



California Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Ethics
350 McAllister Street, San Francisco, CA 94102-4797
www.courts.ca.gov/2963.htm

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: [Cathal Conneely](mailto:Cathal.Conneely@courts.ca.gov), 415-865-7740

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Comment Sought on Proposed Changes to Code of Judicial Ethics

*Canon 2C prohibits judges from holding membership in any organization
that practices invidious discrimination*

San Francisco—The California Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Ethics today announced that the Supreme Court has authorized the committee to invite public comment on proposed amendments to canon 2C of the code. The deadline for comment is April 15, 2014.

Canon 2C prohibits judges from holding membership in any organization that practices invidious discrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. There are currently exceptions in the canon for membership in religious, military, and nonprofit youth organizations.

The invitation to comment is posted on the California Courts website at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/policyadmin-invitationstocomment.htm>.

The committee proposes eliminating the exceptions for military and nonprofit youth organizations. The committee proposes eliminating the military organization exception because the U.S. military no longer restricts military service by gay, lesbian, and bisexual personnel.

The committee also proposes eliminating the nonprofit youth organization exception. California is the only state that prohibits membership in organizations that discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation but has an exception for nonprofit youth organizations. The committee concluded that California's status as the only state with such an exception, combined with recent developments in the law relating to recognition of same-sex relationships, is anomalous and inconsistent with other principles in the canons. The exception pertains to organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America, which recently announced its decision to permit openly gay boys to participate as scouts until age 18, but to continue its bar against gay and lesbian adults as troop leaders or in other leadership positions.

In addition, the committee proposes amending related provisions in the commentary to canon 2C, the commentary to canon 3E, canon 6D(5)(b) and the Terminology section of the code.

Comments should be sent to Ms. Camilla Kieliger, Administrative Office of the Courts, Legal Services Office, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, California 94102.

Under the California Constitution, the Supreme Court adopts the [California Code of Judicial Ethics](#), which establishes standards for ethical conduct for state judges on and off the bench and for candidates for judicial office.

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