

RE: THE 2025 CODE OF CONDUCT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR COURT OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL

A.M. No. 25-06-11-SC, October 28, 2025

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Public office is a public trust. The Judiciary, as with every other government institution, is founded on public trust. Court officials and personnel, as the frontline actors in the administration of justice, are held to a higher standard of professional and ethical conduct. They are expected to embody independence, propriety, impartiality and equality, competence and diligence, and accountability in all aspects of their duties. Any act or omission that departs from these standards does not merely reflect on the court official or personnel involved, but imperils public trust in the Judiciary and undermines the rule of law.

Pursuant to its mandate under Section 6, Article VIII of the Constitution, the Court issued the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel in 2004. The Code of Conduct for Court Personnel refined the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees submitted by the Judicial Group on Strengthening Judicial Integrity before the participating Chief Justices, including then Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr., during its Third Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka in January 2003.

The Code of Conduct for Court Personnel, issued in 2004, recognized the "need to adopt norms of conduct that are specific to personnel in the Judiciary because of the special nature of their duties and responsibilities." It further recognized that "court personnel, from the lowliest employee to the clerk of court or any position lower than that of a judge or justice, are involved in the dispensation of justice, and parties seeking redress from the courts for grievances look upon court personnel as part of the Judiciary."

While these pronouncements remain true, the law, technology, and socio-economic structures have rapidly evolved since the promulgation of the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel more than two decades ago. These developments have placed new ethical demands upon court officials and personnel. Notably, the emergence of digital platforms has extended the visibility of these court actors and, by extension, their immediate family members, onto the online sphere, thereby requiring specific provisions on responsible and circumspect use of social media. The integration of artificial intelligence into court processes has likewise altered the nature of office functions within the Judiciary, calling for a reexamination of corresponding ethical responsibilities. Contemporary ethical challenges have likewise underscored the importance of reinforcing prohibitions against acceptance of gifts, tips, or other gratuities for assisting or attending to litigants, lawyers, or other court users. In keeping with the evolving standards of equity and inclusivity, a provision on the use of gender-fair, child-friendly, and culturally sensitive language across judicial communications is emphasized.

The Court, in the Resolution dated June 28, 2022, in Administrative Matter No. 22-04-26-SC, approved the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations (SPJI) 2022-2027, a comprehensive roadmap to address institutional challenges and ensure a justice system that is timely, fair, transparent, inclusive, and technologically adaptive.

Relatedly, the Court issued Memorandum Order No. 88-2023, dated August 2, 2023, creating the Sub-Committee for the Review of the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel, tasked to review and update the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel. The Sub-Committee conducted extensive regional consultation caravans in

the cities of Lipa, Davao, Bacolod, General Santos, and in Metro Manila to gather feedback from key stakeholders, including Justices, Judges, court officials and personnel, members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the academe, CSOs and NGOs, and law students.

Following these consultations, the Sub-Committee conducted a comprehensive final review and writeshop on April 14 to 15, 2025 in Metro Manila to harmonize the recommendations received during the regional consultations and finalize the proposed provisions in the new code of conduct, to be called the 2025 Code of Conduct and Accountability for Court Officials and Personnel, for approval by the Court En Banc.

FOR THESE REASONS, the Court resolves to APPROVE Administrative Matter No. 25-06-11-SC, entitled "The 2025 Code of Conduct and Accountability for Court Officials and Personnel."

This Code shall take effect after 15 calendar days following its publication in the Official Gazette or two newspapers of general circulation, and its posting on the official Supreme Court website.

SO ORDERED.

Gesmundo, C.J., Leonen, SAJ., Caguioa, Hernando, Lazaro-Javier, Inting, Gaerlan, Dimaampao, and Marquez, JJ., concur.

Zalameda,[*] Rosario,[*] J. Lopez,[*] and Kho, Jr.,[*] JJ., on official business, but left their concurring votes.

Villanueva,[*][*] J., on official leave, but left his concurring vote.

[*] On official business.

[*][*] On official leave.

EN BANC

A.M. No. 25-06-11-SC

THE 2025 CODE OF CONDUCT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR COURT OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, the efficient administration of justice is a sworn public trust reposed not solely in justices and judges, but in all officials and personnel of the Judiciary who serve as indispensable partners in ensuring that the judicial system functions with independence, propriety, impartiality and equality, competence and diligence, and accountability to the rule of law;

WHEREAS, Section 1, Article XI of the 1987 Philippine Constitution declares that public office is a public trust, and mandates all public officers, including court officials and personnel, to "be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency; act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives."

WHEREAS, court officials and personnel, as visible embodiments of the Judiciary, are held to higher standards of ethical conduct, and their actions, omissions, and behavior reflect upon the honor, dignity, and credibility of the entire Judiciary;

WHEREAS, in recognition of the pivotal role of court officials and personnel in the impartial and effective

administration of justice, and the adverse implications of any impropriety on the dignity and honor of the Judiciary, the Supreme Court of the Philippines issued the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel in 2004;

WHEREAS, the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel in 2004 supplemented the rules governing the ethical conduct of government officials and employees, and imposed upon court officials and personnel a duty to abide by norms of conduct specific to their duties and responsibilities;

WHEREAS, since the promulgation of the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel in 2004, there have been substantial developments in law, technology, and socio-economic structures which have materially altered the landscape within which court officials and personnel perform their duties and responsibilities;

WHEREAS, there is a pressing need to revise and update the Code of Conduct for Personnel to respond effectively to these developments, and to ensure continued fidelity to the values of competence, integrity, and accountability within the Judiciary;

WHEREAS, in the Resolution dated June 28, 2022 in Administrative Matter No. 22-04-26-SC, the Court approved the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations (SPJI) 2022-2027, an action plan to address institutional challenges in the Judiciary and to ensure that the administration of justice is timely and fair, transparent and accountable, equal and inclusive, and technologically adaptive;

WHEREAS, under the SPJI, the pursuit of ethical responsibility among court officials and personnel is a priority reform activity under the outcomes of Efficiency, Innovation and Access;

WHEREAS, pursuant to this mandate, the Supreme Court of the Philippines issued Memorandum Order No. 88-2023, dated August 2, 2023, creating the Sub-Committee for the Review of the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel, tasked with updating and revising the Code in accordance with contemporary demands;

WHEREAS, the Sub-Committee conducted a series of regional information and consultation campaigns to gather feedback and proposals from key stakeholders, including justices, judges, court officials, and personnel, members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the academe, CSOs and NGOs, and law students from across the country, thereby ensuring that the revised Code of Conduct reflects the lived realities and collective insights of the Judiciary.

