

**2004 – 2005 ANNUAL REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON ETHICS**

In light of new amendments to the State Bar of Michigan Bylaws, the membership of the “Standing Committee on Professional and Judicial Ethics” was substantially scaled back. The Committee was divided into subcommittees of Professional and Judicial Ethics. Now the “Standing Committee on Ethics” is a single committee with 15 members.

Jurisdiction

The committee is charged with the responsibility of expressing its written opinion concerning the propriety of anticipated professional and judicial conduct. The Committee is comprised of lawyers and judges and deals with lawyer conduct as it relates to the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct and issues of judicial conduct relating to the Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct.

Informal Opinions

Each year, the Committee issues Informal Opinions in response to requests from lawyers and judges for advice as to prospective conduct. During 2004 – 2005, the Ethics Committee issued four opinions:

RI-334 “Two County Criminal Defense Firms”
RI-335 “ Reporting Clients to Credit Agency”
JI-130 “Victim Restitution Program”
JI-131 “ Judicial Campaign Speech”

Two other opinions are currently in the review process and will not be released until the Supreme Court adopts the new amendments to the Michigan Rues of Professional Conduct.

Continuing Education

This past year, the Committee together with the Attorney Grievance Commission and the Attorney Discipline board held two Ethics School programs. This is a diversion program for individuals who have had “minor” grievances filed with the Attorney Grievance Commission.

In support of the Committee, the State Bar of Michigan provides a meeting room at the Michael Franck Building and lunch for the Committee members. A staff liaison is assigned to coordinate the meeting schedule, the agenda and agenda materials for each meeting. The Committee is scheduled to meet October 14, 2005, January 20, 2006 and April 28, 2006.

Chair:
Robert L. Martin