

CONFLICTS REVIEW OFFICER

(a) Function. Conflicts Review Officers review grievances filed against disciplinary counsel and other lawyers employed by the Association, hearing officers, conflicts review officers and conflicts review officers pro tempore, members of the Disciplinary Board, officers and members of the Board of Governors, and staff, attorneys, and judicial officers of the Supreme Court. Conflicts Review Officers also review grievances filed against persons who have been assigned cases as adjunct disciplinary or special disciplinary counsel, or appointed in disability matters pursuant to ELC 8.2(c)(2), at the time the grievance is filed. A Conflicts Review Officer performs other functions as set forth in these rules.

(1) *Authority.* The Conflicts Review Officer's duties are limited to performing the initial review of grievances covered by this Rule. A Conflicts Review Officer may, under rule 5.3(b), obtain the respondent lawyer's response to the grievance, if they feel it is necessary to do so, in their sole discretion. A Conflicts Review Officer may dismiss the grievance under rule 5.7(a), defer the investigation under rule 5.3(d), or assign the grievance to special disciplinary counsel for investigation under rules 2.8(b) and 5.3. If a grievant requests review of a dismissal under rule 5.7(b), the Conflicts Review Officer may either reopen the matter for investigation or refer it to a review committee under that rule.

(2) *Independence.* Conflicts Review Officers act independently of disciplinary counsel and the Association.

(b) Appointment and Qualifications.

(1) The Supreme Court, on the recommendation of the Board of Governors in consultation with the Disciplinary Selection Panel, shall appoint three active members of the Association as Conflicts Review Officers. Each Conflicts Review Officer is appointed for a three-year term on a staggered basis, and may be recommended for reappointment at the discretion of the Board of Governors. Applications shall be solicited from those eligible to serve, and submitted to the Board of Governors, in such manner as the Association deems most appropriate under the policies and procedures then in effect for recruitment and appointment of volunteers in the discipline system.

(2) When no Conflicts Review Officer is available to handle a matter due to conflict of interest or other good cause, the Supreme Court, on the recommendation of the Board of Governors, shall appoint a Conflicts Review Officer pro tempore for the matter.

(3) To be eligible for appointment as Conflicts Review Officer or Conflicts Review Officer pro tempore, a lawyer must have prior experience as a Disciplinary Board member, disciplinary counsel, or special disciplinary counsel. Conflicts Review Officers and Conflicts Review Officers pro tempore may have no other active role in the discipline system during the term of appointment.

(c) Counsel and Clerk; Assignment of Cases. The Association shall assign matters to the Conflicts Review Officers in such a manner as to balance their caseloads insofar as it is practicable to do so. The Executive Director of the Association may appoint a suitable person or persons to act as counsel and clerk to the Conflicts Review Officers, to assist them in carrying out their functions under these rules.

(d) Access to Disciplinary Information. Conflicts Review Officers and Conflicts Review Officers pro tempore have access to any otherwise confidential disciplinary information necessary to perform the duties required by these rules. Conflicts Review Officers and Conflicts Review Officers pro tempore shall return original files to the Association promptly upon completion of the duties required by these rules and shall not retain copies.

(e) Compensation and Expenses. The Association reimburses Conflicts Review Officers and Conflicts Review Officers pro tempore for all necessary and reasonable expenses, and may provide compensation at a level established by the Board of Governors.

(f) Restriction on Representing or Advising Respondents or Grievants. Current Conflicts Review Officers are subject to the restrictions set forth in rule 2.14. Members serving as Conflicts Review Officer pro tempore are subject to the same restriction while serving in that capacity.

[Adopted effective October 1, 2002; Amended effective January 12, 2010; January 1, 2014; January 1, 2015; September 1, 2017; January 1, 2023.]