

RULES
ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPREME JUDICIAL
COUNCIL AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

Chapter One
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. These Rules regulate the main issues related to the activity and organization of work of the Supreme Judicial Council and to the structure, functions and organization of work of its administration.

Article 2. (1) The Supreme Judicial Council is a permanent body that represents the judiciary, secures and asserts its independence, determines the composition and organization of the work of the courts, prosecutor's offices and prosecution authorities, and financially and technically secures their activity, without interfering with its implementation.

(2) The activity of the Supreme Judicial Council is carried out in compliance with the principles of legality, independence, proportionality, truthfulness, equality, autonomy, impartiality, rapidity, accessibility, publicity, transparency, consistency and predictability.

(3) The Supreme Judicial Council is a legal entity with registered offices in Sofia. It exercises its powers through a plenary session, a college of judges and prosecutors, and is represented by one of its elected members, determined by a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 3. The Supreme Judicial Council shall have an official round seal containing the elements referred to in Article 16(5) of the Judiciary System Act. In the middle, the state coat of arms of the Republic of Bulgaria is depicted, around which is written "Republic of Bulgaria. Supreme Judicial Council".

(2) The official seal shall be stamped only on the originals of the acts of the plenary session and the colleges, as well as on official long-term documents signed by the presidents of the plenary session and the colleges, and by the representative of the Supreme Judicial Council as well.

(3) For business purposes, a round shaped business seal shall be used, with the inscription in the middle "Republic of Bulgaria", and written "Supreme Judicial Council" around it.

(4) The Secretary-General of the Supreme Judicial Council shall approve the official and business stamp forms and designate the officers who keep and stamp them.

Article 4. (1) In exercising its powers, the Supreme Judicial Council interacts directly with judges, prosecutors and investigators at all levels of the judicial authorities.

(2) In exercising its powers, the Supreme Judicial Council interacts with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Assembly, the Constitutional Court, with central and territorial bodies of the executive power, and their administrations, as well as with other agencies.

(3) The Supreme Judicial Council cooperates with the professional organizations of judges, prosecutors and investigators, judicial officers, other non-profit legal entities with activity in the field of justice, as well as with advisory bodies established by decision of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 5. (1) In exercising its powers, the Supreme Judicial Council is assisted by an administration.

(2) The activity of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council is carried out in compliance with the principles of legality, impartiality, competence, responsibility, efficiency, publicity, transparency and respect for the judicial officers' professional ethics.

(3) The administration of the Supreme Judicial Council is headed by a Secretary-General.

(4) In exercising its functions, the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council interacts with the judicial authorities and other state and municipal institutions not included in the judiciary system, as well as with legal entities and individuals.

Chapter Two **SUPREME JUDICIAL COUNCIL**

Section I **Powers of the Plenary Session of the Supreme Judicial Council**

Article 6. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council is composed by all the people in the council.

Article 7. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council shall:

1. approve the draft budget of the judiciary;
2. adopt a decision to terminate the term of office of an elected member of the Supreme Judicial Council under the terms of Article 130(8) of the Constitution;
3. organize the qualifications of judges, prosecutors and investigators;
4. hear and adopt the annual reports of the judiciary under Article 84, point (16) of the Constitution;
5. manage the real estate of the judiciary;
6. make a proposal to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for the appointment and dismissal of the President of the Supreme Court of Cassation, the President of the Supreme Administrative Court and the Prosecutor General;
7. on a proposal of one of the colleges after consultation with the Minister of Justice, or upon a proposal of the Minister of Justice, and in the case of military courts – after consultation with the Minister of Defense, determine the number, judicial areas and seats of the district, county, military, administrative and appellate courts and prosecutor's offices, establish and close courts and prosecutor's offices, change their seats and determine the settlements where territorial divisions are opened to the respective district court and to the respective district court prosecutor's office;
8. on a proposal of one of the colleges, in coordination with the administrative heads of the judicial authorities, determine the number of judges, prosecutors and investigators in all courts, prosecutor's offices and investigation departments according to the degree of workload;
9. determine the number of employees and the structure of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and of the National Institute of Justice, on the proposal of the respective head;
10. determine the remuneration of judges, prosecutors and investigators;
11. prepare and submit to the National Assembly by 31 May an annual report on its activities, together with the annual report on the activity of the Inspectorate at the Supreme Judicial Council and with the annual reports of the Supreme Court of Cassation, the Supreme Administrative Court and the Prosecutor General;

12. draw up and publish an annual report on the independence and transparency of the activities of the judicial authorities and its own activities, which it makes available for public consultation;
13. give opinions to the Council of Ministers and the National Assembly on draft laws related to the judiciary;
14. establish standing and temporary committees to support its activities;
15. adopt regulations for the organization of its activities and the activities of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council, which is promulgated in the State Gazette;
16. create and maintain an electronic public register of all its decisions and the reasons for them;
17. in the cases provided for by law, issue regulations;
18. approve the automated information systems for the judicial authorities after consultation with the Minister of Justice and ensures their systematic integration and interoperability;
19. issue a classifier of positions in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and the National Institute of Justice, and after consultation with the Chief Inspector – the Inspectorate of the Supreme Judicial Council as well;
20. create and maintain an electronic public register of all projects that have the object of functioning of the bodies of the judicial authorities, implemented by the organizations under Article 217 of the Judiciary System Act;
21. appoint by election decision an elected member to represent the Supreme Judicial Council, as well as an elected member to sign the documents related to holding the post for the representative of the Supreme Judicial Council;
22. organize the construction and functioning of a system of financial management and control in the authorities of the judiciary and internal audit in the absorption and administration of budgetary resources;
23. analyze the reasons for the violations, the grounds for actions under Chapter Three “a” of the Judiciary System Act, and adopt measures for their elimination;
24. coordinate a model of registers for the use of special intelligence means on the basis of Article 34f(3) of the Special Intelligence Means Act;
25. take note of the activity report of the National Legal Aid Bureau on the basis of Article 17, point (6) of the Legal Aid Act;
26. develop and publish an annual program for its activity;
27. resolve other organizational issues common to the judiciary as well.

Section II

Powers of the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 8. The college of judges of the Supreme Judicial Council is composed of 14 members and includes the presidents of the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Supreme Administrative Court, six members directly elected by the judges, and six members elected by the National Assembly.

Article 9. The college of prosecutors at the Supreme Judicial Council consists of 11 members and includes the Prosecutor General, four members directly elected by prosecutors, one member directly elected by the investigators, and five members elected by the National Assembly.

