

## **HSBA: JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (2019)**

FROM : Justice Simeon Acoba (ret.), Co-Chair  
Steven J.T. Chow, Co-Chair

TO : HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On behalf of Justice Simeon Acoba (ret.) and myself, and all the members of the Judicial Administration Committee (“JAC”), the following is our brief report for the Board that you requested.

The JAC committee is made up of members from the judiciary and bar whose mission is to maintain a close relationship on matters of mutual concern to the bench and bar and coordinate activities relating to improvement of the judiciary and administration of justice.

The 2019 JAC consists of both judge and attorney members and the members are:

Associate Justice Simeon R. Acoba (ret.), Co-Chair	Steven J.T. Chow, Co-Chair
Associate Justice Richard Pollack	Kyleigh Nakasone
Judge Joel August (ret.)	Dennis Chong Kee
Judge Ronald Ibarra (ret.),	Hayley Cheng
Judge Randal Valenciano.	Kahikino Noa Dettweiler
Judge Rowena Somerville	Vladimir Devens
Judge Melvin Fujino	Kirsha Durante
Judge Brian Costa	Kevin Takata
	William Harrison
	Edward Kemper
	Carol K. Muranaka
	Dyan Mitsuyama
	Lester Oshiro

Since 2012, the JAC has coordinated Bench-Bar Conferences and Forums. Members of the Judiciary and bar are invited each year to discuss systemic issues involving criminal and civil litigation in both Circuit and District Court that could be improved for the betterment of the legal practice. In 2019, for the first time, the JAC included a breakout session for family law judges and practitioners.

The Bench-Bar Conference was conducted and hosted by the JAC on October 11, 2019. In preparation for the conference, the JAC had twelve regularly scheduled monthly meetings and subgroups (civil circuit/district court, criminal circuit/district court and family court) of the committee held additional meetings in preparation for the 2019 Bench-Bar Conference.

The Bench-Bar Conference was held in the afternoon in conjunction with the Bar Convention, and was attended by 34 judges, two Judiciary staff, and 166 lawyers. The participants were divided into seven groups in terms of their interests: the district court civil law group, the district court criminal law group, two circuit court civil law groups, two circuit court criminal law groups, and a family court group. Each group was assigned specialized topics relevant to its respective subject areas. Materials in support of the common and specialized topics were gathered by the JAC and emailed to all the participants.

Chief Justice Recktenwald spoke to each group and he and other members of the Hawaii Supreme Court and the Intermediate Court of Appeals also attended the group discussions. Other members of the administrative director's office also attended. The JAC members invited the participants, planned the sessions, and acted as discussion leaders and reporters in the group sessions.

The JAC will prepare a report of the comments and suggestions made by the judges and lawyers and the report may be published in the Hawaii Bar Journal. As with the last bench-bar conference, Chief Justice Recktenwald indicated he will address the comments and suggestions in a public written response. In a survey of the participants as of October 28, 2019, on a scale of 1(low) to 5 (highest) 68.66% of the responding participants rated the conference "5", and 28.36.% rated the conference "4" on "overall evaluation," and 64.18% rated 5 and 29.85% rated "4" on "overall usefulness." There were no evaluations below a "3" for any of the categories surveyed. We hope the results of the conference have been and will be of benefit to the bar and to the judiciary and thus also to clients and to the general public.

We are especially thankful to Pat Mau-Shimizu for the support and help of the HSBA staff. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this update.

/s/ Simeon R. Acoba

SIMEON R. ACOBA, JR.  
Associate Justice (ret.)  
Hawaii Supreme Court  
Co-Chair, HSBA Committee on  
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/s/ Steven J.T. Chow

STEVEN J. T. CHOW  
Co-Chair, HSBA Committee on  
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