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The Commission on Judicial Disabilities was established by constitutional amendment in 1966 (Chapter 773, Acts of 1965; Const., Art. IV, sec. 4A). The Commission is empowered to investigate complaints against members of the Maryland Judiciary. It conducts hearings, or takes informal action as it deems necessary, provided that the judge involved has been properly notified.

Commission operating procedures involve a preliminary investigation to determine whether to initiate formal proceedings, after which a hearing may be held regarding the judge's alleged misconduct or disability. If, as a result of these hearings, the Commission, by majority vote, decides that a judge should be retired, removed, censured, or publicly reprimanded, it recommends that course of action to the Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals may also order a more severe discipline of the judge than the Commission recommends. In addition, the Commission has the power in limited situations to issue a private reprimand.

The Commission's primary function is to receive, investigate, and hear complaints against Maryland judges. Formal complaints must be in writing and notarized, but no particular form is required. Individuals also may write or call the Commission to express dissatisfaction concerning the outcome of a case or some judicial ruling.

Pursuant to a revision in Maryland Rule 1227, the Commission also supplies judicial nominating commissions with confidential information concerning reprimands to or pending charges against those judges seeking nomination to judicial offices.

The Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Governor. Members include four judges presently serving on the bench, two members of the bar who have been engaged in legal practice for at least fifteen years, and one lay person representing the public (Code Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, secs. 13-401 through 13-403; Md. Rule 1227).

COURT OF APPEALS STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Chairperson: Alan M. Wilner

Francis M. Arnold; Walter M. Baker; Lowell R. Bowen; Robert R. Bowic; Albert D. Brault; Howard S. Chasanow; D. Warren Donohue; James S. Getty; John O. Herrmann; H. Thomas Howell; Harry S. Johnson; Alexander G. Jones; Joseph H. H. Kaplan; James J. Lombardi; Paul V. Niemeyer; Anne C. Ogletree; Joseph E. Owens; Kenneth C. Proctor; Linda M. Richards; Mary Ellen T. Rinehardt; A. James Smith; Melvin J. Sykes.

Julia M. Freit, *Reporter*

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The Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure, known as the Rules Committee, was originally appointed by an order of the Court of Appeals in 1946 to succeed an ad hoc Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure appointed by the Court in 1940.

The Committee recommends changes in or additions to Court of Appeals rules governing the practice and procedure of law and judicial administration. Its membership consists of lawyers, judges, and other persons competent in judicial practice, procedure, or administration (Code Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, sec. 13-301; Md. Rule 1225).

STATE BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS

Chairperson: Charles H. Dorsey, Jr., 1988

John F. Mudd, 1987; John W. Sause, Jr., 1989; Robert H. Reinhart, 1990; Pamela J. White, 1990; William F. Abell, Jr., 1991; Jonathan A. Azrael, 1991.

John E. Boerner, *Secretary to the Board*

Joanne G. Dowgwilllo, *Clerk to the Board*

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Originally, the various local courts were authorized to examine persons seeking to be admitted to the practice of law in Maryland. The examinations of attorneys remained as a function of local courts until 1898, when the State Board of Law Examiners was created (Chapter 139, Laws of 1898). The Board is composed of seven lawyers appointed to five-year terms by the Court of Appeals.