Article 10. The college of judges and the public prosecutor's office shall exercise the following powers individually and in accordance with their professional orientation with respect to judges, prosecutors and investigators:

1. appoint, promote, remove and dismiss judges, prosecutors and investigators;
2. make periodic and other attestations of judges, prosecutors, investigators, administrative heads and their deputies in the judicial authorities and resolve issues for the acquisition and restoration of immutability;
3. impose the disciplinary sanctions of removal and dismissal of judges, prosecutors, investigators, administrative heads and their deputies in the judicial authorities;
4. determine the number, appoint and dismiss administrative heads and their deputies in the judicial authorities, with the exception of the President of the Supreme Court of Cassation, the President of the Supreme Administrative Court and the Prosecutor General;
5. resolve issues concerning the organization of the activity of the relevant system of judicial authorities;
6. make proposals to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council for the determination of the number of judicial districts and the seats of district, county, administrative and appellate courts and relevant prosecutor's offices;
7. make proposals to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council to determine the number of judges, prosecutors and investigators in all courts, prosecutor's offices and investigation departments;
8. determine the number of judicial officers according to the degree of workload – on a proposal of or after consultation with the administrative heads of the judicial authorities, and for the bodies included in the structure of the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria – with the Prosecutor General as well, and they may open new and reduce jobs;
9. organize and hold competitions for judicial, prosecutorial and investigative positions in the cases provided for by the Judiciary System Act;
10. assign the Inspectorate of the Supreme Judicial Council to carry out inspections that are outside the annual program for its activities;
11. submit opinions on draft laws within the scope of their competence to the Plenary Session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
12. annually analyze and report on the workload of the judicial authorities;
13. every 6 months, require and summarize information from the courts, prosecutor's offices and the National Investigation Service about their activities;
14. issue, after consultation with the Budget and Finance Committee, a classifier of positions of the respective judicial authorities;
15. decide on the temporary dismissal of judges, prosecutors and investigators under Articles 230 and 232 of the Judiciary System Act and their reinstatement in the cases provided for by law;
16. establish standing and temporary committees to support their activities;
17. organize and coordinate the participation of judges, prosecutors and investigators in international legal cooperation;
18. adopt rules for their work, which are published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council;
19. assess the need for judicial assistants and prosecutorial assistants in the courts and prosecutor's offices on the basis of the workload of the respective judicial authority;
20. draw up, keep and store a personnel file for each judge, prosecutor and investigator;
21. the college of prosecutors elects and dismisses the director of the National Investigation Service;
22. the college of judges shall terminate the secondment of a judge in another judicial authority from the one in which he or she occupies the respective judicial position by state,

when during the secondment there are violations of the conditions and procedures provided for in this law, or when there is a need for staffing the work of the judicial authority where the judge is seconded from.

Section III

Powers and Functions of the Representative of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 11. (1) The Supreme Judicial Council is represented by one of its elected members, determined by a decision of the plenary session.

(2) The functions of the representative of the Supreme Judicial Council are, as follows:

1. represents the Supreme Judicial Council before the institutions in the country, in international forums and institutions;
2. convenes meetings of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council when the Minister of Justice is absent;
3. chairs meetings of the plenary sessions when the Minister of Justice is absent;
4. signs the documents related to holding the post of “member of the Supreme Judicial Council” with the elected members of the council;
5. signs the documents related to holding the post of “Secretary-General”;
6. signs the documents related to holding the posts of “Head of Internal Audit” and “Internal Auditor”;
7. concludes contracts to which the Supreme Judicial Council is a party, following a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
8. exercises the powers of a contracting authority under the Public Procurement Law and authorizes persons under Article 7(1) of the Public Procurement Law, upon assignment by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
9. authorizes procedural representatives after a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
10. announces by order the list of categories of information subject to classification as an official secret, created and stored in the Supreme Judicial Council, after a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
11. organizes and coordinates, jointly with the spokespersons of the colleges of judges and prosecutors, the implementation of the Judiciary Communication Strategy 2014–2020;
12. is responsible, jointly with the spokespersons of the colleges of judges and prosecutors, for the communication and media policy and interaction of the Supreme Judicial Council with state authorities, with other central and territorial executive bodies, with non-profit legal entities, professional organizations and the media;
13. organizes the protocol and international activities of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(3) In its absence, the representative shall be replaced by a member of the Supreme Judicial Council by seniority which is determined by the length of the general legal service.

Chapter Three

ORGANIZATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Section I

Committees to the Plenary Session of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 12. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council shall elect from its composition both standing and temporary committees to assist its activities.

Article 13. (1) The standing committees include elected members of the Supreme Judicial Council in equal numbers from each college.

(2) Each committee shall elect from among its members a chairman and a vice-chairman from the different colleges. An elected member of the Supreme Judicial Council may be elected for a chairman of only one standing committee.

(3) Members of the Supreme Judicial Council who are not members of the relevant committee may attend all its meetings without the right to vote.

(4) Standing committees can set up working groups.

(5) Each committee may delegate to one or more of its members the performance of representative, exploratory or other activities related to the exercise of its functions, while ensuring an equal distribution of the activities assigned among the members of the committees.

(6) The activities of each committee shall be assisted by a technical assistant and at least one expert assistant from the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council designated by order of the Secretary-General.

Article 14. (1) The standing committees shall meet and take decisions if more than half of their total members are present. Committees shall decide by a majority of more than half of the members present in the open election.

(2) The standing committee shall be convened at a meeting by its chairman, or at the request of at least one third of its members.

(3) Committees may hold joint meetings when discussing common issues. These meetings shall be chaired by agreement by one of the chairmen.

(4) In joint meetings, a common decision shall be made on the issue under discussion. When different opinions appear, each committee makes its own separate report, proposing a draft decision.

(5) The standing committees adopt their internal rules in accordance with these Rules and the internal rules in force in the Supreme Judicial Council.

(6) Each committee coordinates and interacts with the other committees of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 15. (1) The agenda and frequency of committee meetings shall be determined by them. (2) The committee members shall be informed of the agenda and materials for the meeting at least two days before the meeting.

(3) A report shall be drawn up for the decisions adopted by the committees and shall be signed by the chairman of the committee after its preparation by the technical assistant, and the decisions adopted by the committees and the reasons therefor shall be formulated by the expert assistant.

(4) The agenda and minutes of the decisions taken are published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 16. Standing committees of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council are:

1. Budget and Finance Committee;
2. Property Management Committee;
3. Committee on Legal Affairs;
4. Professional Qualification and Information Technology Committee.

Article 17. The Budget and Finance Committee is composed of six members of the Supreme Judicial Council – three from the college of prosecutors and three from the college of judges. The Committee shall:

1. prepare short- and long-term budget estimates;
2. propose rules and procedures for financial management and control in the judiciary;
3. propose to the Supreme Judicial Council rules and guidelines related to the activities of the judicial authorities and the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
4. prepare draft annual budget of the judiciary;
5. draw up a draft budgetary allocation of the budgetary resources of the judicial authorities;
6. propose budgetary allocation of the budgetary resources of the judicial authorities;
7. propose rules and mechanisms for determining the level of remuneration of members of the Supreme Judicial Council, judges, prosecutors and investigators, and of judicial officers;
8. prepare analyzes of the current financial situation of the judiciary system and maintain financial statistics;
9. render methodological assistance to the judiciary on budget, financial management and financial services;
10. approve the three-year strategic plan and the annual internal audit activity plan prepared by the Internal Audit Directorate, and submit them for approval by the Supreme Judicial Council;
11. approve project proposals and controls the absorption of funds under international and domestic projects related to the Supreme Judicial Council and the judiciary;
12. fulfill the powers of a first-level authorizing officer of the budget of the judiciary under Article 11(4) of the Public Finance Act, on issues determined by a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 18. The Property Management Committee is composed of six members of the Supreme Judicial Council – three from the college of prosecutors and three from the college of judges. The Committee shall:

1. organize the development of concepts, estimates and programs for the investment policy of the judiciary, the management and government of the buildings reserve, and then submit them for approval by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
2. study and analyze the need for new construction, reconstruction and major repairs for the needs of the judiciary, including proposals from the judiciary;
3. propose to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council for adoption the annual programs of investment activity within the budget approved;
4. annually propose to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council to adopt an analysis of the implementation of the annual and long-term projections of the spent funds of investment relevance;
5. submit, jointly with the Budget and Finance Committee, proposals for financing from the budget or other means of new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation and major repairs to the judiciary in the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
6. consider proposals and requests for emergency repairs of the buildings reserve of the judiciary and submit them to the Budget and Finance Committee for budget expenditure in accordance with the requirements for budget implementation;
7. organize the conduction of ex-ante, current and ex-post control over the implementation of the investment policy, including the implementation of new construction, reconstruction and major repairs of the buildings reserve of the judiciary;
8. propose to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council draft decisions concerning the acquisition of real estate and real rights over them for the needs of the judiciary;

9. coordinate with other executive bodies the implementation of joint projects or international programs related to the buildings reserve of the judiciary;
10. propose to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council draft decisions on the distribution of the use of real estate granted to the judiciary, the organization for managing and governing the court buildings and the departmental housing reserve;
11. propose to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council draft decisions concerning the organization and use of the departmental housing reserve.