NOW, THEREFORE, upon the recommendation of the chairperson and the vice-chairpersons of the Sub-Committee for the Review of the Code of Conduct for Court Personnel, the Court resolves to APPROVE "The 2025 Code of Conduct and Accountability for Court Officials and Personnel."

The 2025 Code of Conduct and Accountability for Court Officials and Personnel shall take effect after 15 calendar days following its publication in the Official Gazette or two newspapers of general circulation, and its posting on the official Supreme Court website.

(Sgd.) ALEXANDER G. GESMUNDO
Chief Justice

(Sgd.) MARVIC M.V.F. LEONEN
Senior Associate Justice

(Sgd.) ALFREDO BENJAMIN S. CAGUIOA
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) RAMON PAUL L. HERNANDO
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) AMY C. LAZARO-JAVIER
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) HENRI JEAN PAUL B. INTING
Associate Justice

(On official business, but left his concurring vote)
(Sgd.) RODIL V. ZALAMEDA
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) SAMUEL H. GAERLAN
Associate Justice

(On official business, but left his concurring vote)
(Sgd.) RICARDO R. ROSARIO
Associate Justice

(On official business, but left his concurring vote)
(Sgd.) JHOSEP Y. LOPEZ
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) JAPAR B. DIMAAMPAO
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) JOSE MIDAS P. MARQUEZ
Associate Justice

(On official business, but left his concurring vote)
(Sgd.) ANTONIO T. KHO, JR.
Associate Justice

(Sgd.) MARIA FILOMENA D. SINGH
Associate Justice

(On official leave, but left his concurring vote)
(Sgd.) RAUL B. VILLANUEVA
Associate Justice

THE 2025 CODE OF CONDUCT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR
COURT OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL

PREAMBLE

The administration of justice is a public service that is principally entrusted to the Judiciary. It does not rest alone, however, in the hands of justices and judges. For the efficient and effective administration of justice that is responsive and real-time, court officials and personnel play an integral and critical role.

Public office is a public trust, and all court officials and personnel, as such, shall at all times be accountable to the people. They are visible representations of the institution and must thus embody integrity in their professional and personal lives. Integrity, in turn, shall be exhibited by observing at all times independence, propriety, impartiality and equality, competence and diligence, and accountability.

This Code shall apply to all incumbent court officials and personnel of the Judiciary, except as otherwise provided herein.

CANON I

Independence

Independence of court officials and personnel is a pre-requisite for the efficient administration of justice.

It is the ability of court officials and personnel to perform their duties free from undue or unwarranted influence, restriction, pressure, or interference.

SECTION 1. Duty to uphold and maintain the independence of the Judiciary. – Court officials and personnel shall uphold, protect, and promote at all times the independence of the Judiciary as enshrined in the Constitution, laws, and rules.

It shall be the duty of court officials and personnel to maintain and embody at all times the independence of the Judiciary, in and out of court.

SECTION 2. Duty of vigilance in asserting the independence of the Judiciary. – Court officials and personnel shall be vigilant against any attempt to impair or diminish the independence of the Judiciary and resist any undue pressure from whatever source to suppress or defeat it. They shall act as vanguards to guarantee and defend the independence of the Judiciary.

SECTION 3. Duty to maintain a high standard of independence in the workplace to reinforce public confidence. – Court officials and personnel shall maintain a higher standard of independence to reinforce public confidence in the Judiciary.

SECTION 4. Duty to resist interference in the performance of duties. – Court officials and personnel shall resist any interference, pressure, or undue influence in the performance of their duties. They shall report any such act to the head of office, who shall make an evaluation of the circumstances.

Clerks of court, assistant clerks of court, and deputy clerks of court of collegiate courts shall report any interference, pressure, or undue influence in the performance of their duties to their presiding judges or presiding justices.

SECTION 5. Duty to avoid circumstances that would impede independence. – Court officials and personnel shall avoid circumstances that would impede or interfere with their independence. They shall not allow family, social, or other relationships to influence their conduct and compromise their independence.

Court officials and personnel shall avoid inappropriate connections with the executive and legislative branches of government, whether on the national or local level, and must also appear to be free therefrom, to allay any

suspicion that such connection will affect judicial independence.

Nevertheless, assistance from other government branches may be accepted, as allowed by law.

Until such time that the funding is allocated under the Judiciary appropriation of the annual budget, court officials and personnel may receive financial assistance from other government branches, including allowances, as allowed by the Local Government Code. In all cases, such financial assistance shall be restricted to work-related activities.

When the assistance is in the form of equipment, furniture, and supplies, court officials and personnel shall ensure that it is received solely in the name of the Judiciary and for its sole benefit. For assistance in the form of personnel complement, court officials and personnel shall ensure that confidentiality of information or records is strictly maintained and safeguarded.

Court officials and personnel shall observe the pertinent laws and rules in the receipt and documentation of any assistance hereunder.[1]

CANON II

Propriety

Court officials and personnel must not only be free from any impropriety, but must also be perceived to be so, with respect to their professional and personal conduct, including their activities on social media and use of artificial intelligence. They must live modestly and in accordance with their means.

SECTION 1. Avoidance of any act of impropriety. – Court officials and personnel shall, at all times, avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

SECTION 2. Freedom from undue influence. – Court officials and personnel shall not allow family, social, or other relationships to influence official conduct.

SECTION 3. Prohibition against claim of influence. – Court officials and personnel shall not make it appear that they have the power to influence or affect the outcome of a case or any other matter pending before their office.

SECTION 4. Prohibition against improper communications. – Except on official matters when allowed by the rules, court officials and personnel shall not communicate with lawyers, litigants, or their representatives, including on any social networking platform, on any pending matter before their office.

SECTION 5. Use of gender-fair, and child-friendly and culturally-sensitive language. – Court officials and personnel shall use only dignified, gender-fair, child-friendly and culturally sensitive language in all their personal and professional dealings. They shall avoid the use of abusive, intemperate, offensive, or otherwise improper language, oral or written, and whether made through traditional or electronic means, including all forms or types of mass or social media.

SECTION 6. Conduct towards co-workers and court users. – Court officials and personnel shall deal with co-workers and court users with professionalism, patience, dignity, and courtesy, using gender-fair, child-friendly, and culturally sensitive language.

