

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA

In the Matter of:)
)
PILOT PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE) Administrative Order
EFFICIENCY OF THE ATTORNEY) No. 2003-110
DISCIPLINE SYSTEM)
)
_____)

The Court has taken action in recent years to improve the fairness and timeliness of its attorney discipline system, and it continues to examine ways in which the system may be improved. In furtherance of this purpose the Court on June 9, 2003 issued its order in Supreme Court No. R-03-0002 revising the Court's Rules regarding the attorney discipline process, Rules 46 through 74, Arizona Rules of the Supreme Court.

The Court has determined that there are additional changes to the discipline process that may improve its operation. One of the issues identified in the Court's review of the process is the difficulty that volunteer hearing officers experience in balancing their responsibilities to their practice with the demands of their duties of a hearing officer. The use of retired judges who can devote extended time to the hearing of a disciplinary proceeding may enable complex cases to be heard and completed more expeditiously than can be done presently. A pilot program involving the assignment of retired judges to a limited number of attorney discipline cases will permit an assessment of the benefits of assigning retired judges in this manner. At the conclusion of the pilot program, a determination of the advisability of a permanent change to the Court's Rules can be made.

Now, therefore, pursuant to Article VI, Section 3 of the Arizona Constitution,

IT IS ORDERED authorizing the establishment of a pilot project for the utilization of retired judges as hearing officers to preside in hearings in attorney discipline matters pursuant to Rules 46 through 74, Arizona Rules of the Supreme Court, and that the pilot project shall run for a period not to exceed two years from the date of this Administrative Order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 50, Arizona Rules of the Supreme Court, the Disciplinary Clerk may assign as a hearing officer pursuant to Rule 57(a)2, Arizona Rules of the Supreme Court, any retired judge who has indicated to the Court a willingness to be called back to active duty as a hearing officer.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this pilot program will be evaluated at the end of 2005 and a determination made at that time whether to utilize retired judges as hearing officers on a permanent basis.

DATED this 4th day of December 2003.

CHARLES E. JONES
Chief Justice