



## INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES FOR JUDICIAL OFFICE

The Supreme Court of New Mexico has promulgated the Code of Judicial Conduct, which prescribes standards for judicial election campaigns that are applicable to judges, lawyers and lay persons who become candidates for nomination or election to judicial office. The portions of such rules relevant to election campaigns are attached hereto, so that all candidates for election to judicial office can familiarize themselves with the rules.

The rules apply to all judges, to all lawyers, to lay persons who become candidates for election to judicial office, and to their campaign committees. The rules apply to elections for all courts, and to all elections: primary and general, partisan, non-partisan, retention, and municipal. Lawyers who become candidates for election to judicial office are required both by the Code and by the Rules of Professional Conduct to comply with applicable provisions of the Code of Judicial Conduct. See Rules 16-802(B) and 21-700(B) NMRA.

The Fair Judicial Elections Committee is a Committee of the State Bar of New Mexico. The Committee is not an arm of the government; it is a private, professional committee whose functions are to educate candidates for judicial office and their supporters on the existence and content of rules applicable to judicial election campaigns, to assist candidates in understanding and complying with those rules, to monitor campaign statements and advertising for compliance with the Code, to comment privately to candidates and their campaign committees on campaign statements and advertising that are deemed to violate the standards of the Code, and to request

and encourage candidates and their campaign committees to cease and desist from violations.

The purpose of the Committee is to inform and educate, not to argue or accuse.

The Committee has no enforcement authority; its comments are advisory and educational.

The Committee does not endorse or oppose any candidate, or endorse or oppose any campaign issue. The Committee will, upon request, review proposed advertisements in advance to identify violations of the Code, but will not give its stamp of approval to any campaign statement or advertising, and no candidate or campaign committee can claim its advertisement has been approved.

It is the hope of the Committee that candidates for election to judicial office, and their campaign committees and supporters, will adhere to the Code, will maintain the dignity and decorum appropriate to judicial office, will observe standards that support and maintain the integrity, independence and impartiality of judicial office, and will avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in their campaign conduct. Candidates for election to judicial office are asked to sign a written pledge that they will comply with the letter and spirit of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

The Committee hopes that its efforts will raise the level of public understanding of the differences between judicial offices and political offices, and the unique role of the judicial branch in our system of government.