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# Judicial reform and the creation of the judicial discipline court, as well as the judicial administration body

On September 15, 2024, a Decree was published in the Official Gazette of the Federation by means of which several provisions of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States regarding the Federal Judicial Branch were amended, added and repealed.

The aforementioned reform is of great relevance as it introduces significant

changes in 19 key articles for the operation of the Judicial Branch, among the amendments it includes, for example, the introduction of popular elections for Supreme Court Justices, District Judges and Circuit Magistrates, the creation of a Judicial Discipline Court and a Judicial Administration Body, which would replace the current Federal Judiciary Council.

#### The Judicial Disciplinary Court

The Judicial Disciplinary Court, established by the reform of Article 100 of the Constitution, is an entity of the Federal Judicial Branch with technical, administrative and decision-making autonomy. The main assignment of this tribunal is to supervise the conduct and performance of judicial officers, and

it has several faculties in terms of sanctions and evaluations.

This Court will be integrated by five members selected by popular election, according to the procedure specified in Article 96 of the Constitution. The magistrates must meet the requirements stipulated in Article 95 (such as professional capacity, honesty and honorability) and their term of office will be 6 years, without the possibility of reelection. In addition, the presidency will rotate every two years, being assigned to the member with the highest vote in the corresponding election.

The court has wide-ranging faculties, among them:

- To investigate ex officio or by formal complaint acts that may constitute serious misconduct or crimes committed by judicial public officers.
- Issue sanctions that may include reprimand, suspension, economic sanctions, dismissal and disqualification, with the exception of Supreme Court Justices and Electoral Magistrates, who may only be removed under the terms of Title Four of the Constitution.
- Evaluate the performance of magistrates and district judges during their first year in office, establishing criteria and indicators to measure their performance.
- Order corrective measures, such as training, and if they are not complied with or are not satisfactory, the court may impose a suspension of up to one year or, in more serious cases, the definitive dismissal of the official.

The Court operates both in plenary and in commissions. The commissions, formed by three of its members, are in charge of handling administrative liability proceedings in the first instance. Resolutions may be appealed before the Plenary, which will decide by a majority of four votes. The court's decisions are final and unappealable, which means that no lawsuit or appeal may be filed against them.

In addition, the Court may conduct investigations through a unit responsible for gathering evidence, conducting inspections and requesting appearances. It also has the power to inform the Public Prosecutor's Office if it considers that a crime has been committed and may request the initiation of an impeachment trial before the House of Representatives.

#### **Judicial Administration Body**

The Judicial Administration Body will be integrated by five members. One of them will be appointed by the Mexican President, another by the Senate, and the other three will be appointed by the Plenary of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, by means of a six-vote qualified vote. This scheme seeks to ensure a balanced representation of the branches of government in the management of the Body.

The members of the Body will serve for a term of six years, without the possibility of reelection. In addition, the presidency of the organ will rotate every two years, as established by law, to avoid the concentration of power in a single person.

The Body will be responsible for determining the number, division of circuits, territorial jurisdiction and specialization by subject matter of the Collegiate Circuit Courts, Collegiate Courts of Appeal and District Courts. In addition, it will be responsible for the admission, permanence, promotion and dismissal of judicial personnel (except judges and magistrates), as well as the administrative management of the material and financial resources of the Judicial Branch.

The Body will also be in charge of inspecting compliance with the rules of administrative operation of the Judicial Branch. Likewise, it will operate the National Judicial Training School, which will be responsible for the education, training, certification and evaluation of judicial personnel.

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