

# District of Columbia Court of Appeals

Administrative Order No. 03-11

## ORDER (FILED - October 5, 2011)

### Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts

WHEREAS, a permanent entity within the courts that focuses on fairness and access issues in the justice system is a best practice that is espoused by the National Center for State Courts, the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts, the Council on Racial and Ethnic Justice of the American Bar Association, as well as other national judicial and bar organizations;

WHEREAS, the Joint Committee on the Administration of Justice in the District of Columbia, under the leadership of former Chief Judge Annice M. Wagner, created the *Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts* (“*Standing Committee*”) in September 1996 to enhance equal justice for all individuals in the District of Columbia Courts by ensuring that they are free of bias; and

WHEREAS, the *Standing Committee* continues, on a permanent basis, the work of two *ad hoc* committees that were established in 1990 to identify bias and to develop strategies to eliminate it -- the Task Force on Racial & Ethnic Bias and the Task Force on Gender Bias. These task forces concluded their work and issued their final report 1992 and reports on implementation efforts ended after 1994; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need and it is a best practice to maintain a high level review of racial, ethnic and gender issues of access to justice, as well as high level review of the removal of architectural and procedural barriers for court users and the reasonable accommodations requested by or provided to D.C. Courts applicants and employees; and

WHEREAS, it is a best practice of enhancing access to justice by communicating with and involving members of the community and the *Standing Committee* has a record of effectively reaching out to representatives of the community who may face barriers to justice and making their concerns heard;

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NOW, THEREFORE, it is,

ORDERED, that, the *Standing Committee* shall continue its mission of ensuring that the District of Columbia Courts are free of bias and other barriers to fairness and access to the judicial system; it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, Court of Appeals Associate Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby is hereby appointed Chair of the Standing Committee for a term of five years; it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, Superior Court Associate Judges Alfred S. Irving, Todd E. Edelman and Maribeth Raffinan are appointed to the *Standing Committee* (for a term of five years), commencing *nunc pro tunc* to September 30, 2011; it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, the terms of the current members of the *Standing Committee*, Superior Court Associate Judges Patricia A. Broderick, Neil E. Kravitz, and Hiram E. Puig-Lugo, and Magistrate Judges Aida L. Melendez and Diane Brenneman, shall be extended for a period of three years from the date of this order.

SO ORDERED.

BY THE COURT:

ERIC T. WASHINGTON  
Chief Judge