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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 26, 2012

Supreme Court Approves Rules and Procedures for Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions

San Francisco—The Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions today announced that the Supreme Court has approved the committee's proposed internal rules and procedures for providing formal judicial ethics opinions and advice to guide the conduct of California state judges.

The Supreme Court established the Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions (CJEO) to provide advisory opinions and ethics advice to judicial officers and candidates for judicial office. The court adopted California Rules of Court, rule 9.80, to govern the actions of the committee ([Rule 9.80. Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions](#)).

Under rule 9.80, the committee acts independently of the Supreme Court, the Commission on Judicial Performance, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Judicial Council, and all other entities (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 9.80(b)). Section (m) of the rule requires the committee to adopt procedures to implement the overall requirements of the provision, subject to approval by the court.

In developing its rules and procedures, the CJEO was guided by the recommendations of the Implementation Committee for the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions (<http://www.courts.ca.gov/memo-finalreport-ethicscomm.pdf>).

At the direction of the court, the CJEO circulated its proposed rules for public comment ([State Panel Seeks Comment on Proposed Procedures for Judicial Ethics Opinions \(NR 32-11\)](#)). The committee adopted amendments in response to the comments (<http://courts.ca.gov/documents/CJEO-Rules-Public-Comment.pdf>) and returned to the court with a report on its rules and a request for approval (<http://courts.ca.gov/documents/CJEO-Rules-Report.pdf>).

The court unanimously approved the CJEO Internal Operating Rules and Procedures which establish procedures for the committee to (1) respond to requests for opinions from the judiciary,

the public and other specified sources; (2) ensure confidentiality in the committee's records and proceedings; and (3) coordinate with the California Judges Association in providing oral advice.

The newly approved CJEO rules and procedures will be published in the *California Official Reports* pamphlet No. 7 (March 20, 2012) and are available at:

<http://courts.ca.gov/documents/CJEO-Rules.pdf>

Questions about the CJEO rules can be submitted to:

Justice Ronald B. Robie
Chair of the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions
Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District
621 Capitol Mall, 10th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814-4719
(916) 651-7255

Questions about the committee and requests for inquiry forms or placement on the opinion distribution list can be submitted to:

Judicial.Ethics@jud.ca.gov; the committee's toll-free, confidential line at (855) 854-5366; or the committee counsel at this address:

Ms. Nancy A. Black
Committee Counsel
Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions
350 McAllister Street, Room 1144A
San Francisco, California 94102
(415) 865-7169

The 12 members of the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions are: Justice Ronald B. Robie of the Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District (chair); Justice Douglas P. Miller of the Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division Two (vice-chair); retired Judge Mary Carolyn Morgan of the Superior Court of San Francisco County; Justice Maria Rivera of the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District, Division Four; Judge John S. Wiley, Jr. of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County; Presiding Judge Suzanne N. Kingsbury of the Superior Court of El Dorado County; Judge Kenneth K. So of the Superior Court of San Diego County; Judge George J. Abdallah, Jr. of the Superior Court of San Joaquin County; Commissioner Robert L. Broughton of the Superior Court of Contra Costa County; Justice Judith Ashmann-Gerst of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Two; Judge Joanne B. O'Donnell of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County; and retired Judge Michael Garcia of the Superior Court of Sacramento County.

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