SECTION 7. Prohibition against unwarranted special treatment. – Court officials and personnel shall treat everyone equally, unless required by law to be given a different standard of treatment.

SECTION 8. Prohibition against the private practice of law. – Lawyers in the Judiciary shall not engage in the private practice of law, unless authorized by the Supreme Court.

SECTION 9. Conditions for outside employment; court appearance. – Outside employment, subject to prior

notice and approval of the head of office, may be allowed under the following conditions:

(a)

The outside employment does not result or appear to result in a conflict of interest that adversely affects the integrity and dignity of the Judiciary;^[2]

(b)

The outside employment is not with a person or entity that practices law before the courts or deals with the Judiciary;

(c)

The outside employment will be performed outside of official time and will not affect or conflict with the performance of the court official's or personnel's duties and responsibilities;

(d)

The outside employment does not require the practice of law,^[3] unless the court official or personnel is employed as a professor, lecturer, or resource person in law schools, review or continuing education centers or similar institutions, in which case the court official or personnel shall comply with the relevant Supreme Court rules and regulations; and

(e)

The outside employment shall not be with the legislative or executive branch of government, unless specifically authorized by the Supreme Court.

Court officials and personnel may also appear as counsel on behalf of their immediate family members, with prior authority or clearance from the Supreme Court, provided that: (a) their representation will not conflict or tend to conflict with their official functions; (b) they must not use official time or resources in handling or preparing for the case; and (c) they must file a leave of absence every time they are required to attend to the case.

SECTION 10. Non-disclosure of confidential information. – Court officials and personnel shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information that has come to their knowledge or were obtained in the course of the performance of their duties, even after their separation from the service.

Confidential information refers to information not yet made a matter of public record relating to pending cases, such as drafts, internal memoranda, or record of internal deliberations, and similar papers. The notes, drafts, research papers, internal discussions, internal memoranda, records of internal deliberations, and similar papers that a justice or judge uses in preparing a decision, resolution or order shall remain confidential even after the decision, resolution, or order is made public.

SECTION 11. Prohibition against use of office for personal interests. – Court officials and personnel shall not lend or use the prestige of their office to advance, or appear to advance, their personal interests or those of others.

SECTION 12. Prohibited acts involving the discharge of duties. – When discharging their duties, court officials

and personnel shall not:

(a)

Enter into any contract with the Judiciary for services, supplies, equipment, or lease or sale of property, apart from the employment contract relating to their official position;

(b)

Use their official position to assist any member of their family to secure any contract or transaction with the Judiciary;

(c)

Recommend for employment in the Judiciary any member of the court official's or personnel's immediate family. Immediate family shall include the court official's or personnel's spouse or partner, their children, the spouses or partners of their children, their parents, and the parents of their spouse or partner;

(d)

Use their official position or the name of the Judiciary to secure outside employment for themselves, or that of any other person;

(e)

Use their official position to promise or give preferential treatment to any third party;

(f)

Directly or indirectly solicit or accept from court users, lawyers, litigants, or third parties dealing with the Judiciary, any gift, bequest, or favor, of any value on any occasion, except unsolicited gifts of small or insignificant value as a mere token of gratitude or friendship according to local customs and usage;

(g)

Use or indicate their office or position in letterheads, e-mails, or any form of communication, including social media and social networking platforms, to gain an advantage for their personal or private interest;

(h)

Use Judiciary resources for any personal or private purpose; and

(i)

Perform any act analogous or similar to the foregoing.

RULES ON THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

SECTION 13. Responsible use of social media and artificial intelligence. – Court officials and personnel must exercise restraint and caution when using social media and artificial intelligence.

SECTION 14. Ethical use of technology and artificial intelligence. – Court official's and personnel's use of technological tools and innovations shall be in accord with every person's fundamental rights, as well as ethical and professional standards. They shall exercise care and prudence in the use of technology and artificial intelligence, keeping in mind that these are merely tools to aid them in the performance of their official duties.

SECTION 15. Online posts. – Court officials and personnel shall not take advantage nor allow others to take advantage of the prestige of their office to advance their own interest or that of others through their online posts.

Court officials and personnel shall ensure that their online posts, whether made in a public or restricted privacy setting, always maintain respect for the law, uphold the dignity of the Judiciary and shield it from disrepute.

SECTION 16. Limitations on the use of social media. – Court officials and personnel shall not engage in online activities that are not in keeping with the Constitution, laws, rules, or this Code.

Court officials and personnel shall not use social media in violation of the sub judice principle, or to provoke or inflame divisive and contentious issues of public concern, or project an image not compatible with the dignity of their position or the institution.

Court officials and personnel shall not use in their online activities any language, image, video, or the like that are false, malicious, vulgar, scandalous, intemperate, abusive, or discriminatory. Neither shall court officials and personnel knowingly or maliciously post, share, upload, or otherwise disseminate false or unverified statements, claims, or commit any other act of disinformation.

At all times, court officials and personnel shall exercise prudence when engaging with others online, keeping in mind that such engagements even if made in small or private circles may be circulated to other groups or in other platforms.

SECTION 17. Prohibition against fraudulent accounts. – Court officials and personnel shall not create, maintain, or use accounts in social media to hide their identity for the purpose of circumventing the law or the provisions of this Code.

SECTION 18. Monitoring of social media accounts. – Court officials and personnel shall be responsible for monitoring their social media accounts. They shall avoid any online activity that might affect their independence, impartiality, and propriety.

SECTION 19. Social media activities of family members. – Court officials and personnel must also be attentive of social media activities, within their knowledge, of immediate family members that could reflect adversely on the Judiciary.

CANON III

Impartiality and Equality

Court officials and personnel must always observe impartiality and equality to maintain confidence in the justice system.

SECTION 1. Personal conduct in and out of office. – Court officials and personnel shall ensure that their conduct, in and outside the office, maintains and enhances the confidence of the public in the impartiality of the Judiciary.

SECTION 2. Performance of duty. – Court officials and personnel shall perform their duties without fear, favor, bias, or prejudice.

SECTION 3. Non-interference of personal interest. – Court officials and personnel shall not allow personal or private interest to influence their official duties and functions.

SECTION 4. Prohibition on recommending lawyers. – Court officials and personnel shall not recommend lawyers to litigants, prospective litigants, or anyone dealing with the Judiciary for personal interest or pecuniary gain.

SECTION 5. Prohibition against comments on pending matters. – Except when duly authorized, court officials and personnel shall not make any public comment, nor initiate or engage in any communication, regarding a case or official matter pending before their office.

