

Code of Conduct

Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary

Purpose

The Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary is entrusted with identifying, vetting, evaluating, and recommending to the Mayor judicial candidates and judges for reappointment to New York City Criminal Court and Family Court, and to Civil Court on an interim basis. The Committee's work is essential to maintaining public confidence in the judiciary and ensuring that judicial nominees possess the character, integrity, independence, temperament, experience, and legal acumen necessary to serve with distinction.

Committee members shall perform their duties with fairness, objectivity, professionalism, and a steadfast commitment to the rule of law. Committee members are part-time public servants with substantial policy discretion subject to Chapter 68 of the New York City Charter and Section 12-110 of the NYC Administrative Code.

Core Principles

1. Merit-Based Evaluation

Committee members shall evaluate all candidates based solely on qualifications relevant to judicial service, including integrity and ethical conduct, temperament and professionalism, legal knowledge, professional competence and experience, commitment to fairness and impartiality, commitment to equal justice and access to justice, and respect for the rule of law. Political affiliation, political ideology, personal and professional relationships, or other non-merit-related factors shall not influence candidate evaluations or recommendations.

2. Independence and Impartiality

Committee members shall exercise independent judgment in all deliberations and review every candidate with an open mind and without preconceived bias. Committee members shall evaluate candidates fairly and consistently using the criteria above and refrain from allowing personal, professional, political, or financial interests to influence their decisions.

All evaluation and communication about candidates should occur through the formal Committee process, and Committee members should not engage in any other external communications about candidates or the evaluation process.

Committee members shall not solicit, accept, or offer any gift, favor, or preferential treatment from or to any person or entity directly impacted by the outcome of a judicial appointment or reappointment, including applicants, their employers, their representatives, and anyone advocating for or against a particular candidate. Members shall promptly report such offers, solicitations, or attempts to the Executive Director.

Members shall not contribute or solicit contributions to a judicial campaign during their term of service on the Committee.

Members are ineligible for any judgeship on which the Committee advises the Mayor during their term of service and for two years thereafter.

The Chair, given their role and responsibility to convene and make recommendations on behalf of the Committee, shall refrain from appearing as counsel in New York City Criminal Court and New York City Family Court for the duration of their term of service. The Chair shall neither appear as counsel nor allow his name to appear on pleadings filed before judges in these courts. If the Chair appears as counsel in New York City Civil Court before a judge whose appointment on an interim basis the Chair presided over, he shall promptly flag that conflict for the judge and opposing counsel.

3. Integrity and Professionalism

Committee members shall conduct themselves in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity of the Committee's judicial nomination process. Members shall act honestly, ethically, and respectfully in all Committee activities and treat fellow members, applicants, references, and stakeholders with courtesy and respect. Members shall ensure every candidate receives a fair and thorough review, and base recommendations on verified information and objective assessment. Committee members shall avoid favoritism, discrimination, or preferential treatment.

4. Confidentiality

Committee members shall maintain the confidentiality of candidate applications and supporting materials, reference checks and interviews, Committee deliberations and recommendations, and all non-public information obtained through Committee service. Confidential information shall not be disclosed except as authorized by Committee policy or required by law.

Conflicts of Interest

1. Disclosure Requirements

Committee members shall promptly disclose to the Executive Director any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest involving a candidate, including but not limited to family relationships, close personal relationships, current or past professional associations, financial interests, business partnerships, previous or ongoing litigation or disputes involving or in front of the candidate.

2. Recusal

The Executive Director, as Counsel to the Committee, shall have the sole discretion in determining whether a conflict warranting recusal exists. To do so, the Executive Director shall consider whether the conflict would influence the member's decision as to the candidate. If the Executive Director determines recusal is warranted, the member shall recuse themselves from the evaluation, discussion, and voting related to the involved candidate. The Executive Director shall determine whether additional measures are necessary to preserve the integrity of the process.

Excellence and Competence

Committee members shall prepare thoroughly for meetings and candidate reviews and participate actively and thoughtfully in discussions. Members shall exercise sound judgment based on facts and established evaluation criteria. Members are expected to possess and maintain the professional expertise necessary to assess candidates for nomination.

Non-Discrimination

The Committee shall provide equal consideration to all qualified candidates and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Commitment

By serving on the Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary, each member affirms their commitment to this Code of Conduct and agrees to uphold its principles in both letter and spirit, ensuring that judicial nominees are selected solely based on merit and in the best interests of justice and the people of the City of New York. If a member of the Committee has reason to believe that another member has violated this Code of Conduct, the member shall report it to the Executive Director and to the Chief Counsel to the Mayor and City Hall.