Article 19. The Committee on Legal Affairs is composed of eight members – four from the college of prosecutors and four from the college of judges. The Committee shall:

1. prepare draft regulations in the cases provided for by law and internal departmental rules, which it submits to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council or to the respective colleges for adoption;
2. prepare opinions on draft laws and legislative acts of the Council of Ministers and other central executive bodies that are relevant to the judiciary system;
3. prepare proposals for legislative amendments it deems necessary, and prepare them for submission to a legislative initiative body, after their agreement with the judicial authorities and after a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council, the college of judges or prosecutors;
4. organize the discussion of draft amendments to legislative acts with the judicial authorities, includingly summarize the opinions submitted by judges, prosecutors, investigators and judicial officers, and submit them for discussion in the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council, the college of judges or prosecutors;
5. prepare a draft report on the activity of the Supreme Judicial Council, as well as opinions on the reports submitted by the Supreme Court of Cassation, the Supreme Administrative Court and the Prosecutor General;
6. prepare draft opinions on cases before the Constitutional Court in which the Supreme Judicial Council is constituted as an interested party;
7. prepare opinions on court proceedings of significant public interest on which the Supreme Judicial Council is constituted as a party;
8. prepare draft agreements with other bodies and organizations that are subject to subsequent approval by the plenary session;
9. coordinate the work of the Supreme Judicial Council on the implementation of the measures of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism;
10. prepare a draft annual report on the independence and transparency of the activities of the judiciary and the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 20. The Professional Qualification and Information Technology Committee is composed of six members – three from the college of prosecutors and three from the college of judges. The Committee shall:

1. develop draft plenary decisions required by law to implement e-justice when the Supreme Judicial Council participates in projects with external or state budget funding related to e-justice or e-justice services, coordinate and control their implementation;
2. determine compulsory training courses in the case of promotion of judges, prosecutors and investigators and appointment of administrative heads;
3. organize the qualification of judges, prosecutors and investigators, as well as of judicial officers;
4. discuss current problematic issues from the activities of the National Institute of Justice related to improving the educational process and the application of up-to-date modern technologies in training;

5. assist in coordinating the scientific and applied research of the law faculties in the country on the problems of the organization and functioning of the judiciary;
6. facilitate the acquaintance with foreign scientific achievements in information technology with a view to their use by the judiciary;
7. assist the Supreme Judicial Council in the implementation of the Information Strategy of the judicial authorities, including the implementation of information systems, etc. and electronic communication with the judicial authorities as well as non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors;
8. exchange experience in the field of information technologies and trainings with related units at the Supreme Judicial Councils in other countries;
9. organize the implementation of the activities under Chapter II, Section 1a of the Judiciary System Act.

Article 21. (1) To assist the activity of the Supreme Judicial Council in the preparation, monitoring and implementation of projects in the Justice sector at the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council, a Board for the coordination of the actions of the judicial authorities for participation in international projects and programs shall be established.

(2) The permanent composition of the Coordination Board shall be determined by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and include members of the colleges of judges and prosecutors as well as officials of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(3) Where appropriate, and in accordance with the issue under consideration, representatives of other bodies and institutions may also attend meetings of the Coordination Board.

(4) The Board for the coordination of the actions of the judicial authorities for participation in international projects and programs has the following functions:

1. identifies and evaluates external funding opportunities for policies and programs implemented by the Supreme Judicial Council, and identifies appropriate programs, including when implementing measures under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism and the Roadmap to the Updated Strategy to Continue the Judicial Reform, where the Supreme Judicial Council is a responsible institution;

2. coordinates the participation in projects under programs funded by the European Union and other donors to which the Supreme Judicial Council is a beneficent or partner;

3. ensures coordination and interaction with regard to the project proposals of the judicial authorities with a view to avoiding double funding and duplication of activities;

4. ensures coordination and interaction with the bodies and structures managing the funds from the European structural and investment funds, as well as with other bodies financing the relevant project activity.

(5) The Board for the coordination of the actions of the judicial authorities for participation in international projects and programs shall adopt rules for its activities as well as rules related to the organization of project implementation and management.

(6) In the performance of its functions, the Board for the coordination of the actions of the judicial authorities for participation in international projects and programs shall be assisted by officials of the Supreme Judicial Council's administration designated by order of the Secretary-General.

Article 22. (1) The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council may also set up temporary committees to carry out specific tasks in relation to its powers or other subsidiary bodies to support certain activities performed by it. In such cases, external specialists may be involved.

(2) The temporary committees and other structures under para. (1) shall cease to exist upon the expiration of the term for which they have been established, or with the termination of their activity, as well as before the term set with a resolution of the plenary session.

Section II

Committees to the Colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 23. (1) The following standing committees assisted the colleges of judges and prosecutor's activities:

1. Attestation and Competitions Committee;
2. Professional Ethics Committee;
3. Committee on Disciplinary Activity and Interaction with the Inspectorate to the Supreme Judicial Council;
4. Judicial card, Workload and Forensic Statistics Committee;
5. Judicial Administration Committee.

Article 24. (1) The colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council may also establish other standing or temporary committees to support their activities.

(2) The powers of the committees, the number of members of the standing committees, as well as the rules for their activities are determined by the relevant college of the Supreme Judicial Council and published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Section III

Meetings of the Plenary Session and the Colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 25. (1) The plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council shall adopt their acts at meetings.

(2) Meetings are public and broadcast directly on the Internet, except when proposals for disciplinary sanctions, documents containing information protected under the Personal Data Protection Act or classified under the Classified Information Protection Act are discussed.

(3) A closed meeting of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and colleges for discussing material containing classified information shall be held upon the proposal of this one chairing the meeting. He or she shall announce the classification marking with which the document is marked under the Classified Information Protection Act, determines the persons entitled to be present at the discussion of the material, and orders that the direct broadcast to the press center of the Supreme Judicial Council and the broadcast on the Internet shall be suspended. The meeting shall continue in camera as this shall not be discussed or voted on.

(4) The discussions and the minutes of the closed session under para. (3) are classified information and bind all relevant members of the Supreme Judicial Council and other persons who have access to them with the relevant obligations.

(5) Decisions taken in private shall be made public.

(6) By decision of the plenary session or the colleges, the meetings may be held in another settlement, outside the seats of the Supreme Judicial Council in the city of Sofia, or in another building – upon prior agreement.

Article 26. (1) Plenary meetings are convened by the chairperson and, when he or she is absent, by the representative of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(2) Plenary meetings may also be convened at the request of any college of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(3) The Minister of Justice chairs the meetings of the plenary sessions. In his or her absence, the plenary session is chaired by the Supreme Judicial Council representative, the President of the Supreme Court of Cassation, the President of the Supreme Administrative Court or the Prosecutor General.

(4) In the absence of the Minister of Justice, a Deputy Minister designated by him or her may be present at the plenary session.

(5) Plenary meetings are held on an agenda previously announced.