SECTION 6. Prohibition against conflict of interest. – Court officials and personnel shall avoid conflict of interest in performing official duties.

Conflict of interest exists when the court official or personnel, in the performance of official duties, handles a matter in which they or any member of their immediate family might be personally or financially interested in.

No conflict of interest exists if any benefit accrues to the court official and personnel as a member of a profession, business, or group to the same extent as any other member of such profession, business, or group who does not hold a position in the Judiciary.

SECTION 7. Disclosure and effect of conflict of interest. – When court officials and personnel reasonably believe that a conflict of interest exists or may potentially exist, they shall promptly inform the head of office, who shall make an evaluation of the circumstances. If a conflict of interest exists, the head of office shall exclude the court official or personnel from further involvement in such matter and disclose the same to the parties involved.

A clerk of court shall, at the first available opportunity, disclose to the presiding judge their kinship with or relationship to a lawyer or a litigant that has a pending case before their court. If a conflict of interest exists, the presiding judge shall inhibit from further handling the case.

This rule shall apply to all clerks of court, assistant clerks of court, and deputy clerks of court of collegiate courts, insofar as relevant to them in the performance of their respective functions and duties.[4]

SECTION 8. Non-acceptance of gifts and tips. – Court officials and personnel shall not receive gifts, tips, or other gratuities for assisting or attending to litigants, lawyers, or other court users.

SECTION 9. Prohibition against discrimination. – In performing official duties, court officials and personnel shall not discriminate nor manifest any bias or prejudice by words or conduct against any person, including parties, witnesses, lawyers, and co-workers, based on nationality or ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, age, religion, educational attainment, marital, social, or financial status, political beliefs, and other similar factors.

SECTION 10. Prohibition against conduct or language that perpetuates bias, prejudice, or stereotypes. – Court officials and personnel shall refrain from any conduct or language that perpetuates or could perpetuate bias, prejudice, or stereotypes against any individual or group.

SECTION 11. Equal access to courts. – Court officials and personnel shall ensure equal access to justice for all individuals, and accord them the same opportunities to present their case and access court services.

CANON IV

Competence and Diligence

Competence is the sum of the knowledge, skills, values, and personal qualities of the court officials and personnel necessary to efficiently perform their duties and functions.

Diligence is the consistent and earnest effort of the court officials and personnel to discharge their functions in a manner that avoids delay, oppression and injustice.

SECTION 1. Requirement of high professional competence and diligence. – Court officials and personnel shall exhibit a higher level of professional competence and diligence as they discharge their official duties. The performance of such duties shall take precedence over all other activities.

SECTION 2. Commitment to duty. – Court officials and personnel shall, at all times, strive to perform their official and assigned duties faithfully, efficiently, and diligently.

SECTION 3. Promptness in responding to queries and requests. – Subject to existing laws and rules, court officials and personnel shall respond with promptness, but no later than 15 calendar days, to any query or request regarding official records and other court matters.

They shall exercise due care and attention in answering queries or requests about official court matters, and shall not give any legal advice.

SECTION 4. Strict observance of office hours. – Court officials and personnel shall strictly observe office hours in the assigned court and office and devote themselves exclusively to their functions and responsibilities.

SECTION 5. Responsible use of court resources. – Court officials and personnel shall responsibly and conscientiously preserve and utilize the Judiciary's resources, properties, and funds.

SECTION 6. Continuing education and trainings. – Court officials and personnel shall take reasonable steps to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills, values, and personal qualities necessary for the proper performance of their official duties, taking advantage of the training and other facilities made available to them.

They shall be knowledgeable in the proper use of technological tools that aid in the discharge of their official functions. Court officials and personnel shall responsibly utilize artificial intelligence tools. When used for research on relevant legal authorities, sources must always be verified and correctly cited.

SECTION 7. Proper custody and care of court records and evidence. – To maintain the integrity and confidentiality of court records and evidence, court officials and personnel shall not alter, falsify, destroy, mutilate, fail to make required entries on, nor distribute without authority any official court document, record, or evidence within their possession and/or control. This provision does not prohibit amendment, correction or expunction of records or documents, or disposal or destruction of evidence, pursuant to a court order.

SECTION 8. Speedy discharge of duties and timely enforcement of decisions, orders and processes. – Court officials and personnel shall accomplish their assigned tasks with dispatch. They shall be mindful of compliance periods, as required by laws and rules.

In the enforcement of decisions, orders, and other court processes, all court officials and personnel shall strictly follow the prescribed periods therefor, aware as well of the limits of their functions. They shall not cause any undue delay or permit the same to occur.

SECTION 9. Scope of work. – Court officials and personnel shall not be required to perform any work or duty for the personal gain or benefit of their superior or co-worker, during or beyond office hours.

SECTION 10. Duty to uphold professionalism in the judiciary. – Court officials and personnel shall uphold professionalism and merits-based appointments and promotions in the judiciary. They shall not endorse, support, or recommend the employment, promotion, or advancement of any unqualified applicant in the Judiciary.

CANON V

Accountability

All court officials and personnel shall live up to the higher standards of efficiency and accountability in public service. They shall, at all times, preserve the integrity and dignity of our courts.

The failure of court officials and personnel to live up to the exacting standards of their position makes them accountable and unfit to discharge their duties.

SECTION 1. How instituted. –

(a)

Motu proprio. – Proceedings for the discipline of the court officials and personnel may be instituted, by the Judicial Integrity Office (JIO) on its own initiative, or upon the directive of the Supreme Court, or by referral from the appropriate offices of the tertiary level courts, or any administrative body, such as but not limited to the Civil Service Commission, the Commission on Audit, the Office of the Ombudsman, Office of the President, or the Department of Justice. Any report or other document that forms the basis of the action shall be made part of the records.

(b)

By complaint. – Disciplinary proceedings against court officials and personnel may also be instituted with the JIO by any interested person, either through:

(i)

a verified complaint, supported by affidavits of persons who have personal knowledge of the facts alleged therein or by authentic documents which may substantiate its allegations; or

(ii)

an anonymous complaint, provided, that its material averments may be readily verified, and/or substantiated by competent evidence, including public records.

In every case, the written verified or anonymous complaint shall state, clearly and concisely, the acts or omissions constituting the administrative offense under Sections 19 to 21 of this Canon.

If the verified or anonymous complaint is filed directly with the Supreme Court or with any court or office under the Judiciary, the same shall be referred to the JIO as if it was originally filed before the latter, reckoned from the date the JIO receives the complaint.

