

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

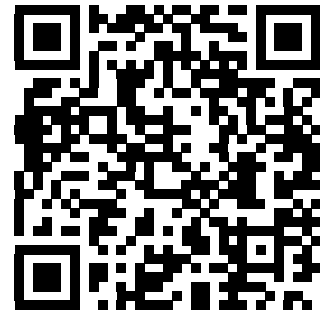


The Equal Justice Committee wants to hear from you to know where there may be bias in the Maryland Rules and when Rules are applied with discriminatory or unfair consequence. Members of the bar and the public are invited to participate in listening sessions to identify Rules or practices that appear consciously or implicitly biased.

What: Admission to the Bar and Ethics

When: Wednesday, June 23 | 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Where: Zoom

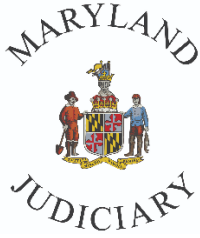


CLICK HERE TO REGISTER



If you cannot participate in the listening session, please scan this QR code and fill out the *Survey on Implicit Bias in the Maryland Rules*.

Please feel free to forward this invitation to others who may be interested.



Committee on Equal Justice

Rules Review Subcommittee

Public Meeting Workgroup

Notice of Committee on Equal Justice, Rules Review Subcommittee **Open Public Input Meeting**

Admission to the Bar and Ethics
Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Instructions for Members of the Public

The Equal Justice Committee is interested in learning of rules or practices **around Admission to the Bar and Ethics** that provoke concerns for discriminatory behaviors or implicit bias (attitudes or stereotypes that affect court decisions in an unconscious manner) based upon race, sex, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status, or political affiliation. (See Rule 18-102.3) Are there court rules or unethical practices that can adversely—discriminatorily—affect participants in cases when communicating with the court or other participants, when preparing cases for hearings or trial, when appearing in court proceedings, or when securing court decisions? Do the rules, in language or application, raise equal justice concerns or negatively affect people of color or members of disadvantaged communities?

The lawyer's oath on admission to the bar of Maryland commits each to act "fairly and honorably as an attorney" (Md. Code Bus. Occ.& Prof. § 10-212). Applicants to the bar must prove "good moral character and fitness for the practice of law" (Maryland Rule 19-204(d)). Attorneys should not engage in professional misconduct that "knowingly manifest[s] ... bias or prejudice based upon race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status when such action is prejudicial to the administration of justice" (Maryland Rule 19-308.4(e)). Nor shall judges "in the performance of judicial duties ... manifest [such] bias, prejudice, or harassment" (Maryland Rule 18-102.3).

In her *Statement on Equal Justice* (June 9, 2020), Chief Judge Barbera reiterated that "Judges swear to be fair and impartial, to do justice in every individual case." She charged the Equal Justice Committee to lead the Maryland Judiciary to "re-examine how we administer justice. We must determine ... how to ensure that the protections and rights under law are afforded equally to all of us ... that our courts do not suffer bias, conscious or unconscious." The Judiciary's Equal Justice Committee wants to know if the ethics rules for lawyers and judges are applied fairly or if professional misconduct provokes discriminatory prejudice in our courts.

This meeting will be devoted to rules and procedures regarding **Admission to the Bar and Ethics**. Please note that this is a *listening session*, members of the committee will not respond to questions or make any comments. Please register for this session using the link in the flyer and email ejcrulesreview@mdcourts.gov to ensure that you receive the Zoom link prior to the meeting. If you have any comments related to a posted agenda item, you may e-mail them to ejcrulesreview@mdcourts.gov no later than 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting in order to distribute them to the members of the subcommittee.

This listening session, including all communications made through the Zoom platform by participants, will be recorded for future use by the Rules Review Subcommittee. By registering to participate, you acknowledge and consent to the audio and video recording of the session.

Members of the public must observe the following protocols during the virtual listening session:

- Upon joining the meeting, please note that your microphone will be muted unless you are recognized to speak.
- Each member of the public will be given two (2) minutes to speak. Please begin by providing your initials and your preferred pronoun as well as the county/counties to which your comment refers. Your identifying information will be removed from any and all reports made of the public meeting. Speakers may also request anonymity in any reports. However, speakers consent to audio recording of their remarks upon requesting to speak.
- If you would like to request permission to speak, you may send a chat message in the Zoom platform to the meeting host. If there is an opportunity for you to speak, you will be recognized. You must have your camera turned on and your microphone will be unmuted by the host for the duration of your comment.
- If there are any concerns regarding these procedures during the meeting, questions may be submitted via the chat.
- All participants and speakers will engage in civil, respectful communication. Participants who fail to adhere to this request may be subject to having their microphone, chat, and/or video feature disabled.
- Requests for spoken language interpreters and auxiliary services (ASL/CDI interpreters or CART) may be directed to Ksenia.Boitsova@mdcourts.gov.
- For any other accommodations please contact ejcrulesreview@mdcourts.gov.