



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
ETHICS COMMITTEE OF THE KENTUCKY JUDICIARY

403 WAPPING STREET
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601

ANTHONY M. WILHOIT
Court of Appeals

THOMAS J. KNOPF
District Court

JOSEPH H. ECKERT
Circuit Court

B. M. WESTBERRY, CHAIRMAN
Attorney

UHEL O. BARRICKMAN
Attorney

Judicial Ethics Opinion

JE - 74

Formal

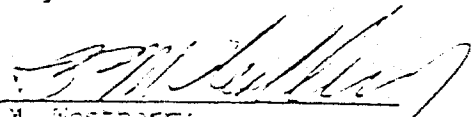
Question: May a judge write a letter of recommendation for a student seeking to enter law school?

Answer: Yes.

The committee received a letter from a judge who wanted to know whether he might write a letter of recommendation for a student seeking to enter law school. The Committee believes that the answer to this question is yes. Such a letter meets the standards for letter of recommendation set forth in D.R. Fretz, R.A. Peoples and J.C. Wicker, Ethics for Judges 13-14 (1982) in that:

- the employment sought is not connected with any branch of government;
- the letter would not impair public confidence in the integrity, independence and impartiality of the judiciary;
- the position sought is not a sensitive one which might prove embarrassing to the judge or the judiciary as a whole;
- the letter does not violate the spirit of Canon 25.

In addition, the letter does not run afoul of In re Anastasi, 388 A.2d 620 (N.J. 1978) where a judge was reprimanded for writing a letter of reference for a friend who had been denied a license by the New Jersey Racing Commission.


B.M. Westberry
Chairman
Judicial Ethics Committee