SECTION 2. Effect of death, retirement, and separation from service to the proceedings. –

(a)

Circumstances already existing prior to the institution of the proceedings. – Disciplinary proceedings may not

be instituted against court officials and personnel who have already died, retired, or otherwise been separated from judicial service. However, for compelling reasons, such proceedings may still be instituted notwithstanding the retirement, resignation, or separation from judicial service of the court officials and personnel within 12 months from such retirement, resignation, or separation from the service.

(b)

Circumstances supervening only during the pendency of the proceedings. – Once disciplinary proceedings have already been instituted, the respondent's supervening resignation, retirement, or separation from judicial service shall not preclude or affect the continuation of the proceedings.

Disciplinary proceedings instituted against court officials and personnel who die during the pendency of the proceedings shall be dismissed with prejudice, but subject to any surviving civil claim against the estate of the deceased or the latter's legal heirs or representatives.

(c)

Circumstances not affecting the proceedings, exceptional circumstances. – The desistance of the complainant, settlement, compromises, restitution, withdrawal of the disciplinary action by the complainant, failure of the complainant to prosecute the same, the death of the complainant, the respondent's transfer of residence to a foreign country, or analogous circumstances, shall not interrupt or terminate the investigation of disciplinary actions conducted by the JIO, unless exceptional circumstances exist to warrant the termination or dismissal of the action, as may be determined and recommended by the JIO to the Supreme Court.

SECTION 3. Action initiated by the Supreme Court or the JIO; verified comment. – In disciplinary proceedings initiated by the Supreme Court or the JIO, the respondent shall be notified of the relevant acts or omissions and the applicable Canons, and served with a copy of the records, documents, newspapers or media reports, or other documents used as basis for the disciplinary action. Thereafter, within 10 calendar days from notice and service, or any extended period granted by the JIO not exceeding 30 calendar days, the respondent shall file a verified comment, supported by affidavits of persons who have personal knowledge of the facts alleged and/or by documents which may substantiate respondent's defenses.

SECTION 4. Initial action when proceedings initiated by complaint; verified comment. – If the action is commenced by a verified or anonymous complaint, and the JIO finds factual basis to proceed, the respondent shall be notified of the relevant acts or omissions and the applicable Canons, and served with a copy of the complaint, including its attachments. Within 10 calendar days from notice, or any extended period granted by the JIO, not exceeding 30 calendar days, the respondent shall be required to file a verified comment, supported by affidavits of persons who have personal knowledge of the facts alleged and/or documents which may substantiate respondent's defenses.

SECTION 5. Recommendation for outright dismissal of complaint. – If the JIO finds no factual basis to proceed on a verified or anonymous complaint, it shall no longer docket the complaint and instead recommend its outright dismissal.

Moreover, if the complaint, on its face, appears to be baseless and filed only to harass or embarrass the respondent, or to hinder the respondent's qualification for promotion, or to unduly delay the release of retirement benefits, the JIO shall recommend to the Supreme Court that the complainant be required to show cause why he or

she should not be cited in contempt. Furthermore, if the complainant is a lawyer or assisted by one, the counsel shall also be required to show cause why he or she should not be administratively sanctioned as a member of the Philippine Bar and as an officer of the Court.

Litigants and/or counsel who have a record of filing vexatious or harassment complaints against court officials and personnel shall be presumed to have abused the court processes and, if found guilty, shall be sanctioned for contempt of court and/or under the pertinent administrative rules, whichever is applicable.

This rule shall apply to court personnel who have a record of filing vexatious or harassment complaints against court officials and fellow personnel.

SECTION 6. Consequence of failure to comment. – Failure of the respondent to file a verified comment shall, unless otherwise justified, result in a waiver of participation in the proceedings, and the investigation may proceed based solely on the complaint and available evidence on record.

SECTION 7. Preliminary grievance meetings before the JIO. – In administrative complaints involving less serious and light offenses, where the complainant and the respondent belong to the same office, branch, or court station, the JIO shall not, in the meantime, docket the complaint and instead shall direct the parties to undergo a mandatory preliminary grievance meeting to explore the possibility of resolving the grievance by discussion. At least two grievance meetings shall be conducted, taking no longer than 60 calendar days from the first meeting.

Should there be a resolution of the complaint, the JIO shall record such resolution and declare the case closed and terminated. If there is no resolution despite the meetings, the complaint shall be docketed and processed like other complaints.

Even if there is a resolution of the grievance, but the Judicial Integrity Officer determines that there is basis to proceed on another ground independent of the grievance, the JIO shall docket that part of the complaint and proceed accordingly.

SECTION 8. Prohibited motions and pleadings. – The following submissions are prohibited and shall only be noted without action:

(a)

motion for a bill of particulars or for clarification;

(b)

motion to dismiss;

(c)

motion to quash;

(d)

memoranda;

(e)

supplemental pleadings including reply and rejoinder; and

(f)

motion for reconsideration of an order of outright dismissal.

SECTION 9. Administrative case considered as disciplinary action as a member of the bar. – An administrative case against any court official and personnel who is a member of the Bar shall also be treated as a disciplinary action against that individual as a member of the Bar, provided, that the complaint imputes acts or omissions which may constitute violations of the Lawyer's Oath or the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability.

If the complaint fails to include such specific statement, or if the disciplinary proceedings are instituted by the Supreme Court or the JIO on its own initiative, the respondent, in the interest of due process, must first be required to show cause in this respect before being likewise disciplined as a member of the Bar, as may be warranted by the circumstances of the case.

The disciplinary action against the respondent as a member of the Bar shall be docketed as a separate administrative case but shall be consolidated with and jointly threshed out in the investigation of the administrative complaint against the respondent as a court official and personnel. The JIO shall include the findings and recommendations on said disciplinary action in the report submitted to the Supreme Court.

SECTION 10. Preventive suspension of respondent. – The Supreme Court may, on its own initiative or upon recommendation of the JIO, for compelling reasons, order the preventive suspension of the respondent for a period not exceeding 90 calendar days, unless earlier lifted by the Supreme Court. Upon the lapse of the period of preventive suspension, the respondent shall be automatically reinstated in the service, unless the Supreme Court finds compelling reasons to extend the suspension. Upon reporting back to work, the respondent shall submit a written manifestation that the period of preventive suspension has lapsed.

In case of several complaints arising from the same act or omission, the respondent may only be preventively suspended once, subject to the preceding paragraph.

