

MISSOURI MUNICIPAL AND ASSOCIATE CIRCUIT JUDGES ASSOCIATION

Conference Committee

History and Purpose: Traditionally the vice-president of the Association chairs the Conference Committee. This committee presents the annual conference and is responsible for its content, arranging for speakers, preparation of the announcements and materials and all aspects of the conference.

Primary Dues of Conference Committee

1. Plan the Agenda. This should be done as quickly as possible after the previous year's conference. Since some speakers require bookings far in advance, it is wise to plan ahead if you are in line to be chairman of this committee. If possible, do not duplicate topics that have recently been presented by MJEC or our Association. The program must consist of fifteen (15) hours of CLE and should contain one (1) or more hours of ethics. Topics must pertain to judicial education. Introductions, lunch, breaks, social events, etc. do not count as CLE hours. A good reference in planning the program is to refer to the previous years critiques for suggestions of topics members are interested in learning about and also for complaints and constructive criticism that will help insure a successful conference.
2. Printing and Distribution of Agenda. The agenda should be finalized, printed and mailed to all members and non-members by late February. By mailing the agenda in this time frame judges will be given sufficient time (at least two council meetings) to request approval for conference expenses from their city council. The quantity of printed agendas should be at least 750. This will allow for one to be mailed to each member and non-member, to each presiding judge, and extra for use at the conference by the attendees. The conference chair should consult with the hotel to secure the rooms needed for each presentation. If breakout sessions are being planned, the rooms with the larger capacities should be assigned to the sessions the committee feels will have the most in attendance. Assigned rooms for each program should be printed on the Agenda.
3. Sponsored Luncheon. Over the past fourteen years the Division of Highway Safety has sponsored a Thursday luncheon for the Association and provided a luncheon speaker. The conference committee may select the luncheon speaker but the Division of Highway Safety must approve him and the program must contain education for judges regarding DWI's. The Division of Highway Safety will designate the amount of money they will allow for the luncheon and a menu to conform to these limitations must be selected. The Conference Chair should confirm with the Division of Highway Safety that they would sponsor this luncheon. The best time to do this is at the preceding conference. This is normally a joint luncheon with MACA and arrangements

for the luncheon should be coordinated with MACA.

4. Membership Certificates. The conference committee should design a membership certificate for the current year. This should be 8 ½ x 11 and suitable for framing. These should be sent to the Executive Secretary to print the name of each judge who is a member on the certificate and included in the packed for the judges at the conference and mailed to judges who are members and do not attend the conference. Certificates are not given to prosecutors and others who attend the conference. A quantity of 325-350 should be sufficient.
5. Ribbons for Board Members. The Conference Committee should order ribbons for the board members designating them as a MMACJA Board Member. These ribbons may be ordered with an adhesive strip so they can easily be attached to their name badges. These ribbons help identify board members so they may answer any questions posed by conference attendees. Note: The name badge sleeves and inserts should be ordered and printed by the Executive Secretary.
6. Materials for Conference Attendees. The Conference Chair should write each presenter, confirming their participation and requesting specific instructions for any audio-visual equipment or other materials they may need for their presentation. These presenters should be given a deadline for the materials to be submitted to the Conference Chair. A proposed deadline of April 15th is good to use as this is a date easily remembered and will give the Conference Chair a week or so to make certain he has received the materials and contact the presenters if not received. Most printers will require the materials be to them no later than May 1st for set-up and printing. The materials must be prepared and assembled for submission to the printer in the order they are to appear in the notebook. Notations should be put on post-it notes and attached to the materials if they can be printed front and back. Notebooks should be ordered as soon as possible after the agenda is prepared if it is going to be printed as well as tabs for each segment of the program. An index should be prepared by the Conference Chair to be placed in the front of the notebook as well as a Welcome Letter from the board of directors, highlighting some of the programs to be presented. Note: If the notebook is to have a printed cover it must be ordered in sufficient time to have this done. Ordering a different color notebook from previous years is helpful to members who keep their notebooks readily accessible for reference. It is important to stress the deadline to the presenters for their materials so these can be put in the notebooks and presented to the attendees when registering. This helps with the professional image we want to convey about our Association. The only materials that are consistently late should be on New Legislation. Including legislation passed in the previous year that effects municipal courts and materials on new legislation that is very likely to be passed by the legislature and signed by the governor can usually solve this.
7. Registration. The location of the registration desk should be confirmed with the hotel. The registration desk should be manned by the Executive Secretary

who should be assisted by other board members selected by the Conference Committee. The contents of the "registration packet" should be dictated by the Conference Chair and coordinated with the Executive Secretary. Breakfast tickets and complimentary golf (or other hotel amenities) should be included in the packet along with the Membership Certificate, name badge and any other item that is to be generally distributed to the attendees. The hotel no longer furnished tickets for breakfast so these should be computer generated by the Executive Secretary in sufficient quantity to cover attendance at the conference. Registration times and location should appear on the agenda.

8. Menus. The Conference Chair should meet with the Facilities Committee and the hotel to select menus for the breakfast buffets and the reception. The menus should be selected keeping in mind not only the quality and quantity of the food but the price to be paid by the Association.
9. Plaques. The Conference Committee is responsible to design and purchase a suitable plaque for the out-going president. Also if any other plaques or awards are to be presented at the conference, this should be coordinated by the Conference Chair.
10. Critiques/Evaluations. An evaluation form for the conference, including separate evaluations for speakers, materials, facilities, over-all conference, etc. should be designed by the Conference Chair and placed in the materials notebook or in the participant's packet. Participants should be encouraged at each session and throughout the conference to complete these critiques, as these are a valuable tool in planning future conferences. The practice we instituted at the 2001 Conference wherein each participant turning in an evaluation had his/her name placed in a drawing for a free week-end at the hotel (this is given to the Association as a part of our contract), increased the number of evaluations received and might be a good practice to follow. We are required as an accredited sponsor to make these evaluations readily available and to advise the speakers within a reasonable time of the results of the evaluations pertaining to their particular segment of the program. The Association is required to retain these evaluations for a period of one year.
11. Post-Conference. The Conference Chair should write thank you letters to all presenters and any others that helped with the conference where deemed appropriate. Presenters should also be advised of the rating for their presentations as indicated by a recap of the critiques.
12. Miscellaneous. (a) A record of attendance at the conference must be kept and retained by the Association for a period of three (3) years. The Conference Chair should coordinate with the Executive Secretary to make certain these records are produced and maintained. (b) It is a good idea to include the number of CLE hours for each program and indicate if they qualify as ethics hours on the Agenda. Printing these on the program will assist the conference attendees that may not participate in all programs to determine the number of CLE hours earned for their compliance report and will also assist the Executive Secretary and others in the Association to answer questions posed by members at the time they complete their compliance report. (c) A copy of

the printed Agenda should be sent to the Missouri Bar. We re an accredited sponsor, however they want to see a copy of our program. They have, on rare occasions, questioned the topics we are presenting and the Conference Chair should be in a position to justify why this qualifies as CLE if questioned. A report must be sent to the Missouri Bar each year listing all seminars presented by MMACJ and the number of CLE hours for each. This report is completed by the Executive Secretary.

Conclusion: The success of our Association is dependent upon a well-organized and well-presented annual conference. This takes a lot of time and thought, as well as many hours of hard work by the Conference Chair and his/her committee. We have part-time and full-time municipal judges, associate circuit judges, prosecutors, lawyer judges and non-lawyer judges attending our conference. It is important that our conference include topics of interest to all of these groups. The Conference Chair is well advised to utilize the knowledge and expertise of present and past Conference Chairs.