

CANON 3, RULE 3.7

A judge shall conduct the judge's personal and extrajudicial activities to minimize the risk of conflict with the obligations of judicial office.

RULE 3.7: PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL, RELIGIOUS, CHARITABLE, FRATERNAL, OR CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- (A) Subject to the requirements of Rule 3.1, a judge may participate in activities (i) sponsored by organizations or governmental entities concerned with the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice and (ii) sponsored by or on behalf of educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations not conducted for profit, including, but not limited to, the following activities:
- (1) assisting such an organization or entity in planning related to fundraising and participating in the management and investment of the organization's or entity's funds;
 - (2) soliciting* contributions* for such an organization or entity, but only from members of the judge's family* or from judges over whom the judge does not exercise supervisory authority;
 - (3) soliciting membership for such an organization or entity, even though the membership dues or fees generated may be used to support the objectives of the organization or entity, but only if the organization or entity is concerned with the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice;
 - (4) appearing, speaking, receiving an award or other recognition, and permitting the judge's title to be used in connection with a fundraising or other event of such an organization or entity;
 - (5) making recommendations to such a public or private fund-granting organization or entity in connection with its programs and activities; and
 - (6) serving as an officer, director, trustee, or nonlegal advisor of such an organization or entity, unless it is likely that the organization or entity:
 - (a) will be engaged in proceedings that would ordinarily come before the judge; or

CANON 3, RULE 3.7

A judge shall conduct the judge's personal and extrajudicial activities to minimize the risk of conflict with the obligations of judicial office.

- (b) will frequently be engaged in adversarial proceedings in the court of which the judge is a member or in any court subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the court of which the judge is a member.
- (B) A judge may encourage and solicit lawyers to provide *pro bono* public legal services.

COMMENTS

- [1] The activities permitted by paragraph (A) generally include those sponsored by or undertaken on behalf of public or private not-for-profit educational institutions and other not-for-profit organizations, including law-related, charitable, and other organizations.
- [2] Before engaging in activities permitted by Rule 3.7, a judge should consider whether the membership and purposes of the organization, or the nature of the judge's participation in or association with the organization, would conflict with the judge's obligation to refrain from activities that reflect adversely upon a judge's independence, integrity, and impartiality.
- [3] Mere attendance at an event, whether or not the event serves a fundraising purpose, does not constitute a violation of paragraph (A)(4) so long as the judge does not engage in direct solicitation. It is also generally permissible for a judge to serve as an usher or a food server or preparer or to perform similar functions at fundraising events sponsored by educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations. Such activities are not solicitation and do not present an element of coercion or misuse the prestige of judicial office.
- [3A] A judge may not use social media or social networking platforms to promote the activities of educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations when the judge would be prohibited from doing so using another means of communication. For example, just as a judge may not write or telephone nonfamily members or judges over whom the judge has supervisory authority to encourage them to attend organizations' fundraising events, a judge may not promote those events via social media or social networking platforms.

CANON 3, RULE 3.7

A judge shall conduct the judge's personal and extrajudicial activities to minimize the risk of conflict with the obligations of judicial office.

- [4] Identification of a judge's position in law-related, educational, religious, charitable, fraternal, or civic organizations on letterhead or written materials used for fundraising or membership solicitation by such an organization or entity does not violate this Rule. The letterhead may list the judge's title or judicial office if comparable designations are used for other persons.
- [5] In addition to appointing lawyers to serve as counsel for indigent parties in individual cases, a judge may promote broader access to justice by encouraging lawyers to participate in *pro bono* public legal services if in doing so the judge does not employ coercion or misuse the prestige of judicial office. Such encouragement may take many forms, including providing lists of available programs, training lawyers to do *pro bono* public legal work, participating in events recognizing lawyers who have done *pro bono* public work, and requesting lawyers handle matters on a *pro bono* basis.
- [6] For guidance regarding a judge's involvement with political organizations, see Canon 4.