If the respondent is exonerated from any administrative liability, the respondent shall be paid back salaries, allowances, and other economic benefits for the entire period of preventive suspension.[5]

Preventive suspension may be imposed to enable the JIO or any other office tasked by the Supreme Court to conduct an unhampered formal investigation.

SECTION 11. Withholding of Retirement Benefits. – If the respondent is retiring or has retired from service, the Supreme Court may, on its own initiative or upon recommendation of the JIO, order the withholding of the respondent's retirement benefits, in full or in part, for a period not exceeding three months from the effectivity date of their retirement.

Within 60 days from the effectivity date of retirement, and in all cases no later than 15 days before the expiration of the three-month period, the JIO shall submit a report to the Supreme Court on the status of the proceedings and the causes of delay, if any.

If proceedings are not terminated or resolved within the said three month-period, the respondent's retirement benefits shall be immediately released to them, unless it is shown that the delay in the resolution of the case is for

justifiable reasons or is attributable to the respondent. If the delay in the resolution of the case is for justifiable reasons or is attributable to the respondent, then retirement benefits shall not be released pending full resolution of the case.

The release of the respondent's retirement benefits shall be without prejudice to the final outcome of the administrative or disciplinary case.

The withholding of retirement benefits shall not affect the respondent's vested entitlement thereto under existing retirement laws, and the same shall be released in full upon exoneration.

Retirement benefits may also be withheld, in accordance with the foregoing rules, if the Court official or personnel is the subject of a pending criminal case where the act or omission involved also constitutes a violation of this Code.

The benefits withheld shall in no case include the court official or personnel's terminal or accrued leave benefits.

SECTION 12. Procedure for formal investigation. –

(a)

When hearings are not required. – A disciplinary action against any respondent which may already be resolved on the basis of the pleadings, public or court records, or other documents or papers on record without need of a hearing, shall be deemed submitted for the preparation and submission by the JIO of a report. The JIO shall notify the parties that the case has been submitted for resolution without the need for any hearing.

(b)

When hearings are required. – If based on the pleadings of the parties, there is a prima facie case against the respondent which requires a hearing to resolve substantial factual issues raised, the JIO shall set such hearing, with due notice to the parties.

At the hearing, the parties may be heard by themselves and/or through counsel. If after due notice, the complainant or respondent fails to appear, the investigation shall proceed ex parte. Furthermore, the parties may present documentary and/or object evidence, as well as testimonial evidence in the form of judicial affidavits to serve as the direct testimony of the parties and/or their witnesses; after which, they may be cross-examined by the other party or counsel, and may further be examined by the JIO. No hearing shall last more than 30 calendar days from the date of the first setting.

(c)

JIO report. – The report, containing findings of facts and recommendations, shall be submitted to the Supreme Court within 60 calendar days from the JIO's receipt of said pleadings, records or documents, or termination of the hearing, without prejudice to an extension granted by the Supreme Court for valid reasons, not exceeding 30 calendar days.

SECTION 13. Functions of the JIO during hearings. – The JIO shall administer oaths to the parties and their witnesses, and issue subpoena ad testificandum and duces tecum, conduct ocular inspections and take depositions of the complainant or witnesses, as may be warranted and in accordance with the laws and rules. The failure or refusal to obey or comply with any subpoena ad testificandum and duces tecum issued by the JIO shall be referred

to the Supreme Court for contempt proceedings, which shall proceed independently of the administrative proceedings.

SECTION 14. Referral of fact-finding investigation. – The JIO may delegate the fact-finding investigation of court officials and personnel to the Office of the Judiciary Marshals (OJM)[6] or to the appropriate offices or committees in the Judiciary.

SECTION 15. Termination of the investigation and submission of report. – If the JIO delegates the fact-finding investigation to the OJM or any appropriate committee of the Judiciary, the latter shall terminate its investigation and submit its Report to the JIO within 60 calendar days from the date of delegation, without prejudice to an extension granted by the Supreme Court for valid reasons not exceeding 30 calendar days.

SECTION 16. Action of the Supreme Court. – The Supreme Court shall take action on the report as may be warranted by the facts, this Code, and the laws and the rules.

A copy of the decision or resolution of the Supreme Court shall be served immediately on the parties by electronic mail, and a physical copy shall also be sent by registered mail not later than 30 calendar days from promulgation.

A copy thereof shall likewise be attached to the 201 file of the respondent. In case of court officials and personnel who are members of the Bar, a copy shall also be furnished to the Office of the Bar Confidant and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

SECTION 17. Confidentiality of proceedings and records. – All proceedings, records, and reports in administrative disciplinary investigations shall be confidential and for the exclusive use of the Supreme Court. The decision and resolution in such disciplinary proceedings shall be appended to the 201 file of the concerned court officials and personnel.

Any unauthorized disclosure or tampering of records shall render the responsible party liable for contempt of court, in addition to other sanctions, as may be provided by law.

SECTION 18. Classification of offenses. – Administrative offenses against court officials and personnel are classified as Serious, Less Serious, or Light Offenses.

SECTION 19. Serious Offenses. – Serious Offenses include:

(a)

Gross misconduct constituting violations of this Code, the Code of Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees,[7] or the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability for court officials and personnel who are members of the Bar;

(b)

Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude;

(c)

Bribery, direct and indirect, or violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act;[8]

(d)

Falsification of official documents, including making untruthful statements in the certificate of service;

(e)

Serious dishonesty;

(f)

Gross neglect of duty;

(g)

Borrowing money or property from lawyers or litigants in a case pending before the court;

(h)

Gross immorality;

(i)

Grave abuse of authority, or conduct unbecoming of a court official and personnel or prejudicial conduct that gravely besmirches or taints the reputation of the service;

(j)

Vulgar or scandalous conduct that gravely besmirches or taints the reputation of the institution;

(k)

Sexual harassment or any other form of sexual abuse;

(l)

Gross insubordination;

(m)

Possession or use of illegal drugs or substances, or possession of drug paraphernalia;^[9]

(n)

Illegal possession of firearms or ammunitions, or explosive devices;

(o)

Unlawful discriminatory acts in the performance of official functions, whether based on gender, religion, race, age, or other factors;

(p)

Habitual alcoholism; and

(q)

Other acts analogous or similar to the foregoing.

