Bylaws
of the
National Conference of Specialized Court Judges
of the
Judicial Division of the American Bar Association

Approved by the ABA Board of Governors on November, 2015

ARTICLE 1 – NAME AND PURPOSE.

Article 1.1 – NAME. This organization shall be known as the National Conference of Specialized Court Judges of the Judicial Division of the American Bar Association (Association), and shall be referred to herein as the Conference.

Article 1.2 – PURPOSE. The purposes of the Conference shall be the purposes of the American Bar Association as stated in its constitution within the particular area of administration of justice. To that end, the purposes of this Conference shall be to gather, study and disseminate information about the organization, procedures and business of trial courts, and particularly courts of special or limited jurisdiction; to present and conduct programs with respect to such matters at regional, state and other meetings of the bar and other associations; to cooperate with law schools and other educational institutions; to foster and promote organizations of judges within the various states; and to maintain facilities for dissemination of information to judges.

ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERSHIP.

Article 2.1 – ELIGIBILITY. Membership shall be open to any members of the Judicial Division of the Association who are serving or who have served as a judicial officer in a court of specialized or limited jurisdiction, or any other interested current or former judicial officer who is a member of the Judicial Division.

Article 2.2 – ASSOCIATE MEMBERS. Any Judicial Associate or International Associate of the Judicial Division who is serving or has served as a judicial officer in a court of specialized or limited jurisdiction shall be eligible to become a Judicial Associate or International Associate of this Conference, subject to Association policies and guidelines.

Article 2.3 – DELEGATE MEMBERS. Each state, or other jurisdiction, as hereinafter defined, by its Chief Justice or other chief judicial officer, may designate as Delegate-Members up to four judicial officers of that state or other respective jurisdiction, provided that each judicial officer so designated is a member of the Conference. Delegate members shall be encouraged to participate in Committees and other affairs of the Conference.
Article 2.4 – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP. Any member of the Conference whose dues to the Judicial Division are delinquent by a period set by the Board of Governors shall cease to be a member of the Conference. Any person who ceases to be a member of the Association shall also cease to be a member of the Conference.

Article 2.5 – CONFERENCE DIVERSITY POLICY.

(a) Mindful of the principles and provisions contained in ABA Goal III, Judicial Division Goal I (and the Judicial Division Diversity Action Plan), and accepting and adopting said principles and provisions in their entirety, the Conference sets forth the following further declaration of its Conference policy with regard to diversity:

(b) The Conference recognizes the growing diversity in American society and the need to reflect this reality in its own policies and programs. Diversity is a necessity. One of the greatest strengths of the Conference is that our Conference is diverse. We are a richer and more effective conference because of our diversity, as it increases our Conference’s strengths, capabilities and adaptability. Through increased diversity, our Conference can more effectively address societal and members needs with a varied perspectives, experiences, knowledge, information and understanding inherent in a diverse membership. It takes all of our members, working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, to make a successful organization. Embracing different perspectives and frames of reference offers significant advantages to our conference. We must acknowledge, respect and utilize the differences and similarities of our members to create an inclusive and productive environment that reflects American society.

(c) The Conference is committed to the protection of equality rights within the conference. The Conference is dedicated to respect for equality and the elimination of discrimination in all aspects of the work of its membership by:

(1) Promoting inclusiveness in the organization of the Conference, in its leadership, in its activities, in the development of its policies and in the formation of its committees;

(2) Supporting the development and inclusion of equality and diversity components in the Conference education programs; and

(3) Supporting policies that foster a judiciary of qualified members reflective of American society.

ARTICLE 3 – CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

Article 3.1 – ANNUAL AND MIDYEAR MEETINGS. The Conference shall meet immediately before or during the Annual Meeting and the Midyear Meeting of the Judicial Division of the Association in the same city at a time fixed by the Executive Committee.
Article 3.2 – SPECIAL MEETINGS. The times and places of Executive Committee meetings may be fixed by the Chair, and meetings of the general membership must be approved by the Board of Governors of the Association.

Article 3.3 – QUORUM. The members of the Conference present at a meeting of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article 3.4 – AGENDA. The agenda of the Annual Meeting of the membership shall consist of the election of officers and members of the Executive Committee and such others matters as the Chair of the Conference deems appropriate. The agenda of a special meeting of the membership shall consist of those matters which the Chair of the Conference deems appropriate or of which notice has been given.

Article 3.5 – NOTICE. Notice stating the place, date and hour of any annual or special meeting of the membership may be given by publication in any journal or newsletter published by the Association or this Conference. Otherwise, it shall be delivered either personally, electronically, or by mail to each Conference member. Such notice shall be given at least 60 days in advance of the meeting or in such other reasonable period of time as appropriate.

Article 3.6 – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Conference. Proceedings at any general or special meeting of the Conference and at Executive Committee meetings shall be governed by the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.

