

PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONALISM FOR FLORIDA JUDGES

1. A judge should be courteous, respectful and civil to lawyers, parties, witnesses, court personnel, and all other participants in the legal process.
2. A judge should maintain control of the proceedings, recognizing that judges have both the obligation and the authority to ensure that all proceedings are conducted with dignity and decorum.
3. While endeavoring to resolve disputes promptly and efficiently, a judge should be considerate of the time constraints and pressures imposed on lawyers, parties and other participants in the legal process.
4. To the extent possible, a judge should be punctual in convening trials, hearings, meetings and conferences, and should, when practicable, promptly notify those affected if the judge becomes aware that there will be a significant delay.
5. A judge should permit a lawyer or self-represented party to present a cause properly and to make a complete and accurate record.
6. A judge should not impugn the integrity or professionalism of any lawyer on the basis of the lawyer's clients or cause.
7. A judge should refer to lawyers and adult parties and witnesses by surname preceded by the preferred title (as, Mr., Ms., Mrs., Miss, Dr.) or by professional title (as, counselor or Doctor) when conducting a trial or hearing.
8. A judge should work cooperatively with other judges on matters relating to the availability of lawyers, parties, witnesses, or court resources, and the scheduling of proceedings.
9. A judge should be courteous and respectful to other judges in speech and in written decisions and opinions, mindful that a position articulated by another judge is the result of that judge's earnest effort to interpret the law and the facts correctly.

These principles have been unanimously adopted by the Conference of County Court Judges of Florida, Conference of Circuit Judges of Florida, Florida Conference of District Court of Appeal Judges, and by the Supreme Court of Florida. The principles do not alter the Code of Judicial Conduct or the obligations imposed by the Code.