

**Committee on Judicial Ethics**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 18, 2025**

Committee members present via *Microsoft Teams*: Judge Kimberly Knox (Chair), Judge Robert Shapiro, Judge Karen A. Goodrow, Professor Carolyn W. Kaas, Judge Daniel J. Klau and Judge Wendy Grispin (Alternate). Staff present: Attorney Viviana L. Livesay (Secretary), Attorney Kevin J. DiAdamo (Assistant Secretary), Attorney Steven Bidwell (Assistant Secretary) and Carolina E. Marin.

**MINUTES**

- I. Judge Knox (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. Although publicly noticed, no members of the public were present.
- II. Judge Goodrow made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2025 Regular Meeting. Judge Klau seconded. Kaas, Goodrow, and Klau approved. Shapiro, Knox and Grispin abstained.
- III. The Committee discussed Informal JE 2025-02 concerning whether a Judicial Official may accept an invitation to attend an expensive birthday event at a first-class resort in a foreign country. Judge Klau summarized why the matter was tabled at last month's regular meeting. Judge Klau explained that at the August meeting, despite a robust discussion, the lack of consensus among the three members led them to agree to defer this non-urgent matter for one month, allowing for the opportunity for more committee members to weigh in.

To begin the discussion, Judge Shapiro made a motion to approve the staff recommendation, as amended by Judge Goodrow, to state that "while the JO may still attend the birthday event, the JO and their spouse may not accept payment from the hosting couple for travel, accommodations, meals, and entertainment-related expenses." Professor Kaas seconded the motion. Judge Klau explained that he was conflicted because of the language in subsection (b)(2) of Rule 3.13 which allows for the receipt of gifts from friends, including lawyers, whose appearance or interest in a proceeding pending or impending before the JO would in any event require disqualification.

Judges Knox, Goodrow, and Shapiro were of the opinion that the contemplated gift goes beyond what constitutes "ordinary social hospitality" and noted that there is no history of similar extravagant gifts between the JO and their lawyer-friends. Judge Knox indicated she believed Rule 3.13 (a) applied to this situation. Judges Knox, Shapiro, and Goodrow approved the motion, while Judge Klau, Prof. Kaas, and Judge Grispin (alternate) opposed. Judge Grispin, who participated as a non-voting alternate, exited the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Judge Klau suggested a new vote to incorporate additional new language stating that, in this context and under the facts of this inquiry, (1) the acceptance of the gift violates the appearance of impropriety under the reasonable person test of Rule 3.13(a), (2) that no specific value is attributed to the value of the gift, and (3) that Committee concluded that the gift exceeds ordinary social hospitality. Judge Goodrow made a motion to approve the recommendation as further amended by Judge Klau. Judge Shapiro seconded. All members present approved. Judge Goodrow and Attorney DiAdamo agreed to prepare a revised draft for final review.

- IV. Judge Goodrow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Judge Shapiro seconded. All approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.