

Judicial Demeanor



The Judicial Qualifications
Commission of Georgia

PRESENTED BY
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DIRECTOR
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Applicable CJC Provisions

CJC Rule 1.2

- Judges shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, *integrity*, and *impartiality* of the judiciary

CJC Rule 2.3

- A judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, or engage in harassment, including bias, prejudice, or harassment based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sex, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status

CJC Rule 2.8

- Judges shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses, lawyers, and others with whom they deal in their official capacity

Recent Supreme Court of Georgia Opinion

In re Inquiry Concerning a Judge, S21Z0916 (June 22, 2022)

- Georgia Supreme Court found that an isolated episode of intemperance, occurring during a meeting planned by the Judge, violated CJC Rules 1.2 (A) and 2.8 (B) and warranted a public reprimand
- “[The Judge’s] violations were based on non-habitual conduct, with no evidence that [the judge] used vulgar language or engaged in any sort of physical altercation”
- “But [the Judge’s] deliberate and conscious planning of this confrontation is particularly problematic, as [the judge’s] misconduct was not the result of a sudden or brief loss of temper”

Demeanor

You can be firm and authoritative without being rude, condescending, or unprofessional

Suggestions:

- Take a break, if needed
- Use the 6:00 p.m. news as your guide. If you would be comfortable hearing your comments played on the 6:00 p.m. news, then no need to fret. If not, then you should likely re-think your commentary

Phone on Bench

If you are expecting an important call, let the people in your courtroom know in advance and step off the bench when the call comes in

Suggestions:

- Do not scroll on your phone and/or post/play on social media during court
- Do not play games on your phone during court
- Do not answer calls during court

Punctuality

CJC Rule 2.1

- The judicial duties of judges take precedence over all other activities

CJC Rule 2.2

- Judges shall dispose of all judicial matters fairly, promptly, and efficiently

Suggestions:

- If you have morning time constraints, start your calendars later. Or split your calendar into a morning and an afternoon calendar, if needed
- Don't leave the bench and disappear for hours
- If you are delayed by an emergency, call your office and let them know so they can advise the litigants who are awaiting your arrival

REVIEW QUESTIONS

At all times, judges should act in a manner to promote public confidence?

Judges should not answer the phone while on the bench?

Judges should be on time for court?

Judicial duties should take precedence over all other activities?

Judges can be firm without being rude or unprofessional?

ANSWER FOR ALL REVIEW QUESTIONS

