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**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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**May 2022 Policy No. 18**

**Complaints Involving Certified Judges or Certified Judge Candidates**

**POLICY**

In the event of a complaint against a Certified Judge, originating outside of the NACQJ organization, the issue will be handled by the CJ Coordinator, following the steps listed in Part I below.

In the event of an incident between/among Certified Judges within the organization, the issue will be handled by the CJ Coordinator, following the steps listed in Part II below.

In the event of an incident involving a Candidate, the issue will be handled by the Candidate Coordinator, following the steps listed in Part III below.

**PROCEDURES**

**I. The following steps will be taken for a complaint against a Certified Judge originating outside of the NACQJ organization:**

1. A written complaint is filed with the Certified Judges (CJ) Coordinator, using the email address listed under the Board Members section of the NACQJ website. The complaint should contain as much specific information as possible.
2. The complaint should be investigated by the CJ Coordinator in a timely manner, defined as no more than thirty days from the receipt of the written complaint.
3. The CJ Coordinator may contact the complainant to gather more information if needed.
4. The CJ is contacted by the CJ Coordinator to inform her/him of the complaint, and asked for an explanation.
5. The CJ Coordinator may contact other CJs only if it is deemed necessary to gain full understanding of the situation. Otherwise, confidentiality should be maintained.
6. If, after thoughtful consideration, the complaint is found to be frivolous and of no value, the CJ Coordinator will contact the complainant and the CJ in question with that information, and the process is complete. The CJC may consult with the NACQJ President anytime during this process.
7. If the complaint is validated, the CJ Coordinator will send a paper copy of the complaint by Certified Mail to the CJ and inform her/him of the findings of the investigation, and the CJ will be informed of the consequences.
8. The Consequences are as follows:
   1. First Formal Complaint (defined as an incident documented, investigated, and validated by the CJ Coordinator following steps 1-7 listed above). **(Step 1: Warning)**
   * The CJ Coordinator will inform the President, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation. The CJ Coordinator will inform other members of the organization only if the resolution of the incident requires their knowledge. Otherwise, confidentiality will be maintained.
   * The CJ Coordinator will draft a letter of reprimand, co-signed by the President, which will be sent to the CJ in question by certified mail. A copy of the letter will be kept by the CJ Coordinator in the reprimanded CJ’s file.
   1. Second Formal Complaint (defined as an incident documented, investigated, and validated by the CJ Coordinator following steps 1-7 listed above within a span of two years from the date of the first letter of reprimand). The President will inform the other members of the Board. A second letter of reprimand, co-signed by the President, will be sent to the CJ in question by certified mail. A copy of the letter will be kept by the CJ Coordinator in the reprimanded CJ’s file. In addition, and at the discretion of the Board, taking into consideration the nature of the CJ’s actions, the Board may place the CJ in question on probation for one year from the date of the letter of reprimand. **(Step 2: Probation)** During probation:
   * The CJ’s name is removed from the NACQJ website.
   * The CJ is removed from any Board of Directors position.
   * The CJ is not permitted to evaluate a Candidates’ paperwork, nor sit a Candidate’s panel.
   * The CJ is not permitted to teach the Two Day Introduction to Quilt Judging Seminar.
   1. Third Formal Complaint (defined as an incident documented, investigated, and validated by the CJ Coordinator following steps 1-7 listed above within a span of two years from the date of the second letter of reprimand). A third letter of reprimand, co-signed by the President, will be sent to the CJ in question by certified mail, and a copy of the letter will be kept by the CJ Coordinator in the reprimanded CJ’s file. **(Step 3: Suspension)**

* The CJ is suspended indefinitely from any and all activities of the NACQJ.
* If necessary, the Board of Directors may act at their discretion for egregious validated complaints, with full documentation provided to the Certified Judge and to the CJ Coordinator.

**II. The following steps will be taken in the event of an incident between/among Certified Judges within the organization:**

1. The CJ Coordinator should investigate any incident in a timely manner, defined as no more than thirty days from the receipt of the written complaint.
2. The CJ Coordinator may mediate, counsel, and suggest solutions deemed appropriate to resolve the situation.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved within the CJ Coordinator’s purview, the CJ Coordinator may inform the President and/or members of the Board of Directors.
4. If the situation is deemed sufficiently egregious, the CJ Coordinator may initiate the process intended for response to a complaint from outside the organization, as outlined above.

**III. The following steps will be taken in the event of any incident involving a candidate:**

1. Any incident involving a Candidate will be handled by the Candidate Coordinator. This includes any complaint by or about any Candidate. If at all possible, action on a complaint involving a candidate will remain within the purview of the Candidate Coordinator to maintain confidentiality.
2. Any complaint made by or about a Candidate should be filed with the Candidate Coordinator using the email address listed under the Board Members section of the NACQJ website. The complaint should contain as much specific information as possible.
3. The complaint should be investigated by the Candidate Coordinator in a timely manner, defined as no more than thirty days from the receipt of the written complaint.
4. The Candidate Coordinator will investigate, mediate, and counsel as needed to resolve the situation.
5. At the Candidate Coordinator’s discretion, no formal action need be taken if the issue is a result of inexperience, misunderstanding of ethical/professional behavior, or confusion about NACQJ policies, procedures, or standards.
6. If the situation is especially serious, the Candidate Coordinator may seek the counsel of the President.

Revised 5/22 by KE