

County Attorney Files Petition to Amend Commission on Judicial Conduct Rules

On September 15, the Maricopa County Attorney's Office filed a petition with the supreme court to change the Commission on Judicial Conduct Rules 9 and 16. The petition includes the following proposals:

1. To make commission disclosure rules similar to the rules for disclosing attorney discipline records.
2. To allow the press and the public to view the record of *all* proceedings after disposition.
3. To disclose the outcome of all complaints: dismissals, advisory letters, diversions, admonitions, reprimands and, of course, formal sanctions.
4. To amend the definition of "record" to include all the documents filed in a case from the original complaint to final disposition.
5. To limit confidential matters to draft documents, attorney work product, deliberations and information subject to protective orders.
6. To change discretionary disclosure of the final disposition of complaints to mandatory disclosure.
7. To add language clarifying that complainants, judges and witnesses are free to disclose information about proceedings.

Given the importance of these proposed changes to the judiciary and the need to study them carefully before responding, the commission requested an extension of time to reply. The deadline for filing a response is now January 31, 2005.

We have posted the entire petition on our website. If you would like to read it, click on www.supreme.state.az.us/ethics and look under "Rules."