

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE**

Committee Name: Standing Committee on Professional Ethics

Jurisdictional Statement:

- Prepare written opinions concerning the propriety of professional conduct of lawyers at the request of the State Bar President, Board of Commissioners, Representative Assembly, Attorney Discipline Board, Attorney Grievance Commission, Executive Director, or individual members of the State Bar inquiring about their own contemplated conduct.
- Recommend amendments to the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct and other standards of professional conduct, and review proposed amendments.

The Michigan Judges Association, Michigan Probate Judges Association, Michigan District Judges Association, and the Referees Association of Michigan shall each nominate one member for appointment to this committee.

This committee may have more than 15 members.

Officers and Membership:

Chair: William B. Dunn, Detroit

Members:

Patrick W. Bennett, Troy
Hon. Elwood L. Brown, Port Huron
John G. Cameron, Jr., Grand Rapids
Donald C. Campbell, Southfield
Elaine Fieldman, Detroit
Hon. Laura A. Frawley, Harrisville
Peter L. Gustafson, Grand Rapids
Joseph L. Hardig, III, Bloomfield Hills
Howard B. Hill, Grosse Pointe Farms
Robert P. Hurlbert, Bloomfield Hills
Daniel R. Hurley, Detroit
Gregory M. Janks, Auburn Hills
Kevin Kalczynski, Detroit
Hon. Randy L. Kalmbach, Wyandotte
Hon. M. Richard Knoblock, Bad Axe
Larry W. Lewis, Hastings
Paul J. Raine, Troy
Steven M. Ribiat, Bloomfield Hills
Mark Sherbow, Pontiac

2008-2009 Meeting Schedule (date and location):

October 10, 2008, Lansing, Michigan
April 24, 2009, Lansing, Michigan
June 19, 2009, Lansing, Michigan

Committee Activities:

During each committee meeting, the members discuss proposed topics for ethics opinions; receive updates about pending matters; discuss and debate opinions in progress; and receive information about and discuss inquiries received on the Bar's ethics helpline. Between meetings, the members work in subcommittees to research and draft opinions for discussion and approval by the committee as a whole. Since the last annual report, the committee voted to approve R-20, which replaces R-14 as a result of the Board of Commissioners' vote to adopt R-20 on July 24, 2008. At the October 10, 2008, meeting the committee voted to adopt RI-345. Since the last annual report, the committee has reviewed and informally resolved issues posed by seven letters without identifying a need for a new opinion. During the April 24, 2009, meeting the committee discussed a proposal presented by the Family Law Section to the Representative Assembly, various alternative recusal rules for supreme court justices being considered by the Court, and the status of the Court's consideration of changes to the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct. At the conclusion of the April 24, 2009, meeting the committee continues work on ten subjects.

Resources Provided by the State Bar of Michigan in Support of Committee Work:

The committee has been assisted in its work by staff liaisons Dawn Evans, Nkrumah Johnson-Wynn, and Danon Goodrum-Garland as well as staff member Karen Spohn.

Future Goals and Activities:

The committee continues to identify issues of interest to Michigan lawyers as evidenced by questions posed by letter or ethics helpline inquiry that might be appropriate as the subject of an opinion either because the topic has not previously been addressed or because changes in the area have rendered previous opinions no longer appropriate. To the extent that the Committee's input is sought by the Board of Commissioners, the Representative Assembly, or the Supreme Court on discrete issues or projects, the committee stands ready to respond with appropriate research and commentary.

Chair/Co-Chair Contact Information:

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