**PENNSYLVANIA BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIAL**

 **EVALUATION COMMISSION**

**INTERNAL OPERATING PROCEDURES**

1. INTRODUCTION

 These procedures have been adopted by the Commission pursuant to Section I A of the ORGANIZATION AND RULES adopted by the Pennsylvania Bar Association for the Judicial Evaluation Commission. These Procedures are intended to supplement, not replace, the ORGANIZATION AND RULES adopted by the Pennsylvania Bar Association.

1. ATTENDANCE OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

 It is expected that Commission members will attend all candidate interviews and evaluations. If a member is chronically absent, the Commission may without prior notice expel the offending member. Any action to expel a member must be approved by the vote of two thirds of the current sitting members.

1. TIMING OF EVALUATIONS

The Commission will strive to complete its evaluations of judicial candidates and publish its recommendations regarding all candidates prior to the issuance of political party endorsements. Candidates are therefore encouraged to submit completed Candidate Questionnaires and schedule interviews as soon as possible. The Commission recognizes that, due to unforeseen circumstances, investigations and interviews can be delayed. In such circumstances the Commission will strive to complete its evaluation of the affected candidates and issue late recommendations as soon as time permits. The Commission reserves its right to issue a rating of Not Recommended for any candidate who does not submit to an interview prior to the publication of political party endorsements.

IV. EVALUATION OF JUDICIAL CANDIDATES

1. At any time after the receipt of a report from an Investigative Panel but prior to its release of its rating, the Commission may, at the request of any member, conduct further investigation of a judicial candidate. Supplemental investigations may be conducted by members of the Investigative Panel that submitted the original report, or, at the discretion of the Commission, the supplemental investigation may be assigned to new Investigative Panel Members.
2. The Commission will strive to complete its evaluations on the basis of a single interview of each candidate. The Commission may request that a candidate submit to a supplemental interview. Supplemental interviews may be conducted in person or by telephone or other electronic media.
3. All Commission members should review the completed Candidate Questionnaires and Investigative Panel Reports prior to the candidate interview.
4. Immediately following the final interview of a candidate, the Commission members shall vote on that candidate’s rating by secret ballot. The Chair of the Commission shall appoint two tellers from among Commission members who shall collect and tally all ballots. There shall be two ballots for each candidate. The first ballot shall be preliminary. After the first ballot is tallied, the results shall be announced to the Commission members. Following a discussion at which any Commission member may speak, a second ballot will be conducted, the results of which will be tallied and announced by the tellers.
5. Only those Commission members who are present during the candidate interview may vote on a candidate.
6. A rating of Recommended shall require the vote of two thirds of the Commission members who vote on that candidate.
7. A rating of Highly Recommended shall require the vote of 80% of the Commission members who vote on that candidate.
8. Prior to the publication of the Commission’s ratings, any member may request that there be a general review of all ratings, and any Commission member may request reconsideration of a candidate’s rating. If the Chair determines that an additional ballot or ballots should be conducted prior to the publication of any candidate’s rating, such additional ballots shall be conducted in the same manner as the second ballot described above, and the requirements set forth in Subsections E, F and G above shall apply to such ballot.
9. CANDIDATE WITHDRAWAL

 In the event that a candidate fails to complete the evaluation process after submitting a Candidate Questionnaire but does not withdraw his or her candidacy for judicial office, the Commission shall issue a rating of Not Recommended together with a written rationale for the rating.

VI. REPUBLICATION OF RATINGS

 In the event that a candidate has received a rating of Not Recommended for a prior election cycle and announces his or her candidacy again, the Commission may reissue its prior rating together with its prior written rationale for the rating.