(6) The draft agenda shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General on the basis of proposals received from:

1. the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council;
2. standing and temporary committees to the plenary session;
3. members of the Supreme Judicial Council;
4. the Minister of Justice, in accordance with his or her powers.

(7) The Secretary-General submits for consideration matters within his or her competence.

(8) Plenary consideration materials shall be made available to the Secretary-General not later than 4 working days before the meeting. On a regular basis, additional materials can only be submitted after a plenary decision.

(9) In cases where the deadline under para. (8) is not met, they are included in the agenda for the next meeting.

(10) In the term under para. (8), the draft agenda shall be submitted for coordination to the Minister of Justice.

(11) Additions to the agenda previously announced may be made on the day of meeting under a plenary decision.

(12) The members of the plenary session and the Chief Inspector shall be informed of the date, time and place of the meeting and of the agenda three days in advance, and shall be provided with the written materials for the meeting. The agenda shall be published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council within the same period.

(13) The materials that contain classified information are separated into a separate part of the agenda and are provided only to the members of the Supreme Judicial Council in compliance with the requirements of the Classified Information Protection Act and the acts on its enforcement.

(14) Coordination of the preparation of the meetings is carried out by the Secretary-General.

Article 27. A plenary and collegium meeting is held if more than half of their members are present.

Article 28. (1) At plenary and collegium meetings, the following are present: the Minister of Justice and the Chief Inspector, without the right to vote, as well as the Secretary-General or a official of the administration designated by him or her, an officer of the Public Relations department, an operator of the computerized voting system for recording the vote of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council, and a stenographer, and in the cases under Article 32(3) of the Judiciary System Act – a Deputy Minister designated by the Minister of Justice as well.

(2) Other stakeholders invited as appropriate may also be present at the consideration of a separate item on the agenda.

(3) At the request of a member of the Supreme Judicial Council, the plenary session or the relevant college may authorize the presence of individual officers of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council when considering a particular item on the agenda.

(4) When discussing items from the agenda containing classified information, only persons with access to classified information at the appropriate level are present.

Article 29. Plenary decisions under Article 30(2), points (2) and (6) of the Judiciary System Act shall be adopted by a majority of not less than seventeen votes, and the remaining decisions – by a majority of more than half of the members present.

Article 30. (1) Voting in the plenary session and colleges is always open and personal. “Abstention” vote is not allowed.

(2) Open voting shall be carried out by means of computerized voting system.

(3) Where it is not possible to vote using the computerized voting system, voting shall be carried out by raising hand.

(4) Voting through a computerized voting system shall be carried out through the personal computers of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(5) The printout of the computerized voting system shall become an integral part of the minutes of the plenary session under Article 36, and shall be published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(6) Voting reporting is automatic. The results of the vote shall be recorded on the personal computers of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council and on a control panel placed in the room providing public access to the meetings of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(7) Voting by raising hand shall be carried out after an invitation by the chairperson of the meeting, alternately with “for” and “against”. Counting of votes and their reporting shall be carried out under the control of the chairperson of the meeting and shall be reflected in the minutes by name.

(8) The plenary session and the colleges may decide to hold a joint vote on certain items on the agenda.

(9) Speeches are not allowed from the announcement of the vote until its completion.

(10) Re-voting proposals on account of error are proposed and accepted before the voting results are announced.

Article 31. (1) A member of the Supreme Judicial Council shall not have the right to vote in a decision that relates to him or her, his or her spouse or relative in a straight line, in a collateral line up to the fourth degree and in marriage to the third degree, or if there other circumstances that cast doubt on his or her impartiality.

(2) In the cases under Article 35(1) of the Judiciary System Act, a member of the Supreme Judicial Council shall remove himself or herself by declaring the circumstances that necessitated the removal.

Article 32. (1) The college of judges is chaired by the President of the Supreme Court of Cassation and, in his or her absence, by the President of the Supreme Administrative Court, or by the most senior member present.

(2) The college of prosecutors is chaired by the Prosecutor General and, in his or her absence, by the most senior member present.

Article 33. (1) The meetings of the colleges shall be convened by the chairperson.

(2) The meetings of the college may also be convened at the request of three members of the relevant college.

(3) The members of the colleges, the Chief Inspector and the Minister of Justice shall be informed of the date, time and place of the meeting and of the agenda three days in advance,

and shall be provided with the written materials for the meeting. The agenda shall be published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council within the same period.

Article 34. (1) The decisions of the college of judges under Article 30(5), points (1–4) of the Judiciary System Act shall be adopted by a majority of not less than eight votes, and the remaining decisions – by a majority of more than half of the members present.

(2) The decisions of the college of prosecutors under Article 30(5), points (1–4) of the Judiciary System Act shall be adopted by a majority of not less than six votes, and the remaining decisions – by a majority of more than half of the members present, with the exception of the decision under Article 30(5)(17) of the Judiciary System Act.

Article 35. The chairperson of the college of judges or prosecutors shall authorize procedural representatives after a decision of the respective college.

Section IV

Drafting Acts of the Plenary Session and the Colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 36. (1) During the meetings of the plenary sessions and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council, audio recording technique is used and a complete verbatim report and brief minutes on the adopted decisions are prepared, and are published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council in compliance with the Classified Information Protection Act and the Personal Data Protection Act.

(2) The complete verbatim report shall be drawn up within seven working days of the conclusion of the meeting. The minutes shall be signed by the chair of the plenary meeting, respectively the colleges.

(3) Following the conclusion of the meeting, brief minutes of the decisions taken shall be drawn up by the end of the next working day at the latest, reflecting all decisions taken. The brief minutes of the decisions taken shall be agreed with the Secretary-General after signature by the stenographers.

(4) Within 3 working days of the signing and publication of the brief minutes of the decisions taken, excerpts from them shall be prepared and communicated to the bodies and persons concerned.

(5) Minutes of meetings may be corrected by decision of the plenary session or the colleges in case of a manifest factual error. Technical errors in the brief minutes of the decisions taken are corrected by order of the Secretary-General on the basis of a proposal of the petitioner, which is an integral part of the protocol.

(6) The audio files of the plenary and collegium meetings shall be stored within 1 month of the conclusion of the meeting.

(7) Verbatim reports and audio files are used only in the Supreme Judicial Council building.

(8) Excerpts from the full verbatim report and from the brief minutes of the decisions taken shall be made available to third parties at the request of the Secretary-General.

Article 37. (1) The acts of the plenary sessions and the colleges shall be signed by the chairperson and stamped with the official seal of the Supreme Judicial Council, and the acts under Article 34, point (3) of the Act on Regulations, internal rules, methodologies and instructions related to the activity of the Supreme Judicial Council – by the representative.

(2) The plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council shall use the same seal in accordance with Article 3 of these Rules.

Article 38. After the decision on the appointment, promotion, demotion and transfer of a judge, prosecutor and investigator enters into force, the Supreme Judicial Council notifies the person who takes up the position within one month.

Section V Organization of Work with Proposals and Alerts

Article 39. (1) Proposals and alerts submitted to the Supreme Judicial Council or the colleges shall be considered in the order of Chapter Eight “Proposals and Alerts” of the Code of Administrative Procedure.

(2) The administration and organization of work with proposals and alerts received from the Supreme Judicial Council shall be governed by internal rules adopted by the plenary session and/or the colleges which shall be published on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 40. (1) Written or oral proposals and alerts, submitted in person or through an authorized representative by telephone, telegraph, telex, fax or email, shall be registered, reflecting the sender, the date of receipt and the issue set out in the proposal or alert, as well as the officers entrusted with the preparation of the decision thereon.

