

## Judicial Inquiry Commission

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The Judicial Inquiry Commission has considered your request for an advisory opinion as to whether a circuit judge may continue to serve on the executive committee of a local bar association that considers grievance complaints against attorneys after appointment to the bench.

The answer to your inquiry is controlled primarily by Canon 4, which provides in pertinent part as follows:

A judge, subject to the proper performance of his judicial duties, may engage in the following quasi-judicial activities, if in so doing he does not cast doubt on his capacity to decide impartially any issue that may come before him:

\* \* \*

- C. He may serve as a member, officer, or director of an organization or governmental agency devoted to the improvement of the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice ...

While a sitting judge may generally continue to participate in a local bar organization after appointment or election to the bench, and indeed is encouraged to do so under Canon 4, it is the opinion of this Commission that a judge should not continue to serve on the executive committee of a local bar association when such position requires the judge to participate in the investigation and/or resolution of grievance complaints against local attorneys. Such participation could too easily lead to situations in which doubt could be cast upon the judge's ability to decide cases coming before him impartially. Further, such participation could conflict with a judge's responsibility under Canon 3B(3) to take or initiate appropriate disciplinary measures against a lawyer for unprofessional conduct of which the judge has personal knowledge.

Very truly yours,

JUDICIAL INQUIRY COMMISSION