ARTICLE 4 – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Article 4.1 – POWERS AND FUNCTIONS.

(a) The Executive Committee shall be vested with the powers and duties necessary for the administration of the business of the Conference, including establishing and adopting Policies and Procedures when needed. It shall authorize all commitments for expenditures of Conference monies. However, it shall not authorize commitments for expenditures in a fiscal year which would exceed the income and reserves of the Conference for that fiscal year without approval of the Board of Governors of the Association.

(b) The Executive Committee is authorized to establish and organize into appropriate organizational structures and committees as it deems necessary to carry out the activities and purposes of the Conference. The Executive Committee shall establish an appropriate chain of responsibility for any organizational structures and committees which it may create. No action of the Conference committee or any other organizational component shall be effective until approved by the Executive Committee of the Conference or by the membership of the Conference. The Chair shall have the authority to establish committees unless the Executive Committee determines otherwise.
Article 4.2 – COMPOSITION. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the following individuals: The Chair; Chair-Elect; Vice-Chair; the immediate past Chair; the Secretary; 9 District Representatives representing geographical areas as set out below; and 3 at-large District Representatives.

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Article 4.3 – TERMS OF OFFICE FOR OFFICERS.

(a) The terms of the Chair, Chair-Elect and the Vice-Chair are each one Association year, beginning with the adjournment of the Annual Meeting during which that person is elected.

(b) The Chair-Elect automatically becomes the Chair of upon the adjournment of the next Annual Meeting of the Association and is not again eligible for election to either office.

Article 4.4 – TERM OF OFFICE FOR DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES. The term of a District Representative is three Association years beginning with the adjournment of the Annual Meeting during which such representative is elected. The terms of at least one-third of the District Representatives shall expire each year. No District Representative may serve more than two successive terms in that capacity.
Article 4.5 – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND CONFERENCE CALLS.

(a) The Executive Committee shall hold at least one regular meeting each year at the time and place of the Annual Meeting of the Association. The Chair shall, upon request of five members of the Executive Committee, call a special meeting of the Executive Committee between Annual Meetings. A majority of the entire Executive Committee present shall constitute a quorum for meetings of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee meetings shall be open to attendance by any Conference member except when the Executive Committee meets in executive session.

(b) Meetings are defined as the Midyear Meeting, the Annual Meeting, any special meetings, and the conference call dates established by the Chair at the beginning of the term year.

(c) There shall be neither absentee nor proxy voting at Annual or special meetings.

(d) If a meeting of the Executive Committee is not feasible, the Chair of the Conference shall, upon the written request of five members of the Executive Committee, submit in writing to each of the members of the Executive Committee any item upon which the Executive Committee may be authorized to act. The members of the Executive Committee may vote upon the proposition by written ballot, electronic/digital ballot, email, or by telephone, confirmed in writing, to the Secretary of the Conference who shall record the proposition and votes on the matter.

(e) Matters before the Executive Committee shall be determined by a majority vote of those Committee members voting.

Article 4.6 – COMPENSATION. No salary or compensation for services shall be paid to or by any Officer, member of the Executive Committee, or any committee members, except as may be specifically authorized by the Board of Governors.

Article 4.7 – VACANCIES AND ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS.

(a) If any member of the Executive Committee or Officer shall fail to attend two successive business meetings including conference calls of the Executive Committee, that member’s seat on the Executive Committee or their office shall be vacated automatically unless the member upon request is excused for good cause by action of the Executive Committee. All requests to be excused from business meetings or conference calls shall be directed to the Chair with notice to the entire Executive Committee. If there is no request for absence, the Chair shall immediately notify the Executive Committee member or Officer when that person’s seat on the Committee is declared vacated.

(b) Between Annual Meetings of the Conference, the Executive Committee may fill vacancies in the seats of the District Representatives or Officers at a meeting or in the manner provided in 4.5(d).
(c) The Executive Committee, between the Annual Meetings of the Conference, may also fill vacancies in the office of the Chair-Elect, Vice-Chair, Secretary, District Representative, or Conference Delegate to the House of Delegates. A member of the Executive Committee or Officer appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term of such seat or office, after which the usual election process shall apply. The number of terms for which a member may be elected to a particular office is not altered by the appointment of that member to fill a vacated term of office.

ARTICLE 5 – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS, DELEGATE TO THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, AND DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES.

Article 5.1 – OFFICERS. The officers of the Conference shall be the Chair, the Chair-Elect, and the Vice-Chair.

Article 5.2 – CHAIR. The Chair shall perform the following duties:

(a) Preside at all meetings of the members of the Conference and of the Executive Committee;

(b) Superintend the performance of all activities of the Conference.

(c) Keep the Conference members informed of the activities of the Conference and implement its decisions;

(d) Perform such other duties and acts as usually pertain to such office or as may be designated by the Executive Committee.