(2) Anonymous proposals or alerts shall not be considered.

Section VI Rights and Obligations of Members of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 41. (1) The members of the Supreme Judicial Council, with the exception of those who carry out scientific and teaching activities, shall suspend the conduct of their position occupied until their election for the duration of their term of office in the Supreme Judicial Council.

(2) The time during which the members of the Supreme Judicial Council fulfill their functions shall be counted as a length of service under Article 164(1–7) of the Judiciary System Act.

(3) The members of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be seconded in accordance with Article 8(4) of the Ordinance of Business Travel Inside the Country.

(4) The members of the Supreme Judicial Council use the material base of the judicial authorities.

Article 42. An elected member of the Supreme Judicial Council shall comply with the incompatibility criteria set out in Article 18 of the Judiciary System Act.

Article 43. (1) A member of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be obliged to participate in the composition of at least 3 /three/ committees and boards that support the activities of the plenary session and the colleges.

(2) A member of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be obliged to attend the meetings of the Supreme Judicial Council and the committees in which he or she is elected.

(3) A member of the Supreme Judicial Council may participate in the meetings of a standing committee of the plenary session of which he or she is not a member, without the right to vote.

(4) The plenary session and the colleges may periodically review the composition of the committees and boards supporting their activities and take decisions for making changes as necessary, in compliance with the rule under para. (1).

Article 44. The members of the Supreme Judicial Council shall, from the moment of taking up their appointment, be entitled to access at all levels of classified information for the duration of their office, in compliance with the ‘need-to-know’ principle and upon a decision of the relevant college or the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council when the college or the plenary session meet in private.

Chapter Four BUDGET OF THE JUDICIARY

Article 45. The budget of the judiciary is autonomous and is part of the state budget.

Article 46. The Supreme Judicial Council is the paramount authority on the budget of the judiciary.

Article 47. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council shall organize and direct the drawing up and implementation of the budget of the judiciary.

Article 48. Lower level budget administrators of the budget of the judiciary are designated by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 49. Draft budgets and budget estimates for the budget of the judiciary are developed by judicial authorities.

Article 50. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council submits to the Council of Ministers budget estimates and draft budgets of the judiciary within the deadlines set by the budgetary procedure.

Article 51. When adopting the state budget, the National Assembly hears a report of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council presented by its representative.

Article 52. The budget of the judiciary provides for contingency and/or emergency reserve. The amount of the reserves is determined by the State Budget Act for the respective year and shall be spent by decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 53. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council makes changes to the budget of the judiciary, including the budgets of the secondary authorizing officers with budget.

Article 54. The plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council submits to the Ministry of Finance, on a monthly and quarterly basis, reports on the implementation of the budget of the judiciary, including accounts for European Union funds and accounts for foreign funds, as well as additional information.

Article 55. By decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council, members of the Budget and Finance Committee are designated as authorizing officers of the budget of the judiciary with the right of first signature and officers of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council with the right of second signature.

Chapter Five

INTERNAL AUDIT

Section I General Provisions

Article 56. (1) An Internal Audit Directorate has been set up at the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council to assist the judiciary in achieving its objectives by identifying and assessing risks, and evaluating the adequacy and efficiency of financial management and control systems (internal control).

(2) The Internal Audit Directorate is directly subordinate to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and carries out an internal audit activity in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Act.

(3) The Directorate carries out the internal audit of all structures, programs, activities and processes in the Supreme Judicial Council, the Inspectorate of the Supreme Judicial Council, the judicial authorities and the National Institute of Justice – lower-level authorizing officers, in accordance with Article 13 of the Public Sector Internal Audit Act.

(4) Internal audit is carried out through the implementation of specific audit engagements for assurance or consultation.

(5) The Director of the Internal Audit Directorate reports on the results of the audit engagements and the overall activity of the Directorate of the Supreme Judicial Council through the relevant competent committee, depending on the content of the results.

Section II

Composition, Functions and Organization of the Work of the Internal Audit Directorate of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 57. The activity of the Directorate is carried out by the head of Internal Audit – Director, and internal auditors – State, Chief, Senior and Junior.

Article 58. In carrying out the internal audit activity, the head of Internal Audit and internal auditors shall:

1. plan, carry out and report on internal audit activity in accordance with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Act, public sector internal audit standards, the Internal Auditors' Code of Ethics, the status of the Internal Audit Directorate, and procedures and specific implementation methodology of the activity of the Internal Audit Directorate in accordance with Article 27(1)(6) of the Public Sector Internal Audit Act;
2. prepare, on the basis of a risk assessment, a three-year strategic plan and an annual plan for their activities, which are approved by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
3. prepare an audit plan for each audit engagement that contains the scope, objectives, duration and allocation of resources to perform the engagement, audit approach and techniques, type and scope of controls;
4. provide the Supreme Judicial Council and the administrative heads of the judicial authorities with an independent and objective assessment of the status of the process, system or other object of the audit;
5. verify and evaluate the compliance of the activity with the acts, regulations, internal acts and contracts; the reliability and comprehensiveness of the financial and operational information; the organization established for the protection of assets and information, the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the activities; fulfillment of tasks, contracts, commitments and achieving goals;

6. consult the Supreme Judicial Council and the administrative heads of the judicial authorities at their request, giving advice, opinion, training and more in order to improve risk management and control processes without assuming managerial responsibility for this;
7. the audit team leader and internal auditors discuss with the administrative heads of the judicial authorities which activity is audited the results of each audit engagement performed and prepare an audit report;
8. the audit team leader and internal auditors make recommendations in the audit reports to improve the performance of the audited sites, the adequacy and effectiveness of the financial management and control systems and carry out verifications to monitor the implementation of the recommendations;
9. prepare and submit to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council an annual report on internal audit activity in accordance with Article 40(6) of the Public Sector Internal Audit Act, which is included in the report under Article 20(3) of the Public Sector Financial Management and Control Act;
10. improve their professional qualifications and liaise with other internal audit units of public sector organizations in order to exchange good practices.

Section III

Internal Auditors Status

Article 59. (1) The Head of Internal Audit and internal auditors are judicial officers and are appointed and dismissed from the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council. They must meet the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Act.

(2) In the performance of internal audit activity in the judiciary system, the head of Internal Audit and internal auditors shall have the rights and comply with the obligations set out in Chapter Three, Section II of the Public Sector Internal Audit Act.

(3) The Head of Internal Audit carries out the administrative management of the internal auditors to fulfill the audit engagements and overall activities of the Directorate.

Article 60. The appointment, appraisal and promotion of the head of Internal Audit and internal auditors shall be carried out in accordance with the internal rules for conducting appointment competitions, attestation and promotion of internal auditors in the Internal Audit Directorate of the Supreme Judicial Council approved by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 61. The secondment of the head of Internal Audit and the internal auditors and their use on paid or unpaid leave is authorized by the representative of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 62. (1) The head of Internal Audit and internal auditors carry out their activities also in accordance with the Judiciary System Act, the Labor Code and the legislative acts related to them. They are required to carry out their duties and individual responsibilities impartially, accurately and competently in accordance with their job description.

(2) Internal auditors are required to perform their duties outside working hours when there is an official need.

Chapter Six

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Section I General Provisions

Article 63. (1) The administration of the Supreme Judicial Council assists the activities of the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council and is structured in directorates and other independent administrative units.

(2) Directorates carry out their functions through departments, sectors and units to them.

(3) The structure of the directorates and the office schedules of the administration shall be determined by order of the Secretary-General.

(4) The number of officers and the structure of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be determined by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council upon the proposal of the Secretary-General.

