

[3-102.]15-518. SAME — FURTHER PROCEEDINGS.

[(j) (1)] (A) Except as to proceedings terminated in accordance with [paragraph (2) of subsection (k)] § 15-517(B) OF THIS SUBTITLE, the legislator shall be notified and provided with a copy of the statement filed or prepared pursuant to [subsection (i)] § 15-515 OF THIS SUBTITLE and of the preliminary summary prepared pursuant to [subsection (k)(3)] § 15-517(C) OF THIS SUBTITLE and allowed 15 days to file a written answer to the preliminary summary.

[(2) (i)] (B) (1) Following notification of the legislator, the JOINT ETHICS Committee shall:

[1.] (I) Terminate the proceedings if an answer from the legislator is timely filed and the JOINT ETHICS Committee finds that, upon a basis set forth in [subsection (k)(1)] § 15-517(A) OF THIS SUBTITLE, further proceedings are not justified, in which case [subsection (k)(2)] § 15-517(B) OF THIS SUBTITLE shall govern.

[2.] (II) Schedule a hearing if:

[A.] 1. An answer from the legislator is timely filed but the JOINT ETHICS Committee finds no basis for terminating the proceedings pursuant to item 1 of this subparagraph; or

[B.] 2. No answer is timely filed.

[(ii)] (2) No hearing shall be scheduled less than 20 days after written notice thereof is provided to the legislator and to any person who filed the statement.

[(iii)] (3) The JOINT ETHICS Committee may amend the preliminary summary at any time prior to the hearing. If the preliminary summary is amended, the process established in [subparagraph (i) and (iii)] PARAGRAPHS (1) AND (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION shall be repeated.

[(3)](C) At the hearing, the JOINT ETHICS Committee shall develop an evidentiary record relating to the issues raised by the preliminary summary and any amendments thereto. The legislator may present evidence, cross-examine witnesses, face and examine any person who has filed a statement in the matter, and be represented by counsel. The hearing shall be recorded.

[(4)](D) Based upon the record compiled at the hearing, the JOINT ETHICS Committee shall make one of the following findings:

[(i)] (1) There is no cause for further proceedings because there is no probable cause to believe that a violation may have occurred;

[(ii)] (2) There is probable cause to believe that a violation may have occurred but further proceedings are not justified because:

[1.] (I) Any violation that may have occurred is not within the jurisdiction of the JOINT ETHICS Committee;