

LGALR 7.  
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Grievance Procedure.

(1) There shall be a grievance review committee consisting of the Superior Court Presiding Judge, the Court Administrator and a representative of the Okanogan County Bar Association as appointed by the then County Bar President.

(2) All grievances must be in writing and must be submitted to the Superior Court Presiding Judge.

(3) Upon receipt of a written grievance, the Presiding Judge shall convene the Grievance Review Committee within ten (10) business days to review the grievance. Upon review of the grievance, the Grievance Review Committee shall either:

(a) Make a finding that the grievance has no merit on its face, and decline to review the grievance and so inform the complainant; or

(b) Make a finding that the grievance does appear to have merit and request a written response from the GAL within ten (10) business days, detailing the specific issues in the grievance to which the Committee desires a response. The Committee shall provide the GAL with a copy of the original grievance. A GAL's failure to respond within the required ten (10) business days will result in the immediate suspension of the GAL from all registries.

(c) In considering whether the grievance has merit, the Grievance Review Committee shall consider whether the grievance alleges the GAL has:

- (1) Violated the code of conduct;
- (2) Misrepresented his or her qualifications to serve as GAL;
- (3) Not met the annual update requirements set forth in Section (d) of this policy;
- (4) Breached the confidentiality of the parties;
- (5) Falsified information in a report to the court or in testimony before the court;
- (6) Failed to report abuse of a child;
- (7) Communicated with a judicial officer ex-parte;
- (8) Represented the court in a public forum without prior approval of the court;
- (9) Violated state or local laws, rules, or this policy in the person's capacity as a GAL; or,
- (10) Taken or failed to take any other action which would reasonable place the suitability of the person to serve as GAL in question.

(4) Upon receipt of a written response to a complaint from the GAL, the Grievance Review Committee shall, within ten (10) business days, make a finding as to each of the issues delineated in the Committee's letter to the GAL that either there is no merit to the issues based upon the GAL's response or that there is merit to the issue. The Review Committee may, at their discretion, extend the time for entering findings to conduct additional investigation if necessary; however, in no case shall that extension be for more than twenty (20) business days and the GAL shall be notified.

(5) The Grievance Review Committee shall have the authority to issue a written admonishment, a written reprimand, refer the GAL to additional training or recommend to the court, upon its own motion, to remove the GAL from the instant case, or suspend or remove the GAL from the registry. In considering a response, the Committee shall take into consideration any prior grievance which resulted in an admonishment, reprimand, referral to training, removal of the GAL from a particular case, or suspension or removal from a registry. If a GAL is listed on more than one registry, the suspension or removal may apply to each registry the GAL is listed on at the discretion of the Committee.

(6) The complainant and the GAL shall be notified in writing of the Committee's decision within 10 business days of receipt of the GAL response.

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