

CHAMBERS OF RONALD T. Y. MOON CHIEF JUSTICE

SUPREME COURT OF HAWAII
ALIOLANI HALE P.O. BOX 2560
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

August 30, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Justices and Judges

FROM: Ronald T. Y. Moon, Chief Justice

SUBJECT: Statewide Implementation of the Hawaii Judicial Performance Program

This is to notify you that the Special Committee on Judicial Performance, which was created to assist in operationalizing and administering Rule 19, will commence implementation of a permanent statewide Judicial Performance Program. Participation in this program includes all full-time Circuit Court and District judges. The progression from an experimental to a permanent program marks the culmination of over two years of pilot testing. During the test phase, the Special Committee undertook the evaluation of judicial performance of selected trial-level judges in the Circuit and District Courts of the First Circuit.

Please note, however, that because of staffing constraints, the program will be phased-in over time. The initial phase will include those judges in the Circuit Court of the First Circuit with two or more years of experience. The next phase will involve those judges in the District Court of the First Circuit with one or more years of experience. This will be followed by evaluations of Family Court judges of the First Circuit and all Neighbor Island judges.

When the program becomes fully operational, the plan is to evaluate Circuit Court judges at three regularly scheduled intervals, and District judges at two regularly scheduled intervals during their respective terms.

It is anticipated that newly-appointed Circuit Court judges will be evaluated shortly after a "grace period" of two years, followed by a second evaluation midway through their term, and a third evaluation two years before the expiration of their term. District judges will be evaluated once after a "grace period" of one year, and again two years before the expiration of their term.

Prior to the commencement of the evaluation process, an informational meeting will be held for the judges being evaluated. At that meeting, program staff, together with members of the Judicial Performance Committee, will explain the purposes and operations of the program. In turn, judges will have the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns they may

have about the program. Other meetings will be scheduled with court staff to cover implementation procedures.

A report summarizing our efforts to date, highlighting the program's salient points, and presenting our plan for full program implementation, is enclosed for your information. Also enclosed is a sample evaluation questionnaire and cover letter, which will be sent to participating attorneys.

The Special Committee's primary thrust is to establish a program that will provide meaningful, reliable feedback on judicial performance and to achieve the objectives of Rule 19. I ask for your support in this effort.