Section II Secretary-General

Article 64. (1) For a Secretary-General of the Supreme Judicial Council may be appointed a person who meets the requirement of Article 164(2) of the Judiciary System Act.

(2) The Secretary-General shall be appointed by a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council after a competition, in accordance with the Rules for conducting a competition for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(3) The Secretary-General shall carry out the administrative management of the administration for the preparation of the meetings of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and the colleges and the execution of their acts, by:

1. organizing the preparation of the meetings of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and the colleges;
2. proposing to the chairperson the draft agenda for meetings of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and the colleges, after submitting materials from the relevant committees, members of the Supreme Judicial Council, working groups;
3. exercising direct control over the activities of the Stenographers Unit in the preparation of the complete and brief verbatim report of the plenary and collegium meetings;
4. organizing the implementation of plenary and collegium decisions;
5. participating in the meetings of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council and the colleges, and may submit opinions on issues on the agenda within his or her competence;
6. may participate in the meetings of the standing committees of the Supreme Judicial Council without the right to vote;
7. organizing the maintenance of the website of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(4) The Secretary-General, as the employer of the administration officers, directs, coordinates and controls the functioning of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council, whereby he or she:

1. appoints, dismisses and seconds in the country and abroad officials of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
2. organizes and conducts the competitions, attestation and promotion of judicial officers by the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council in accordance with the internal rules approved by him or her;
3. approves by order the establishment plan of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
4. approves internal rules for the activities performed by the administration;

5. controls the expenses of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 6. controls and is responsible for the work with documents, their storage and archiving, and for the protection of the official information;
 7. determines the order for the document circulation, record keeping and archival activity in the administration;
 8. encourages the officers of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council with distinction or award for their high professionalism, exemplary performance of their duties and high moral qualities;
 9. realizes the disciplinary responsibility of officers for disciplinary offenses committed by them;
 10. organizes the training of judicial officers and the improvement of their qualification;
 11. is responsible for creating conditions for the normal and effective work of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council and the administration;
 12. allocates, in accordance with the functional competence of the administrative units, the tasks for implementation;
 13. exercises direct control over the activity of the Financial Controllers Unit.
- (5) The specific tasks for the administration, formulated by the plenary session, the colleges, committees and individual members of the Supreme Judicial Council, are entrusted to the administration through the Secretary-General within a volume and terms agreed with him.
- (6) The Secretary-General exercises methodological guidance and control over court administrators.
- (7) In the performance of his or her functions, the Secretary-General may:
1. request from the judicial authorities, central and territorial executive bodies, local self-government bodies, as well as from other bodies and organizations, information and materials necessary for the exercise of the powers of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 2. participate in meetings and committees with representatives of other bodies or organizations at their invitation or on assignment by the Supreme Judicial Council;
 3. liaise with representatives of the judicial authorities, legislative bodies, central and territorial executive bodies and local self-government bodies, of international bodies and organizations, as well as with citizens.
- (8) By decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council, the Secretary-General may be assigned other functions as well.
- (9) The Secretary-General, in the exercise of his or her powers, shall issue rules, arrangements and orders that are binding on judicial officers of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council.
- (10) The Chief Secretary in his or her absence may delegate his or her powers to a judicial officer from the administration and determine his or her functions by order.

Section III

Functions and Organization of the Work of the Administration of the Supreme Judicial Council

Article 65. (1) The administration of the Supreme Judicial Council includes:

1. Budget and Finance Directorate;
2. Judicial Property Management Directorate;
3. Legal Directorate;
4. Directorate of Information Technology and Forensic Statistics;
5. Directorate of Competitions for Magistrates;
6. Magistrates Attestation Directorate;

7. International Activity and Protocol Directorate;
8. Directorate of Human Resources, Administrative and Technical Services and Classified Information.

(2) The Financial Controllers Unit, the Public Relations Sector and the Stenographers Unit are structured as separate units in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 66. (1) The directorates are managed by a director who organizes, coordinates and controls the performance of the functions assigned to them and reports in a timely manner on their implementation.

(2) The director of a Directorate shall allocate and assign tasks by departments, sectors and units by nature and specificity, proposing to the Secretary-General measures for improving the organization of work in the Directorate.

Article 67. (1) The departments are managed by the head of the department, who organizes, coordinates and controls the work performance of judicial officers in the respective department and the timely fulfillment of their tasks assigned.

(2) The head of department allocates and assigns tasks in the sectoral departments and units by nature and specificity, proposing to the Secretary-General and the Director of the Directorate measures for improving the organization of work in the department.

Article 68. Independent units are directly under the authority of the Secretary-General, with the exception of the Public Relations sector, which is directly under the authority of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 69. The Budget and Finance Directorate performs the functions of drafting the budget of the judiciary and organizes the implementation of the budget by:

1. in relation to budget financing:

(a) preparing the budgets of the secondary authorizing officers within the budget of the judiciary approved by the National Assembly by elements of the Unified Budget Classification, and proposes them for approval by the Supreme Judicial Council;

(b) organizing the current financing of the secondary authorizing officers of the budget of the judiciary according to the approved budgets through the Electronic Budgetary Payment System, by: daily processing the initiated payment orders; controlling the implementation of expenditures by the judicial authorities within their approved budgets; maintaining a daily register of the Electronic Budgetary Payment System funds absorbed under the sections of the Unified Budget Classification;

(c) daily publishing on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council information on the payments made to the Electronic Budgetary Payment System in total for the judiciary system, by secondary systems with budget and by code for type of payment for each working day;

(d) maintaining and updating the Register of Budget Organizations in the Judiciary System, through the functionality created for this purpose in the Electronic Budgetary Payment System;

(e) preparing proposals for adjustments to the budgets of the secondary authorizing officers as requested by the judicial authorities or ex officio after an expert analysis;

(f) making adjustments to the budgets of the secondary authorizing officers after their approval by the Supreme Judicial Council, and timely sending the updated budgets to the judicial authorities;

(g) preparing the monthly distribution of the budget of the judiciary and updating it according to the adjustments approved by the Supreme Judicial Council;

- (h) monthly submitting applications for subsidy and a limit on the expenses of the judiciary for approval by the Ministry of Finance in accordance with the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria Act;
 - (i) maintaining a register for the monthly monitoring of the implementation of the budget of the judiciary by major paragraphs and sub-paragraphs of the Unified Budget Classification;
 - (j) maintaining a register of the allocation of additional appropriations to the budgets of the judiciary by source;
 - (k) analyzing the expenses incurred according to criteria set by the leadership of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (l) collecting and summarizing information on the status of financial management and control systems in the judicial authorities;
 - (m) collecting and keeping the documentation received from the judicial authorities in connection with the due compensation to magistrates and judicial officials;
 - (n) collecting and keeping the documentation received from the judicial authorities in connection with payment of compensation due under the Act on the Liability for Damage Incurred by the State and the Municipalities.
2. in relation to financial projections and analyses:
- (a) developing long- and medium-term estimates of the budget of the judiciary;
 - (b) developing long- and medium-term budget estimates of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (c) drawing up a draft budget of the judiciary for the respective calendar year on the basis of the estimate adopted;
 - (d) drawing up a draft budget of the Supreme Judicial Council for the respective calendar year based on the estimate adopted;
 - (e) justifying and methodologically defending the draft budget of the judiciary;
 - (f) providing methodological guidance on the preparation of the budget of the judiciary; preparing analyzes and reports on the opinions of the competent state bodies related to the budget of the judiciary;
 - (g) distributing the budget of the judiciary approved by the National Assembly for the respective calendar year by judicial authorities (including summary budgets of the courts) by elements of the Unified Budget Classification;
 - (h) preparing monthly information on the implementation of the budget of the judiciary for previous periods and informing the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (i) preparing monthly information on the expected implementation of the budget of the judiciary as of the end of the respective year and submitting it to the Ministry of Finance;
 - (j) creating and maintaining information related to the budget of the judiciary and its implementation;
 - (k) maintaining information on the allocation of additional funds to the budget of the judiciary; (l) updating the budget of the judiciary;
 - (m) preparing the necessary documentation for the Ministry of Finance in case of necessity of approval of additional funds on the budget of the judiciary through a decree of the Council of Ministers, a decision of the Council of Ministers or corrections between individual paramount authorizing officers, as well as subsequent documents;
 - (n) preparing financial justifications for the draft legislative acts in connection with Article 28 of the Act on Regulations and Article 12(2)(3) of the Internal Rules for the Drafting of Regulations in the Supreme Judicial Council and assessment of their impact;
 - (o) regularly updating the revenue and expenditure as well as the subsidy on the budget of the judiciary, and informing the Ministry of Finance;
 - (p) monthly consolidating and analyzing data on the remuneration of the judicial authorities.
3. in relation to accounting and methodology:

