

# **RULES GOVERNING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT JUDGES' CONFERENCE**

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#### Rule 101. Authority

- (a) These rules are promulgated pursuant to Wyoming Constitution Article 5 § 1, W.S. §§ 5-3-102(b) and 9-2-3202(c).

#### Rule 102. Definitions

- (a) "District Judges' Conference" means the body comprising all the judges of the various district courts.
- (b) "Chair" means the district judge elected to preside over the judicial conference.
- (c) "Member" means a current district judge.

#### Rule 103. District Judges' Conference

- (a) Pursuant to W.S. 5-3-102(b), the organization consisting of all current, Wyoming district court judges shall be known as the "Wyoming District Judges' Conference."
- (b) Officers of the Conference shall consist of a: Chair; Vice Chair; and Secretary/Treasurer, who shall serve for a term of one year (from the election in September until new officers are elected in September for the following year).
- (c) The Conference shall act by majority vote of a quorum of the members in attendance at a meeting or on a special question as set out in Rule 109. Members may attend meetings in person, by teleconference, or by videoconference.

#### Rule 104. Election and Duties of the Chair

- (a) At the September meeting the Conference shall elect by majority vote one of its members to act as Chair whose term shall commence after the close of the meeting.
- (b) The Chair is the designated spokesperson for the Conference.
- (c) The Chair shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Conference at the September meeting that fulfills the requirements of W.S. 5-3-102(b) in a form suitable for submission to the State Joint Judiciary Interim Committee. Once approved by the Conference, the Chair shall submit the annual report to the Joint Judiciary Interim Committee on or before November 1st of each year.
- (d) The Chair shall prepare and distribute an agenda to the members of the Conference at least fourteen days prior to any regular meeting, and as soon as possible prior to any other meeting.

- (e) At the written request of any member prior to any meeting, the Chair shall add items to the agenda, and shall, if feasible, provide written notice of the addition to the members of the Conference before the meeting.
- (f) The Chair shall have the authority to do any act necessary to effectuate an action approved by the Conference.

#### Rule 105. Election and Duties of the Vice Chair

- (a) At the September meeting, the Conference shall elect by majority vote one of its members to act as Vice Chair for the next succeeding term.
- (b) The Vice Chair shall act as presiding officer in the absence of the Chair and shall assist the Chair upon request.

#### Rule 106. Election and Duties of the Secretary/Treasurer

- (a) At the September meeting the Conference shall elect by majority vote one of its members to act as Secretary/Treasurer for the next succeeding term.
- (b) The Secretary/Treasurer shall keep minutes of Conference proceedings pursuant to W.S. 5-3-102(b), file the same with the Supreme Court, and assist in the preparation of the annual report.
- (c) The Secretary/Treasurer shall collect any annual dues and shall keep a record of the finances of the Conference.
- (d) The Secretary/Treasurer shall keep all digital and non-digital records of the Conference in a secure and organized fashion.

#### Rule 107. Meetings

- (a) Each member of the Conference should attend all meetings called by the Chair and should attend regular meetings in person wherever possible.
- (b) The Chair of the Conference shall call regular meetings of the Conference at least two times per year, in April on a date set by the Chair and during the week of the annual Wyoming State Bar meeting in September. All meeting dates for the upcoming year will be announced at the September meeting.
- (c) Regular meetings shall be held in person, but individual Members may attend by teleconference or by videoconference.

- (d) Special meetings may be called by the Chair upon twenty-four hour notice to the members of the Conference. Notice may be given in person, by telephone, e-mail, or any combination thereof at the discretion of the Chair. Special meetings may be held by teleconference, video conference, or in person at the discretion of the Chair.
- (e) Members unable to attend meetings may vote on any agenda item by offering their vote, in writing, by email or letter, to the Secretary prior to the meeting.
- (f) Actual travel expenses for any Member attending meetings shall be reimbursed at a rate to be established by the Wyoming Judicial Council.
- (g) At any meeting, a quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the Members ( $1/2$  of the Members plus 1 Member). A vote by a majority of the Members attending a meeting where a quorum is present shall constitute the binding act of the Conference.

#### Rule 108. Order of Business

- (a) The order of business for any meeting shall be as follows:
  - (1) Call to order and roll call;
  - (2) Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting;
  - (3) Approval of the Secretary/Treasurer's Financial Report;
  - (4) Old business;
  - (5) New business;
  - (6) Committee reports; and
  - (7) For the good of the order.

#### Rule 109. Special Questions

- (a) The Officers of the Conference, by majority vote, may call for a vote of the Conference on a special question. No special meeting is required for a special question.
- (b) The Chair shall provide Members the special question in writing at least twenty-four hours prior to the vote.
- (c) A Member may vote on the special question(s) in person, by telephone, e-mail, or any combination thereof at the discretion of the Chair.
- (d) At least a majority of Members of the Conference must vote on any special question and the majority of those votes shall constitute the binding act of the Conference.

