

**BYLAWS OF THE MINNESOTA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
JUDICIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN CONDUCT COMMITTEE**

**Article I
Name**

1. The name of the Committee shall be the Minnesota State Bar Association Judicial Election Campaign Conduct Committee (“Committee”).

**Article II
Purpose of the Committee**

2. The Committee has been formed to monitor and comment on judicial-campaign conduct for the purposes of encouraging responsible campaign behavior, assisting voters to reach an informed decision on the candidates for judicial office and supporting appropriate conduct by individuals running for judicial office. Among its other tasks, the Committee may educate candidates regarding appropriate campaign conduct, advise candidates on the appropriateness of specific advertisements, help opposing candidates reach agreement about appropriate behavior, request candidates to sign an Affirmation regarding their campaign practices, and, if necessary, make public statements criticizing inappropriate conduct by candidates. The Committee cannot endorse the election of any individual candidate or group of candidates.

**Article III
Members and Officers**

3. The Committee shall consist of eleven (11) persons to be appointed by the President of the Minnesota State Bar Association with the advice and consent of the Association’s Council, taking into account the personal and geographic diversity of the community. At least three (3) of the Committee members shall be nonlawyers. No more than five (5) members of the Committee shall be of the same political party. The members shall serve a term of four (4) years and shall be eligible for reappointment to two additional consecutive terms.
4. The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Minnesota State Bar Association. The Committee shall have the authority to elect a Vice-Chair, Secretary, and other Committee officers as it deems necessary. The officers will have the duties and powers normally incident to such offices plus such others as decided by the Committee.
5. No Member of the Committee shall, during the period of his or her membership on the Committee, make any contribution to, or participate in any way in promoting the election campaign of any candidate for judicial office or promote the effort of any person to be appointed to fill a judicial vacancy. A member of the Committee who has contributed at any time to the campaign of a candidate who is the subject of a complaint shall recuse himself or herself from deliberations or decisions involving such candidate.

Article IV **Regulations and Procedures**

6. Only the Chair or his/her designee may communicate with the news media or issue oral or written statements on behalf of the Committee. Deliberations, discussions and records of the Committee shall be confidential and the individual remarks of Committee members shall not be divulged to anyone other than to other incumbent Committee members.
7. The presence of a quorum of six (6) members is required in order for the Committee to act officially. No public announcement shall be authorized except by a vote of at least six (6) members of the Committee present or by conference call at the meeting of the Committee. Proxies shall not be allowed for any purpose.
8. The Statement of Purpose, Operating Procedures, and other written materials related to the Committee will be presented and explained to an officer, or his or her designee, of each major political party. They will also be explained to each candidate for election to a Minnesota court and he/she will be asked to execute an Affirmation expressing his/her willingness to follow them in the campaign. The decision to sign the Affirmation is entirely voluntary. Thereafter, the Committee may produce a signed Affirmation for public inspection when asked to do so.
9. Meetings of the Committee shall be held as needed, pursuant to the determination of the Chair.
10. Meetings may be called by the Chair or by any three (3) members of the Committee. Notice of Committee meetings may be made by any form of written, oral or electronic communication; however, failure to notify a Committee member in any manner shall not invalidate an action of the Committee.
11. Meetings of the Committee shall be at the offices of the Minnesota State Bar Association or at such other place, including by conference call or other electronic means, as determined by the Chair of the Committee.
12. The Committee may consider matters pertaining to campaign conduct in judicial elections of which it becomes aware, from any source, including complaints, whether from candidates or others, monitoring compliance with any Affirmation signed by a candidate, issues related to endorsements and campaign contributions, and any other judicial campaign advertising. “Judicial-campaign advertising” includes any oral or written statements or campaign materials pertaining to a candidate issued by a candidate for judicial office, the candidate’s campaign committee, or an independent organization, including newspaper, radio or television advertising, website or other electronic communication, press releases, brochures, fliers, sample ballots, yard signs, or other printed material, intended to influence the outcome of a judicial election.
13. The Committee may decline to consider matters involving violations or alleged violations of the Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct, the Canons of Judicial Ethics, the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 10A), the Minnesota Fair Campaign Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 211B),

and other provisions of Minnesota law and may instead refer those complaints to that party with jurisdiction to enforce the applicable provision.

14. If the Committee decides that reasonable cause exists to investigate a complaint, it will act pursuant to the Committee's Operating Procedures and these Bylaws.