

NACM ETHICS COMMITTEE
2009-2010 Report of Projects and Results

Committee Chair: Peter Coolsen

Committee Members:

Pam Harris
Stephanie Hess
Peter Kiefer
Mary Koontz
Frank Maiocco
Norman Meyer
Michelle Oken
Sally Pym
William Simmons
David Slayton
Carla Smith
Dean Stanzzone
Karl Thoennes

1. Project Title: NACM Code of Ethics

Results: The committee reviewed all of the commentary in the NACM code of ethics to determine if there was a need for any additional changes or updates. The consensus of the committee was that the commentary is still relevant. However, they recognized that as new issues emerge, such as use of social media in the courts, there may be a need for updates or revisions. It is recommended that this become a regular task of this committee and that the committee look at the Commentary in the NACM Code of Ethics at least once a year to determine if there are any necessary changes in the text.

2. Project Title: Ethics Column and Ethics Hotline

Results: During the monthly conference calls Peter Kiefer and Karl Thoennes reported on their experience with the *A Question of Ethics* column that appears each issue in the *Court Manager*. In addition, Karl Thoennes has taken primary responsibility for handling any issues which arise through the Ethics section of the NACM website (to date there has not been a lot of activity on this section of the website). The ethics section can be improved and will need additional work over the next year. Both the column and the hotline serve as a barometer for ethical issues of concern by the NACM membership. This will continue to be an ongoing agenda item on the monthly conference calls.

3. Project Title: Topical Ethical Issues

Results: The Ethics Committee continues to identify topical issues facing court managers for future discussion by the Committee. Technological issues around use and sale of court information, ethical issues which might arise for court employees around state legislation, such as immigration legislation in Arizona or gay marriage legislation in other states, might cause potential ethical dilemmas for some court managers. The committee will continue to discuss these issues and, along with the ethics column in *Court Manager* and the ethics section of the NACM website, they will serve as a resource to NACM members and the NACM Board regarding these ethical issues.

One topical issue which the committee discussed in more depth is the issue of the use of social media by judges and court personnel. Norman Meyer was particularly helpful in identifying resources in the federal courts regarding this subject. In particular, he shared the *Resource Packet for Developing Guidelines on Use of Social Media by Judicial Employees* which was developed by the Judicial Conference of the United States. This resource packet will be incorporated in the pre-conference session at the 2010 NACM Annual Conference on the use of social media.

4. Project Title: The Court Administrator Manual

Results: The Ethics Committee identified the need to update the NACM Code of Ethics and Commentary when the Court Administrator manual is revised. This suggestion will be shared with the sub-committee that is revising the manual.

Recognition: NACM would like to thank the fourteen members of the Ethics Committee for their important contribution over the past year.