

[CANON 4B] | [SPEAKING & WRITING]

A judge is encouraged to speak, write, lecture, teach and participate in other quasi-judicial activities concerning the law, the legal system, the administration of justice, and the role of the judiciary as an independent branch within our system of government, subject to the requirements of this Code.

([Amended Feb. 20, 2003 (840 So. 2d 1023); May 22, 2008 (983 So. 2d 550).])

Commentary

Canon 4B. This canon was clarified in order to encourage judges to engage in activities to improve the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice. As a judicial officer and person specially learned in the law, a judge is in a unique position to contribute to the improvement of the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice, including, but not limited to, the improvement of the role of the judiciary as an independent branch of government, the revision of substantive and procedural law, the improvement of criminal and juvenile justice, and the improvement of justice in the areas of civil, criminal, family, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, juvenile dependency, probate and motor vehicle law. To the extent that time permits, a judge is encouraged to do so, either independently or through a bar association, judicial conference or other organization dedicated to the improvement of the law. Support of pro bono legal services by members of the bench is an activity that relates to improvement of the administration of justice. Accordingly, a judge may engage in activities intended to encourage attorneys to perform pro bono services, including, but not limited to: participating in events to recognize attorneys who do pro bono work, establishing general procedural or scheduling accommodations for pro bono attorneys as feasible, and acting in an advisory capacity to pro bono programs. Judges are encouraged to participate in efforts to promote the fair administration of justice, the independence of the judiciary and the integrity of the legal profession, which may include the expression of opposition to the persecution of lawyers and judges in other countries.

The phrase “subject to the requirements of this Code” is included to remind judges that the use of permissive language in various sections of the Code does not relieve a judge from the other requirements of the Code that apply to the specific conduct.

[Commentary amended Feb. 20, 2003 (840 So. 2d 1023); May 22, 2008 (983 So. 2d 550).]