SECTION 20. Less Serious Offenses. – Less Serious offenses include:

(a)

Simple misconduct constituting violations of this Code, the Code of Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, or the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability for court officials and personnel who are members of the Bar;

(b)

Habitual tardiness causing prejudice to the operations of the office and/or habitual absenteeism;

(c)

Unauthorized practice of law for court officials and personnel who are members of the Bar, or those misrepresenting themselves as lawyers;

(d)

Violation of Supreme Court rules, directives, and circulars that establish an internal policy, rule of procedure, or protocol;

(e)

Receiving additional or double compensation, unless specifically authorized by law;

(f)

Partisan political activity;

(g)

Illegal gambling;

(h)

Willful failure to pay just debts and obligations, or taxes due to the government;

(i)

Lending money with exorbitant interest;^[10] and

(j)

Other acts analogous or similar to the foregoing.

SECTION 21. Light Offenses. – Light Offenses include:

(a)

Acts that are done during office hours other than official functions, including but not limited to playing computer or mobile games, or excessive recreational use of social media, unauthorized or repeated long breaks;

(b)

Simple neglect of duty;

(c)

Ordinary habitual tardiness not causing prejudice to the operations of the office; and

(d)

Other acts analogous or similar to the foregoing.

SECTION 22. Penalties. –

(1)

If the respondent is found guilty of a Serious Offense, any of the following penalties shall be imposed:

(a)

Dismissal from the service, forfeiture of all or part of the benefits as the Supreme Court may determine, and disqualification from reinstatement or appointment to any public office, including in government-owned or -controlled corporations. Provided, however, that the forfeiture of benefits shall in no case include accrued leave credits;

(b)

Suspension from office without salary and other benefits for one year and one day up to two years; and/or

(c)

A fine of more than PHP 101,000.00 but not more than PHP 500,000.00.

(2)

If the respondent is found guilty of a Less Serious Offense, any of the following penalties shall be imposed:

(a)

Suspension from office without salary and other benefits for one month up to one year; and/or

(b)

A fine of PHP 51,000.00 but not more than PHP 100,000.00.

(3)

If the respondent is found guilty of a Light Offense, any of the following penalties shall be imposed:

(a)

A fine of not less than PHP 20,000.00 but not more than PHP 50,000.00;

(b)

Censure; or

(c)

Reprimand.

In all instances, when the offense involves money or property owed, which is intrinsically linked to the duties of the respondent, the respondent shall be ordered to return the same.

In case the respondent is found not liable for violating any rule of conduct and no penalty is imposed, the Supreme Court may still issue an admonition or warning. An admonition or warning, however, shall not be considered a penalty under this Code.

SECTION 23. Penalty in lieu of dismissal on account of supervening resignation, retirement, or other modes of separation of service. – If the respondent is found liable for an offense which merits the imposition of the penalty of dismissal from service but the same can no longer be imposed due to the respondent's prior resignation, retirement, or other mode of separation from the service except for death, the respondent may be meted with the following penalties in lieu of dismissal:

(a)

Forfeiture of all or part of the benefits as the Supreme Court may determine, and disqualification from reinstatement or appointment to any public office, including in government-owned or -controlled corporations. Provided, however, that the forfeiture of benefits shall in no case include accrued leave credits; and/or

(b)

Fine, as applicable under this Canon.

SECTION 24. Modifying circumstances. – In determining the appropriate penalty to be imposed, the Court may, in its discretion, appreciate the following mitigating and aggravating circumstances:

(1)

Mitigating circumstances:

(a)

First offense;

(b)

Length of service of, at least, 10 years with no previous disciplinary case where respondent was meted with an administrative penalty;

(c)

Exemplary performance;

(d)

Humanitarian considerations;

(e)

Unconditional admission of guilt and public demonstration of remorse; and

(f)

Other analogous circumstances.

(2)

Aggravating circumstances:

(a)

Finding of previous administrative liability where a penalty has been imposed, regardless of nature and/or gravity;

(b)

Length of service facilitated the commission of the offense;

(c)

Employment of fraudulent means to conceal the offense;

(d)

Arrogance, belligerent attitude of the respondent, or lack of remorse; and

(e)

Other analogous circumstances.

SECTION 25. Manner of imposition of penalty. – If one or more aggravating circumstances and no mitigating circumstances are present, the Supreme Court may impose the penalty of suspension or fine, for a period or amount not exceeding double of the maximum prescribed under this Canon.

If one or more mitigating circumstances and no aggravating circumstances are present, the Supreme Court may impose the penalties of suspension or fine, for a period or amount not less than half of the minimum prescribed under this Canon.

If there are both aggravating and mitigating circumstances present, the Supreme Court may offset each against the other.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Supreme Court may impose the next higher or lower penalty against the respondent subject to its appreciation of the number and gravity of the mitigating and aggravating circumstances present.

SECTION 26. Penalty for multiple offenses. – If the respondent is found liable for more than one offense arising from separate acts or omissions in a single administrative proceeding, the Court shall impose separate penalties for each offense. Should the aggregate of the imposed penalties exceed five years of suspension or PHP 1 million in fines, the respondent may be meted with the penalty of dismissal from the service, forfeiture of all or part of the benefits as may be determined, and disqualification from reinstatement or appointment to any public office, including in government-owned or -controlled corporations. Provided, however, that the forfeiture of benefits shall in no case include accrued leave credits.

If a single act or omission constitutes more than one offense, the respondent shall still be found liable for all such offenses, but shall only be meted with the appropriate penalty for the most serious offense.

SECTION 27. Payment of fines. – When the penalty imposed is a fine or when there is an obligation to return

money or property, the respondent shall comply within three months from the date of receipt of the decision or resolution by the respondent. If the fine is unpaid, indirect contempt proceedings shall be commenced against the respondent pursuant to Rule 71, Section 3 of the Rules of Court.[11]

SECTION 28. Immediately executory nature. – Decisions or resolutions pronouncing the respondent's administrative liability are immediately executory in nature. The respondent, upon receipt of such decision or resolution, shall immediately serve the penalty indicated therein. In case of suspension, the respondent shall formally manifest to the Court that the suspension has started within five calendar days upon receipt of the decision or resolution.

Upon reporting back to work, the respondent shall submit a written manifestation that the penalty of suspension has been fully served, to the clerk of court, for the Supreme Court; the presiding justice, in case of the Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan, or the Court of Tax Appeals; or the executive judge where the respondent is assigned or stationed, in case of the First and Second Level Courts.

