

New Ethics Guide for Judges and Their Families

A judge is still a judge in the public's eye when he or she leaves the courthouse, and a judge is still part of a family when he or she departs from home in the morning. How the code of judicial conduct affects a judge and his or her family is the topic of *An Ethics Guide for Judges and Their Families*, a new publication from the American Judicature Society (AJS).

This guide, which was written by Cynthia Gray, director of the AJS Center for Judicial Conduct Organizations, lists examples of permitted and prohibited conduct based on case law and advisory opinions. The topics covered include

- Misuse of office, such as presiding in a family member's case and asking for favors from prosecutors, judges, and police officers
- Disqualification when a relative is a party or an officer or employee of a party or has an economic interest in a case

- Gifts a judge is required to discourage family members from accepting
- Political activity by members of a judge's family, such as family members participating in a judge's campaign or vice versa
- Public comment, such as taking stands on controversial issues or responding to criticism of a judge's decision

The *Guide* also offers suggestions on judicial family issues such as stress, benefits and challenges for children, and security. A related discussion guide contains materials a judicial spouse or other leader can use to plan a program on ethics or related topics for a meeting of judges and their families.

An Ethics Guide for Judges and Their Families and the discussion guide were developed under a grant from the State Justice Institute. The cost is \$25 for the *Ethics Guide* and \$10 for the discussion guide. For more information, see www.ajs.org/ethics14.html or contact Rodney Wilson at rwilson@ajs.org. 

States Remain Committed to Building Public Trust and Confidence in the Justice System

Implementation of the National Action Plan to improve public trust and confidence is under way. Recent survey information indicates states are working on a variety of issues that emerged from the 1999 National Conference on Public Trust and Confidence in the Justice System.

Chief among these are efforts to make courts more inclusive and outreaching and to improve external communication. Please visit The National Center for State Courts' Web site at <http://www.ncsc.dni.us/PTC.HTM> to learn more about state activities to improve public trust. 

AJA Members Honored by Their Peers

Two AJA members were honored during the spring for their service to their communities.

James W. Faison III, chief judge of the municipal court in Camden, N.J., was honored as a distinguished alumnus by the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, which recognizes the contributions of graduates in the political, education, military, economic, business,

entertainment, and social arenas of the nation and the world. Chief Judge Faison is an alumnus of Tyler College in Texas and a member of the AJA Board of Governors (District III).

Richard Lee Price, acting justice of the New York State Supreme Court, received the Leonard Lerner Award for Exemplary Pro Bono Publico Service from the New York County Lawyers' Association. Justice Price served as AJA's president from 1991 to 1992. 