Canons of Judicial Ethics

Canon 1.

A judge should uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary.

An independent and honorable judiciary is indispensable to justice in our society. A judge should participate in establishing, maintaining, and enforcing, and should himself observe, high standards of conduct so that the integrity and independence of the judiciary may be preserved. The provisions of this Code should be construed and applied to further that objective.

Commentary to Canon 1
as Amended Effective July 1, 2019

Deference to the judgments and rulings of courts depends upon public confidence in the integrity and independence of judges. The integrity and independence of judges depend in turn upon their acting without fear or favor. A judiciary of integrity is one in which judges are known for their probity, fairness, honesty, uprightness, and soundness of character. An independent judiciary is one free of inappropriate outside influences when deciding cases. Although judges should be independent, they must comply with the law, including the provisions of these Canons. Public confidence in the impartiality of the judiciary is maintained by the adherence of each judge to this responsibility. Conversely, violation of the Canons diminishes public confidence in the judiciary and thereby does injury to the system of government under the law.

This Canon is not intended to proscribe or punish any public comment by a judge unless such public comment is impermissible under Canon 3.A(6).

[Commentary amended 7-1-2019]

Note from the reporter of decisions: The order adopting the Commentary to Canon 1, Alabama Canons of Judicial Ethics, effective August 25, 2004, is published in that volume of *Alabama Reporter* that contains Alabama cases from 879 So.2d.

Note from the reporter of decisions: The order amending the Commentary to Canon 1, the Commentary to Canon 2, Canon 3.A(6), and the Commentary to Cannon 3.A(6), Alabama Canons of Judicial Ethics, effective July 1, 2019, is published in that volume of *Alabama Reporter* that contains Alabama cases from __ So. 3d.