- (e) The Chair shall report the result of the vote on any special question to the Secretary/Treasurer who shall include the special question and the result of the vote shall be included in the minutes circulated prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

#### Rule 110. Committees and Advisory Panels

- (a) There shall be a standing Budget Review Committee consisting of the Chair, the immediate past Chair, and the Vice Chair. The Budget Review Committee shall review each Member's budget request and present those requests to the Joint Judiciary Interim Committee and the Joint Appropriations Committee of the Wyoming Legislature, with the Committee's recommendations.
- (b) There shall be a standing Docket Review Committee consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair, and immediate Past Chair. The Docket Review Committee shall review each Member's Report of Matters Under Advisement and may make recommendations to individual Members or the Conference.
- (c) There shall be a standing Legislative Liaison Committee. The committee shall consist of five Members appointed by the Chair. The Chair shall serve as an ex-officio member. The terms of the Members shall be three years and shall be staggered.
- (d) There shall be a standing Court Reporter Committee. The committee shall consist of five Members appointed by the Chair. Each committee Member's official court reporter shall serve as an ex-officio member.
- (e) The Conference, or the Chair, may establish ad hoc committees from time to time as necessary. The Chair shall appoint members to such committees.
- (f) The Conference may establish advisory panels consisting of Members, members of the bar, members of the public, or any combination thereof. Such panels shall be established to provide expertise and assistance in specific areas, as the Conference deems necessary. The Chair shall appoint members to such advisory panels.
- (g) Recognizing that Members are often called upon to serve on outside committees within all branches of Wyoming state government, the Wyoming State Bar, the American Bar Association, and other entities formed to promote the law, the legal system and the administration of justice, the Chair may appoint Members to serve on such committees.
- (h) At all times, two Members shall serve on the Commission on Judicial Conduct and Ethics. Representatives to the Commission shall be elected by the Conference on an as needed basis. A Member shall serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- (i) At all times, three Members shall serve on the Wyoming Judicial Counsel (WJC). The terms of the Members shall be three years and shall be staggered so that a Member is

elected to the WJC each year at the April meeting of the Conference. No Member shall serve more than two consecutive terms on the WJC.

#### Rule 111. Personnel

- (a) The Conference has adopted the Guide to Judicial Branch Employment (Guide). The policies and procedures included in the Guide apply to all District Court employees.
- (b) Official Court Reporters shall not perform any free-lance work. Members may require their Official Court Reporter to provide real-time transcription.
- (c) Unless a Member agrees otherwise, Official Court Reporters shall provide the equipment and software necessary for real-time transcription.

#### Rule 112. Budgets

- (a) Each Member must submit a proposed annual budget for their court to the Budget Review Committee one month before the judicial branch submits its budget to the legislature.
- (b) Each Member shall ensure that all funds in the budget for their court are appropriately used and managed.

#### Rule 113. Dockets

- (a) Each Member is responsible for scheduling and management of their own workload.
- (b) Each Member shall assure that work is completed in a timely manner. Members should strive to avoid keeping appeals under advisement for more than 120 days and other matters under advisement for more than 90 days.
- (c) Each Member shall review the docket of their court at least twice annually and take such action as is necessary, consistent with the rules and the nature and complexity of each matter, to resolve all items on the docket in a timely manner.
- (d) Each Member is responsible for implementing improvements in case-flow management as they deem appropriate.
- (e) The Members in each judicial district shall adopt a case assignment system which assigns cases randomly or by type in a manner which balances their workloads. The Members in each judicial district shall provide a description of their case assignment system to the Docket Review Committee when any new system is implemented or upon request.
- (f) Each Member shall submit a Report of Matters Under Advisement to the Docket Review Committee twice annually. Reports of Matters Under Advisement, any data or

communications related thereto, whether in the possession of an individual Member or the Docket Review Committee, are confidential internal work product of the Conference to be used solely for the improvement of the courts.

Rule 114. Annual Dues

- (a) The Conference may collect annual dues from Members to pay for its meetings and activities.
- (b) The Conference shall set the amount of any annual dues which shall be collected at the regular meeting in September.

Rule 115. Effective Date and History

- (a) These rules, any part thereof, or any future amendment thereto shall become effective upon majority vote of the judges present at a meeting where a quorum is present and which meeting is called for the purpose of considering these rules or amendments.
- (b) These rules were unanimously adopted April 27, 2001, amended on December 12, 2014, April 24, 2020, and April 29, 2022.

Passed and adopted April 25, 2024.

  
Secretary/Treasurer