

## NCBJ Ethics Committee Report for 2024 Annual Meeting

### **Members**

Elizabeth Gunn, District of Columbia (Chair)

Diane Finkle, Rhode Island (Chair-Elect)

William Thurman, D. Utah

Charles Novack, N.D. California

Beth Hanan, E.D. Wisconsin

Sims Crawford, N.D. Alabama

Mitchell Herren, S.D. Kansas

Barbara Ellis-Morno, N.D. Georgia

Brian Walsh, E.D. Missouri

Peggy Hunt, Utah

Clifton Jessup, Jr., N. Alabama

Heather Cooper, Vermont

### **Ethics Committee Mission Statement**

The Committee assists the officers and members of the Conference on ethics issues in connection with their Conference activities. It does so in consideration of the Code of Conduct for U.S. Judges as well as general ethical concepts. The Committee's opinions do not provide the safe harbor that is provided by the Judicial Conference's Committee on Codes of Conduct.

### **Ethics Committee Protocols**

The Committee generally meets as needed via email and conference call, if appropriate, as questions are received by the Chair. The Committee takes questions via email or other written communication and provides answers via the same means. At the Chair's discretion, the question will be referred to one or more members of the Committee or to the Committee as a whole. The Committee operates by consensus, with reference to the Judiciary's Code of Conduct. If there is substantial disagreement among Committee members, it will be noted in the answer or the Committee may seek an opinion from the Judicial Conference before rendering its opinion.

### **2023-2024**

In January 2024, the Chair received an informal question from an NCBJ member and responded. That inquiry expanded upon the submission by the member of a request for opinion to the Administrative Office of the Courts. Both the request and the response from the Administrative Office were shared with committee members Gunn and Crawford (in his hybrid role as committee member and member of the Committee on the Codes of Conduct) for comment and response. That process is ongoing. Otherwise, the Ethics Committee has not received any official inquiries during this term.

The Committee has nothing further to report.