- (a) distributing the approved budget of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration for the respective year according to the paragraphs of the Unified Budget Classification and submitting the same to the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council for acquaintance, informing it quarterly of its implementation;
- (b) accounting for the cash execution of the budget of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration and providing the same to the plenum of the Supreme Judicial Council for acquaintance, informing it quarterly of its implementation;
- (c) analyzing and controlling the costs of maintenance of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration and, if necessary, proposing adjustments to individual paragraphs;
- (d) providing financial and accounting services to the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration in accordance with the Accountancy Act and other legislative acts;
- (e) organizing the inventory of the assets, liabilities, claims and obligations of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration;
- (f) preparing monthly, quarterly and annual reports on the cash execution of the budget, the accounts for EU funds and the accounts for foreign funds of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration;
- (g) preparing quarterly and annual turnover sheets of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration;
- (h) ensuring the keeping of the accounting documents of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (i) organizing uniform accounting in the system of the Supreme Judicial Council, preparing a single individual chart of the used accounts and sub-accounts;
- (j) preparing an explanatory note to the quarterly reports and the annual financial statements, which discloses the accounting policies applied in the judicial authorities;
- (k) adopting and summarizing the monthly, quarterly and annual reports on the cash execution of the budget, the accounts for EU funds and the accounts for foreign funds of the judicial authorities, and presenting them to the Ministry of Finance and the Bulgarian National Audit Office;
- (l) adopting and summarizing the quarterly and annual turnover sheets of the judiciary and submitting them to the Ministry of Finance and the the Bulgarian National Audit Office;
- (m) maintaining accounting records on the core indicators of the Unified Budget Classification;
- (n) processing and recording documents on the income and expenditure of the Single Account and maintaining correspondence with the National Revenue Agency;
- (o) maintaining correspondence with the judicial authorities on the release of limits, reversal and clearing of turnover for payments made through settlement (Electronic Budgetary Payment System);
- (p) supervising and analyzing the financial and non-financial information presented in the periodic reports on the cash execution of the budget and the annual financial statements of the secondary authorizing officers of the budget;
- (q) giving methodological guidance on the application of the legislative acts related to the financial and accounting activity – preparation of the reports on the cash execution of the budget (monthly, quarterly and annual), the accounts for the EU funds and the accounts for foreign assets and working balances, to all secondary authorizing officers with appropriations;
- (r) preparing, on the basis of the financial statements, verifications, opinions and proposals for improving financial discipline and accountability;
- (s) conducting regular seminars for training accountants in the judiciary system;
- (t) preparing opinions of the Supreme Judicial Council on issues and problems related to the accounting and methodology of the judicial authorities, posed by other agencies, control and financial institutions;

- (u) processing and recording documents for construction and major repairs of real estate, as well as for obligations arising from the ownership of real estate – taxes, fees, rents, insurance, revaluations and other expenses;
- (v) processing and recording documents for expenses under concluded real estate lease contracts;
- (w) processing and accounting for income and reimbursement documents for the rented real estate or parts of real estate of the judiciary. Filing a tax return under the Value Added Tax Act;
- (x) maintaining financial records in connection with the execution of contracts concluded with contractors performing construction and repair activities in the buildings of the judicial authorities and financed by the Supreme Judicial Council, as well as under lease contracts.

Article 70. The Judicial Property Management Directorate performs the following functions:

1. in relation to investment policy, coordinates the overall activity and assists the Supreme Judicial Council in exercising its powers to implement the budget for capital expenditure, by preparing and proposing draft nominal lists of construction and repair sites for the respective year to be financed from the budget of the judiciary, by:

- (a) examining the need for new construction, reconstruction and major repairs for the needs of the judicial authorities;
- (b) preparing reports on the status of the property subject to major repairs, design or new construction;
- (c) summarizing and analyzing the proposals of the judicial authorities;
- (d) preparing a draft annual investment program of the judicial authorities (by objects and type of capital expenditure) within the approved budget of the judiciary;
- (e) preparing and updating the complete documentation of the capital expenditure on the budget of the judiciary – estimates and reports on the funds spent for investment purposes;
- (f) preparing proposals for financing the sites for major repairs, construction, acquisition of fixed tangible assets of the secondary authorizing officers under the budget of the judiciary and external programs;
- (g) making proposals for adjustments to the capital expenditure on the budget funds of the secondary authorizing officers, as appropriate;
- (h) drawing up analyzes, verifications and appendices on draft budgets and budget estimates of the capital expenditure commitments of the judiciary;
- (i) preparing an application for procurement needs for engineering, construction and services, and to include in the summary application a procurement schedule for the respective year as well, in accordance with the rules approved in the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (j) preparing the terms of reference for the assignment of design and construction of new sites and the reconstruction of existing sites;
- (k) organizing and participating in acceptance committees for the sites completed;
- (l) performing routine control during the execution of construction and installation works and deliveries, checking the drafted acts and construction papers of the sites;
- (m) preparing instructions and providing methodological assistance to the relevant judicial authorities in relation to the implementation of the Investment Program of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (n) taking responsibility for drawing up the technical passports of the building reserve of the judiciary;
- (o) taking responsibility for keeping the design and technical documentation of the building reserve of the judiciary.

2. in relation to the current maintenance of the existing building reserve:

(a) keeping a register of proposals/requests for investment in repairs by the judicial authorities;

(b) analyzing requests received for routine and emergency repairs and preparing proposals for adjustments of funds under paragraph §10-00 Current Expenditure on the budget of the judicial authorities, as appropriate;

3. in relation to the management of the property of the judiciary, assists the Supreme Judicial Council in carrying out the activities of acquisition, management, government, use, maintenance and disposal of real estate – state property, for the needs of the judicial authorities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, by:

(a) keeping a register of real estate governed and used by the judicial authorities, by maintaining and updating a single database of real estate provided for the management of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(b) documenting the ownership of the real estate of the judiciary, keeping records, organizing activities on cadastre, insurance of buildings and other property and reflecting any changes occurred in ownership as type and volume; maintaining and keeping files of property of the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial authorities;

(c) preparing and submitting opinions on the optimal allocation of judicial buildings used by the judicial authorities;

(d) organizing studies on existing options for replenishing the building reserve in order to optimally meet the needs of the judicial authorities, by analyzing and proposing to the Supreme Judicial Council procedures for the acquisition of ownership of buildings and land, organizing procedures for the acquisition of new real estate, including their actual acceptance;

(e) organizing, answering, exercising control and preparing opinions on the proper, lawful and effective use and management of the real estate provided for the management of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(f) preparing opinions on draft acts of the Council of Ministers related to procedures under the State Property Act and its implementing rules;

(g) proposing disposition of real estate – state property, provided for the management of the Supreme Judicial Council in order to achieve maximum efficiency;

(h) arranging for the actual acceptance of the properties provided for management;

(i) preparing and executing the actual transfer of properties of no need for the judiciary;

(j) analyzing and organizing the activities related to the procedures under the Local Taxes and Fees Act;

(k) supporting the inventory of real estate of the judiciary.