Article 5.3 – CHAIR-ELECT. The Chair-Elect shall aid the Chair in the performance of the latter’s responsibilities in such manner and to such extent as the Chair may request and shall preside at meetings of the Conference and the Executive Committee in the absence of the Chair. Such person shall perform such duties and have such powers as usually pertain to such office or may be designated by the Executive Committee or the Chair. The Chair-Elect shall plan the program of the Conference during the ensuing year term, subject to the directions and approval of the Executive Committee. In the case of death, resignation or disability of the Chair, the Chair-Elect shall perform the duties of the Chair for the remainder of the Chair’s term or disability. The Chair-Elect is the Chair of the Membership Committee. All District Representatives should report to the Chair-Elect on the activities within their District.

Article 5.4 – VICE-CHAIR. The Vice-Chair shall aid the Chair in the performance of the latter’s duties in the manner and to the extent the Chair may request. Such officer shall preside at meetings of the Conference and the Executive Committee in the absence of the Chair and Chair-Elect.

Article 5.5 – SECRETARY. The Secretary shall be appointed by the incoming Chair for a one-year term beginning with the adjournment of the Annual Meeting and shall perform the duties of Recording and Corresponding Secretary and be a voting member.
of the Executive Committee of this Conference. The Secretary shall be the liaison between the Conference and the Association staff with respect to the retention and maintenance of books, papers, documents, and other property pertaining to the work of the Conference. The Secretary shall keep a true record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Conference and of the Executive Committee. The Secretary shall contact Delegates and new members.

Article 5.6 – CONFERENCE DELEGATE TO THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES. At an Annual Meeting of the Conference, the membership shall elect a delegate to the Association House of Delegates for a term of three years. The Conference Delegate shall represent the Conference in the House of Delegates and shall meet with and report to the Executive committee but shall have no vote before the Committee. A member may be elected to this office only twice.

Article 5.7 – DUTIES OF GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) Geographical District Representatives will personally contact all new members and appointed Delegates within the District to welcome them and provide information regarding the Conference and otherwise serve as a mentor.

(b) Geographical District Representatives will personally contact all members leaving the Conference;

(c) Geographical District Representatives will assist in identifying and mentoring future District Representatives within the District;

(d) The Geographical District Representative will perform any other duties the Chair or the Executive Committee deems necessary in carrying out the mission or goals of the Conference.

Article 5.8 – DUTIES OF AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVES. At-large representatives will coordinate with the Chair-Elect to identify, recruit, and mentor successors, current Conference members, and other potential members of the Conference who are not otherwise being adequately addressed.

ARTICLE 6 – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION.

Article 6.1 – NOMINATING COMMITTEE. The Conference Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least three members of the Conference who are not candidates for office, a majority of whom shall not be either a present officer or member of the Executive Committee. The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall be the Immediate Past Chair of the Conference. The Chair shall promptly announce the names and addresses of the members of the Nominating Committee in an Association publication or by other means, including electronically, to Conference members. If a vacancy should occur in the membership of the Nominating Committee, the Chair may appoint a member to fill that vacancy. One or more candidates may be nominated by the Nominating Committee for each position to be filled as provided in these Bylaws.
The Nominating Committee shall report the identity of each nominee and shall include a brief statement of the nominee’s activities in the Conference and in the legal profession. The Nominating Committee shall submit its report to the Chair of the Conference not later than thirty days after the end of the Midyear Meeting. The Chair-Elect shall announce the appointment for Secretary not later than thirty days after the end of the Midyear Meeting.

Article 6.2 – PETITION AND FLOOR NOMINATIONS. One or more additional nominations may be made for any office, including District Representative of the Executive Committee by petition signed by not less than 10 members of the Conference, representative of at least three states. The petition must state that the individual nominated has agreed to the nomination. The petition shall be sent to the Chair of the Conference and must be received no less than 60 days prior to the Opening Assembly of the Annual Meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor for any office except that nominations for District Representative may be made only by members from that district during their election caucus.

Article 6.3 – PUBLICATION OF NAMES OF NOMINEES. Not less than 40 days prior to the Opening Assembly of the Annual Meeting, the Chair shall publish the names of nominees for all elected and the appointed Chair in a Judicial Division publication. Publication may be made by electronic means and shall be made to all conferences of the Judicial Division.

Article 6.4 – ELECTION.

(a) At a business meeting or conference call of the Conference, prior to the time of the election as published in the official program of the Conference for the Annual Meeting of the Association, the Chair shall announce the nominees for the offices of Chair-Elect, Vice Chair, Conference Delegate to the House of Delegates and District Representatives. In addition, when relevant, the Chair shall announce the Conference nominee for Chair-Elect of the Judicial Division.

(b) An election of the Chair-Elect, Vice Chair and at-large District Representatives shall be held at each Annual Meeting.

