to attend an expensive birthday event at a first-class resort under the Connecticut Code of Judicial Conduct?
- 2025-03: May a Judicial Official give recorded answers to questions for an academic study that analyzes and evaluates animal cruelty legislation and prosecution of cases, including cases in which the Judicial Official has presided over involving animal-related charges?
- 2025-04: May a Judicial Official participate in a fundraising fashion show by appearing on the runway wearing a judicial robe?
- 2025-05: May a Judicial Official serve on a Merit Selection Committee that evaluates applications and interviews qualified candidates for the Federal Public Defender position?

The Committee, which has now completed seventeen and a half years of service since its creation, is encouraged that Judicial Officials appear to be actively using our services and benefiting from access to the summaries of Informal and Formal opinions and the cross-referenced Subject Matter Index, as well as the minutes of Committee meetings. While encouraging Judicial Officials to consult the webpage regularly, the Committee continues to urge that Judicial Officials should not hesitate to present inquiries whenever they have concerns, regardless of the subject matter or the complexity of the issue or whether the subject may have been addressed in some respects previously. Ethics inquiries are highly fact-specific and even issues that have been addressed before may present new concerns.

All Committee members receive quarterly updates from the [NCSC's Center for Judicial Ethics.](#)

The members of the Committee join in thanking and commending its Secretary and Assistant Secretaries for their excellent and prompt professional assistance in the work of the Committee.

Future Meeting Schedule. At its December 2025 regular meeting, the Committee voted to change its regular meeting schedule from monthly meetings to quarterly. Future regular meetings of the Committee will be held on the third Thursday of March, June, September and December at 9:30 a.m. via *Microsoft Teams*.

Recommendations. The Committee again recommends that ethics components be included on a regular basis in the CJI program. The Committee also welcomes suggestions as to how it can further improve its website to ensure effective access to the growing body of ethical opinions.

Conclusion. The Committee is dedicated to providing accurate, timely, and effective ethics opinions for the guidance of Judicial Officials while also maximizing the privacy of Judicial Officials who submit requests.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Nora R. Dannehy, Chair
January 30, 2026