

Joint Ethics Committee on its own motion may render advisory opinions as it deems necessary. Each advisory opinion shall be kept and indexed in relation to the subject matter for the purpose of building a body of case law.

(b) Either presiding officer may refer any question of propriety relating to the use of expense funds governed by duly adopted guidelines to the Joint Ethics Committee for recommendation.]

15-514. JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE - WRITTEN OPINIONS.

(A) (1) A LEGISLATOR MAY REQUEST A WRITTEN OPINION FROM THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE WITH RESPECT TO THE PROPRIETY OF ANY CURRENT OR PROPOSED CONDUCT OF THE LEGISLATOR AND INVOLVING THE APPLICABLE STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR LEGISLATORS ESTABLISHED BY LAW, RULE, OR OTHER STANDARD OF ETHICAL CONDUCT.

(2) A REQUEST FOR AN OPINION SHALL:

- (I) BE IN WRITING AND SIGNED BY THE LEGISLATOR;
- (II) BE ADDRESSED TO THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE OR EITHER CO-CHAIRMAN;
- (III) BE SUBMITTED IN A TIMELY MANNER; AND
- (IV) INCLUDE A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE STATEMENT OF THE RELEVANT FACTS.

(3) IF A REQUEST IS UNCLEAR OR INCOMPLETE, THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE MAY SEEK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM THE LEGISLATOR.

(4) (I) THE COUNSEL TO THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE SHALL PREPARE FOR THE COMMITTEE A RESPONSE TO EACH WRITTEN REQUEST FOR AN OPINION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.

(II) EACH RESPONSE SHALL DISCUSS ALL APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES, OR OTHER STANDARDS.

(5) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (6)(I) OF THIS SUBSECTION, AN OPINION MUST BE APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE.

(6) (I) THE CO-CHAIRMEN OF THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE MAY APPROVE AN OPINION ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE IF THEY DETERMINE THAT THE OPINION IS CONSISTENT WITH PRIOR PRECEDENT AND THEREFORE DOES NOT REQUIRE CONSIDERATION BY THE FULL COMMITTEE.

(II) AN OPINION FOR WHICH APPROVAL BY THE CO-CHAIRMEN UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH IS ANTICIPATED SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED TO EACH MEMBER OF THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE NOT LATER THAN THE NEXT MEETING OF THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE.