

Maryland Judicial Ethics Committee

Opinion Request Number: 1977-02

Date of Issue: March 7, 1977

O Published Opinion **G** Unpublished Opinion **G** Unpublished Letter of Advice

Judge May Teach Law and Supervise Other Teachers in Proprietary School

In your letter of February 22, 1977, to the Judicial Ethics Committee, you advised the Committee that a corporation “designed to train security personnel” had offered you a position as a law teacher. You went on to state that, under the terms of the offer, you would teach two courses, Constitutional Law and Criminal Law, would exercise some supervision over the teaching of other law courses, and would be paid \$25.00 an hour for four hours’ work per week. You inquired “as to the ethics of the situation since this is neither a law school nor a college.”

The provision of the Canons and Rules of Judicial Ethics which governs this matter is the third paragraph of Canon XXX:

“A judge may lecture upon or instruct in law, or write upon the subject, and accept compensation therefor, if such course does not interfere with the due performance of his judicial duties and is not forbidden by some positive provision of law.”

Nothing in the Canon suggests that the activities mentioned are permissible only in a “law school” or “college.” Instead, the Canon generally permits a judge to lecture upon, instruct in, or write upon law for compensation, with the only expressed limitations being that the activities do not interfere with the performance of his judicial duties and are not forbidden by a positive provision of law. We have previously ruled that a judge may engage in one of these activities under circumstances where no “law school” or “college” was involved, [Opinion Request No. 1976-08], issued on July 8, 1976.

Assuming that there will be no interference with the performance of your judicial duties, the activities which you contemplate are authorized by Canon XXX.