(c) District Representatives representing geographic areas shall be elected only by the members from their representative geographic areas at district caucuses held during the Annual Meeting.

(d) If the Conference is called upon to nominate a Judicial Division Chair-Elect, the Conference nominee for Chair-Elect of the Judicial Division shall be announced by the Chair no later than thirty days after the Midyear Meeting.

(e) The Chair also shall announce the time and place at which the election shall be held as stated in the official program of the Conference for the Annual Meeting of the Association. All elections shall be held at a business meeting of the Conference during
the Annual Meeting. Elections for positions for which there is more than one nominee shall be by written ballot. Election shall be by a majority of votes cast by those members present and eligible to vote for that office. If there are more than two candidates for a single office and not one of them receives a majority of the votes cast, then there shall be a second ballot between the two candidates having the greater number of votes on the first ballot.

ARTICLE 7 – COMMITTEES.

Article 7.1 – STANDING COMMITTEES. There shall be standing committees as follows: (1) Nominating Committee, (2) Education Committee, (3) Membership Committee, (4) Awards Committee, (5) Traffic Court Steering Committee, (6) Strategic Planning Committee, and (7) Native American Tribal Courts Committee. Other standing committees as shall be established from time to time by vote of the Executive Committee. Any additional standing committees shall be reflected in the Conference Policies and Procedures.

Article 7.2 – APPOINTED COMMITTEES. Consistent with the power delegated in Article 4, appointed committees may be designated by the Conference Chair to consider and carry out special matters that may be deemed of importance or benefit to the Conference. The Chair shall state the purpose of each appointed committee appointed for the ensuing year. Appointed committees shall terminate at the end of the appointing Chair’s term unless extended by the incoming Chair or otherwise provided for by procedure.

Article 7.3 – APPOINTMENT. All committee chairs, both standing and appointed, shall be appointed promptly by the Conference Chair prior to the Annual Meeting of the Association. In case of the failure of the committee chair or any member of the committee to perform delegated duties, the Conference Chair shall have the power to remove such person and appoint a replacement.

Article 7.4 – NOMINATING COMMITTEE. The Nominating Committee shall consist of such members, and shall consider and report its nominations, as provided in Article 6.1.

Article 7.5 – EDUCATION COMMITTEE. The Conference Chair shall designate the Education Committee Chair. Members of the Committee will indicate their desire to join the Committee each year.

Article 7.6 – AWARDS COMMITTEE. The Awards Committee shall consist of at least 5 members of which 2 are ex-officio, the Chair-Elect and the Vice Chair of the Conference. The remaining 3 members shall serve three-year staggered terms. The Awards Committee shall be guided by the terms used in awarding Conference awards. The Awards Committee will facilitate the selection and presentation of any Conference awards which have been approved by the Board of Governors.
Article 7.7 – TRAFFIC COURT STEERING COMMITTEE. The Traffic Court Steering Committee will consist of no less than 5 members, including a Chair appointed by the Chair of the Conference. Members of the Conference shall indicate their desire to join the Committee each year and the Chair of the Conference shall appoint up to 3 members to the Committee to ensure diversity and continuity. Committee members shall be limited to serve no more than 6 consecutive years on the Committee and the Committee Chair shall be appointed on an annual basis by the Chair of the Conference but shall be limited to serve no more than 3 years as Chair. The Traffic Court Steering Committee will perform the duties as set forth by this Conference, including but not limited to, the development and oversight of any National Traffic Court Seminar as may be determined by this Conference.

Article 7.8 – STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE. A Strategic Planning Committee shall be comprised of members of the Executive Committee and Conference members who are not members of the Executive Committee. The Strategic Planning Chair shall be appointed by the Chair of the Conference. Members shall be appointed in such a fashion to ensure continuity of the Committee from one year to the next.

ARTICLE 8 – AMENDMENTS. These Bylaws may be amended at any Meeting of the Conference by a 2/3 vote of the members of the Conference present and voting, provided such amendment shall first have been approved by the Executive Committee. Notice of an intention to amend these Bylaws must be given to the membership no later than 45 days prior to the Meeting at which the amendment is proposed to be adopted. Amendments shall become effective upon approval by the Conference, the Judicial Division Council, and the Board of Governors of the Association.

ARTICLE 9 – REPRESENTATIVES OF ASSOCIATION POSITION. Any action by this Conference must be approved by the House of Delegates by the Board of Governors of the Association before the action can be effective as the action of the Association. Any resolution or recommendation adopted or action taken by the Conference shall, on request of the Committee or the Conference, be reported by the Chair or the Conference delegate to the House of Delegates or to the Board of Governors for action by the Association.

ARTICLE 10 – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES. These Bylaws shall be supplemented with Conference Policies and Procedures that shall be consistent with and implement the Bylaws.