

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

It is the responsibility of the Alabama State Bar (ASB) to formulate the Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct, to respond to criticisms and suggestions concerning the rules, and to enforce the mandate of the rules. Further, complaints against lawyers are investigated by grievance committees of eight (8) local bar associations and by the Alabama State Bar Office of General Counsel. Reports of recommendations of these committees and of the General Counsel are considered and approved or modified by the Disciplinary Commission of the ASB. In appropriate cases, discipline is imposed, either by consent or after hearing, and may range from a private reprimand to disbarment. This entire procedure is conducted pursuant to the Alabama Rules of Disciplinary Procedure which were promulgated by the Supreme Court of Alabama pursuant to their inherent authority and responsibility to supervise the conduct of lawyers.

It is the responsibility of the committee to continuously study the entire process of lawyer discipline in Alabama and to make recommendations for improvement of the process, as well as revisions in the Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct and Alabama Rules of Disciplinary Procedure in order that the profession be properly governed. To that end, the committee is:

- (a) to monitor whether the rules meet the needs of the legal profession and the public;
- (b) to serve as a clearinghouse for all proposed amendments or changes to the rules;
- (c) to make recommendations to the Board of Bar Commissioners concerning proposed changes to the rules, and to report whether such changes are meritorious, are in language, style, and grammar consistent with the rules; are technically consistent with other unamended rules; and are presented in a unified and coherent manner so as to prevent piecemeal submission to the Alabama Supreme Court;
- (d) to provide technical assistance and advice to any person seeking or advocating rules changes;
- (e) to provide a non-adjudicative forum for those persons who wish to air a complaint or written criticism of any matter relating to lawyer ethics; and
- (f) to monitor the grievance process, its structure, control, forms of discipline, confidentiality and funding; and
- (g) to monitor and evaluate those local grievance committees which have been approved by the Board of Bar Commissioners.

Additionally, the committee is directed to specifically address recommendations of those commissions of the American Bar Association concerning the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct and lawyer discipline, and their applicability in Alabama.

The committee should elect from its membership a secretary who should be responsible for a written record of its actions. The secretary, or a designee, should keep minutes of all meetings of the committee, or any subcommittee thereof. The original of the minutes will be filed with the Alabama State Bar within fourteen (14) days after the meeting, to be made a part of the committee's permanent file.

The committee may divide itself into such subcommittees as may be necessary or appropriate to effectively carry out its functions. The chairperson shall appoint sub-chairs for each subcommittee. The committee and any subcommittees should meet at the call of the chairperson or sub-chair; provided, however, that the committee as a whole should meet no less than two times during the year.

Each member of the committee is specifically charged with attending the meetings of the committee, participating in the meetings of the committee, making known to other members relevant experiences and viewpoints of the participant; and voting in accordance with the members' views so as to further the best interests of the public and the bar.

The Alabama State Bar, through its designated staff liaison, will assist the committee in carrying out its purpose. To this end, the chairperson is requested to consult the staff liaison when scheduling meetings. On three weeks' notice, the committee may conduct its meeting at bar headquarters.

Done this 29th day of September, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. G. Methvin, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Robert G. Methvin, Jr., President
Alabama State Bar