

Small Agency Synopsis

Agency Name: Commission on Judicial Conduct
Address: 210 – 11th Avenue S.W., Olympia, WA 98504
Website: www.cjc.state.wa.us
Contact Name: Barrie Althoff, Executive Director
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Phone Number: (360) 753-4585

Agency Responsibilities:

- ▶ The Commission was created by a constitutional amendment as an independent agency of the judicial branch to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate alleged ethical misconduct by Washington state judicial officers and certain employees of the judicial branch of government.
- ▶ The Commission strives to protect the integrity and independence of the judicial process and also to maintain the public confidence in the judiciary.
- ▶ When appropriate, the Commission holds hearings and issues decisions relating to judicial discipline and ethics.
- ▶ Statutes authorizing Commission Activities: Article IV, Section 31 of the State Constitution, RCW 2.64 and RCW 42.52.

Organization Chart and Budget:

- ▶ The Commission office is located in Olympia, Washington. The Commission employs an executive director, two investigators, one case manager, one administrative assistant, one agency services coordinator and one information technology specialist. The Commission members (eleven regular and eleven alternate) are appointed from different areas throughout the state. The Commission has only one program and Barrie Althoff, the Executive Director, manages the activities of the Commission.
- ▶ The Commission budget is funded by the state general fund. The agency's funding level for the 2003-05 biennium is \$1,848,000.
- ▶ The Commission on Judicial Conduct consists of eleven members and eleven alternate members. Of the eleven members in each category, the Governor of Washington appoints six "citizen" or "public" members, the Washington judicial associations appoint three members (one from the courts of appeal, one from the superior courts, and one from the district courts), and the Board of Governors of the Washington State Bar Association appoints two lawyers. Members serve four-year terms with the possibility of reappointment. The Commission usually meets the first Friday of every other month in the Sea-Tac area.

Pressing Issues and Challenges

Although the Commission is generally in good operational and fiscal condition, a few challenges exist.

- ▶ *Increased Rent Costs.* After being in the same small offices for 16 years, the Commission moved in late June, 2004, to long-needed larger space in a state building. The Commission's 2005-2007 biennium budget submission seeks an additional \$36,000 annual funding to cover increased lease costs. Since most Commission expenditures are fixed leaving little discretionary spending, denial of the funding would result in severe budgetary pressures.
- ▶ *Staff Related Resources.* The Commission faces a continuing operational challenge to both investigate and prosecute, on a timely basis, ethics complaints. The same small staff, assisted by retained counsel on prosecutions, handles both tasks. When there are no prosecutions, investigations are handled promptly, but prosecutions can and do consume staff resources and delay investigations. The cost of retained prosecution counsel can severely strain the Commission's budget, necessitating the Commission seeking emergency funding through the Governor's office. Due to the state's severe on-going budgetary limitations, the Commission has not sought additional staff resources from the legislature, but as investigations and prosecutions grow in number and/or complexity, the challenge will grow. By the 2007-2009 biennium the challenge will likely be severe and funding for additional staff resources will be needed.
- ▶ *Outreach.* The Commission's constitutional functions and processes are largely not known to or understood by the public or legislators. The public often complains about alleged conduct which, even if true, is not unethical, and periodically legislation is introduced that evidences a lack of understanding of both the unique nature of the Commission as a constitutionally created independent agency within the judicial branch of government and of the practical effects such legislation would have on the Commission's ability to fulfill its mission. Again, current state budgetary restraints hinder the Commission from adequately addressing these challenges.

Contact person for these matters is Barrie Althoff, Executive Director,
<mailto:balthoff@cjc.state.wa.us> 360-753-4585.

Board Member Listing by Board Position

JUDICIAL CONDUCT, COMMISSION ON (GS085)

Agency 050 - Commission On Judicial Conduct	Senate Conf. N	Positions: Maximum 011
Authority Governor (6 + 6 alternates);statute	Public Disc. Y	Minimum 000
Authoriztn. RCW 2.64.020	Term Length 048	Actual 022
Rem. Auth. GC	Meetings/Yr. 11	

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
006	Whitrock, Todd 123 Sweet Birch Drive Longview, WA 98632	A	C	07/25/2001	06/16/2005
		Terms Served	03		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
007	Hellberg, Frederick 3908 Prestwick Lane SE Olympia, WA 98501	A	C	08/01/2004	06/16/2007
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
008	Wilkerson, Betsy 2222 EN Altamont Spokane, WA 99202	A	AA	07/21/2004	06/16/2008
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Alternate		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
009	Briggs, Wanda 426 West 20th Avenue Kennewick, WA 99337	A	C	08/01/2001	06/16/2005
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Alternate		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
010	Cube, Sr., Antonio P. 17711 - 160th Avenue SE Renton, WA 98058	A	AP	09/02/2003	06/16/2007
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
011	Connelly, Marianne 929 West 32nd Avenue Spokane, WA 99203	A	C	05/13/2002	06/16/2006
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Board Member Listing by Board Position

JUDICIAL CONDUCT, COMMISSION ON (GS085)

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
012	Locke, Hubert (Dr.) 2801 First Ave., #609 Seattle, WA 98121	A	AA	07/06/2004	06/16/2008
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Alternate		
013	White, Bonnie 749 S. Hatch Spokane, WA 99220	A	NA	12/12/2003	06/16/2006
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Alternate		
014	Caver, Vivian 1721 31st Avenue South Seattle, WA 98144	A	AA	07/25/2001	06/16/2005
		Terms Served	03		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		
015	Appleton, Sherry PO Box 2112 Poulsbo, WA 98370	A	C	07/30/2001	06/16/2005
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		
016	Fortier, Judie E. Human Rights Department 747 Market Street, Room 808 Tacoma, WA 98402-3779	A	C	07/25/2001	06/16/2005
		Terms Served	03		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Alternate		
017	Sotelo, Mike 408 Aurora Avenue North Seattle, WA 98109	A	H	08/01/2001	06/16/2005
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Alternate		