SECTION 29. Inflation adjustments. – The Supreme Court shall adjust the monetary penalties by increasing the maximum monetary penalty or the range of minimum and maximum penalties, as applicable under this Canon, to reflect the inflation rates every five years to maintain the deterrent effect of this Code. Any increase shall be rounded off to the nearest multiple of one peso. The adjusted penalties shall be published no later than January 30 of each five-year period.

SECTION 30. Judicial clemency. – A court official and personnel who has been dismissed from service may file a verified petition for judicial clemency after five years from the receipt of the order, decision, or resolution of dismissal from service.

However, if the ground for dismissal involves corruption or bribery, no clemency may be applied for.

SECTION 31. Contents of the petition. – The verified petition for judicial clemency shall allege the following:

(a)

that the verified petition was filed after five years from the receipt of the order, decision, or resolution on the dismissal from service;

(b)

that the court official and personnel recognizes the wrongfulness and seriousness of the misconduct for which they were dismissed by showing positive acts evidencing reformation;

(c)

the court official and personnel has reconciled, or attempted in good faith to reconcile, with the wronged private offended party in the administrative case, or if the same is not possible, an explanation as to why such attempt at reconciliation could not be made. Where there is no private offended party, the plea for clemency must contain a public apology; and

(d)

notwithstanding the conduct for which the court official and personnel was dismissed, they have the requisite good moral character and competence.

Any of the following allegations may also be made in support of the petition:

(a)

that the court official and personnel still has productive years that can be put to good use if given a chance; or

(b)

there is a showing of promise (such as intellectual aptitude, learning or legal acumen or contribution to legal scholarship and the development of the legal system or administrative and other relevant skills), as well as potential for public service.

SECTION 32. Action on the petition for judicial clemency, prima facie merit. – Upon receipt of the petition, the Supreme Court shall conduct a preliminary evaluation and determine if the same has prima facie merit based on the criteria.

If the petition has prima facie merit, the Supreme Court shall refer the petition to the JIO or any fact-finding body the Court so designates for investigation, report and recommendation.

If the petition fails to show any prima facie merit, it shall be denied outright.

SECTION 33. Report and recommendation on investigation. – The JIO or any other fact-finding body designated shall conduct and terminate the investigation and submit to the Supreme Court its report and recommendation within 90 calendar days from receipt of the referral.

SECTION 34. Decision on the petition for judicial clemency, quantum of evidence. – The Supreme Court shall decide the petition on the basis of clear and convincing evidence.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. Transitory clause. – The Code shall be applied to all pending and future cases, except to the extent that in the opinion of the Supreme Court, its retroactive application would not be feasible or would work injustice, in which case the procedure under which the cases were filed shall govern.

SECTION 2. Repealing clause. – All rules, administrative circulars, issuances, orders, and principles established in the decisions of the Supreme Court that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Code are repealed, amended, and superseded accordingly.

SECTION 3. Effectivity. – This Code shall take effect after 15 calendar days following its publication in the Official Gazette or two newspapers of general circulation, and posting on the official Supreme Court website.

[1] Republic Act No. 11691 (2022), in relation to A.M. No. 24-04-09-SC (2024), Judiciary Marshals Act.

[2] See Re: Gross Violation of Civil Service Law on the Prohibition Against Dual Employment and Double Compensation in the Government Service Committed by Mr. Eduardo V. Escala, SC Chief Judicial Staff Officer, Security Division, Office of Administrative Services, 668 Phil. 355 (2011) [Per Curiam, En Banc].

[3] CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY, Canon III, sec. 21.

[4] SC Administrative Matter No. 08-04-1-SC, June 3, 2008, Re: Inhibition and/or Disqualification of Clerks of Court in all levels, under Canon III, sec. 1 of the Code of Conduct of Court Personnel and Rule 137, sec. 1 of the Rules of Court.

[5] See Office of the Court Administrator v. Hon. Villavicencio-Olan, 955 Phil. 665 (2024) [Per J. Gaerlan, En Banc].

[6] SC Administrative Matter No. 24-04-09-SC, August 20, 2024, Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 11691 or The Judiciary Marshals Act.

[7] Republic Act No. 6713 (1989), Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

[8] Republic Act No. 3019 (1960), Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, as amended.

[9] Pursuant to the drug-free policy of the Supreme Court, SC Administrative Matter No. 23-02-11-SC, April 18, 2023, Guidelines for the Implementation of a Drug-Free Policy in the Philippine Judiciary.

[10] See *Lara's Gifts & Decors, Inc. v. Midtown Industrial Sales, Inc.*, 929 Phil. 754 (2022) [Per Acting C.J. Leonen, En Banc].

[11] See *Ignacio v. Balading*, 956 Phil. 777 (2024) [Per SAJ. Leonen, En Banc].

REVISED OATH OF OFFICE

(for Court Officials and Personnel)

I, (name), am a public officer holding a public trust, having been appointed as (position). I solemnly swear to abide by the Constitution, the laws, rules, and legal orders issued by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines. I shall maintain a modest lifestyle that reflects my dedication to serving the public.

I shall maintain and defend the independence and dignity of the Judiciary. I will carry out my mandate with the highest level of competence, integrity, and civility. I shall do so without yielding to any form of influence, impropriety, or partiality. I shall not do, consent to, nor participate in any falsehood. I shall champion equal access to justice for all persons regardless of their identity, sector, group, or community.

While I remain a public officer, my words and conduct, in all my dealings shall always embody the Constitutional desire for a regime of truth, justice, freedom, love, equality, and peace.

I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God.

MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

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Associate Justice, Supreme Court of the Philippines

Vice-Chairperson HON. RAUL B. VILLANUEVA

Associate Justice, Supreme Court of the Philippines

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HON. CARIDAD M. WALSE-LUTERO

Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court, Quezon City,
Branch 223

HON. ANJANETTE NICOLAS DE LEON-ORTILE

Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court, Marikina City,
Branch 156

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Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court, Las Piñas City,
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Bataan, Branch 2

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Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief, Office of the Administrative Services

HON. LILIAN BARRIBAL-CO

Deputy Court Administrator for Administration,
Office of the Court Administrator

ATTY. ANALIZA O. THOMAS-PARRA

Officer in Charge, Legal Office, Office of the Court Administrator

MR. EDMUND DE JAVING

Former President, Philippine Association of Court Employees

MR. ERWIN D. OCSON

President, Supreme Court Employees Association

ATTY. RENE B. ENCISO

President, Supreme Court Assembly of Lawyer Employees

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President, Association of Court of Appeals Employees

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Former President, Sandiganbayan Employees Association

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