4. assists the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council in the management of the Supreme Judicial Council's departmental housing reserve by:

(a) maintaining the registers under Article 34 of the Rules on the leasing of real estate – privately owned state property, provided for the management of the Supreme Judicial Council for housing needs: a register of applicants for accommodation in departmental housing; a register of persons placed in departmental housing and a register of vacant housing.

(b) supervising the implementation of the lease contracts concluded;

(c) controlling the current actual status of the housing leased of the housing reserve of the Supreme Judicial Council and whether their use corresponds to their contractual purpose.

5. approves draft contracts in relation to property management to which the Supreme Judicial Council is a party, providing a reasoned opinion in case of disagreement.

6. in relation to the organization of procurement concerning the management of the property of the judiciary:

(a) preparing the terms of reference for assigning the design and construction of new sites and reconstruction of the existing for equipment supply and technical specifications under the procedures of the Public Procurement Act;

- (b) preparing terms of reference related to property insurance, measurement of property of the judicial authorities and other related to the activity;
- (c) providing methodological assistance and coordination with regard to legal support of activities in other directorates of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (d) carrying out routine control over the implementation of the concluded public procurement contracts (time limits, guarantees, penalties), including by the judicial authorities;
- (e) preparing and coordinating draft contracts for construction, design, construction control in design and construction, as well as for investment control in construction;
- (f) organizing the holding of expert technical and economic boards for the evaluation and acceptance of the project works carried out;
- (g) entering information in the register of contracts concluded within procurement in connection with the activities of the Directorate.

Article 71. The Legal Directorate performs the following functions:

1. regarding legal services:

- (a) provides expert participation in the standing committees of the plenary session and the colleges;
- (b) examines the signals, requests and proposals received, prepares opinions on them and reports them to the committees of the plenary session or the colleges of whose competence they are;
- (c) provides methodological assistance and coordination with regard to the legal support of the activities in the other directorates of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (d) assists the Supreme Judicial Council in the performance of its duties as a data controller, and is responsible for keeping the registers under the Personal Data Protection Act;
- (e) prepares proposals and opinions on fundamental questions and decisions, methodological guidelines and strategies for the judiciary system;
- (f) prepares analyzes, opinions, reports and draft decisions on issues conferred by the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council in relation to the exercise of the powers of the administrative body;
- (g) prepares legal opinions on procedures and activities of the Supreme Judicial Council and/or other structural units within the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (h) prepares draft decisions for granting or refusing to grant access to public information under the Access to Public Information Act on the basis of a reasoned opinion provided by the relevant directorate and/or committee on the availability of information and its nature.

2. in relation to the regulatory activity:

- (a) participates in the preparation of draft legislative acts on the implementation of the Judiciary System Act, which are within the competence of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (b) participates in the preparation of the opinions of the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council on legislative acts that are relevant to the judiciary system and submitted for approval or agreement by the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (e) prepares draft opinions to the Constitutional Court on cases in which the Supreme Judicial Council is constituted as an interested party.

3. regarding the procedural representation of the Supreme Judicial Council:

- (a) draws up claims, appeals, objections, replies and written observations on legal proceedings to which the Supreme Judicial Council, the relevant college or the Secretary-General of the Supreme Judicial Council is a party, and ensures the participation of an authorized procedural representative;

(b) draws up appeals, objections and opinions to the administrative bodies and participates in administrative proceedings before them under the authority of the plenary session or the colleges;

(c) prepares draft opinions on the issues discussed by the plenary sessions of the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Supreme Administrative Court related to the organization of the judiciary.

4. regarding the management of the procurement cycle:

(a) coordinates, administers and controls the overall procurement planning and execution process of the Supreme Judicial Council in accordance with the Internal Rules for the management of the public procurement cycle;

(b) coordinates and organizes all activities related to the preparation of the procurement as well;

(c) in cooperation with the applicant structural unit, develops documents on the procurement procedures;

(d) coordinates the process of conducting the procurement procedures and assignment in accordance with the regulatory requirements and applicable procurement rules;

(e) draws up draft procurement contracts and arranges for their conclusion;

(f) keeps a register of the procurement procedures carried out during the respective year, keeps and stores records of the procurement procedures carried out and organizes their archiving in accordance with the applicable Internal Rules for the management of the public procurement cycle;

(g) prepares opinions on the implementation of the Public Procurement Act and related regulations;

(h) prepares and send for publication, within the time limits laid down by law, the information necessary for procurement assignment to the Public Procurement Agency and to the Official Journal of the European Union, where applicable;

(i) renders methodological assistance to other structural units in the Supreme Judicial Council on issues related to the organization and conduct of procedures under the Public Procurement Act and procurement assignment;

(j) participates in the development of the internal rules under the Public Procurement Act and the implementing regulations thereof;

(k) keeps and maintains a register of contracts concluded by the Supreme Judicial Council.

5. regarding to disciplinary activity:

(a) assists the disciplinary proceedings committees of the colleges in examining proposals by the bodies and persons under Article 312 of the Judiciary System Act to impose disciplinary sanctions and in reviewing orders received from administrative directors to impose disciplinary sanctions of written reprimand on judges, prosecutors and investigators;

(b) maintains and updates the following registers by colleges: an internal register of disciplinary cases; a public register of disciplinary proceedings under the Judiciary System Act; an internal register of criminal proceedings involving a judge, prosecutor or investigator as defendants; an internal register of the orders of administrative heads under Article 327 of the Judiciary System Act;

(c) creates files on disciplinary cases and files initiated by orders of administrative heads and keeps all correspondence on their movement;

(d) assists the disciplinary panels of the relevant colleges in the exercise of their powers;

(e) assists the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council in analyzing and summarizing the results of disciplinary proceedings;

(f) carries out legal representation in disciplinary cases and files;

(g) reports to the disciplinary proceedings committees on the information received from the Inspectorate to the Supreme Judicial Council in accordance with Article 54(1)(5) of the

Judiciary System Act, as well as the data of the Chief Inspector and the Minister of Justice under Article 60m of the Judiciary System Act;

(h) prepares a draft analysis of the data under Article 60m of the Judiciary System Act;

(i) reports to the disciplinary proceedings committees on the information received from the administrative heads of inspections carried out in the district, county and appellate courts and prosecutor's offices.

Article 72. The Directorate of Information Technology and Forensic Statistics performs the following functions:

1. in connection with the implementation of modern information and communication technologies:

(a) develops plans and strategies for the implementation of modern information and communication technologies in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial authorities, and organizes their implementation;

(b) develops terms of reference for the implementation of hardware and software in the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial authorities;

(c) participates in the development and implementation of methodologies, rules and procedures in the field of information and communication technologies in the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial authorities;

(d) assists the Supreme Judicial Council in the exercise of its powers to implement the strategy for the introduction of modern information and communication technologies into the judiciary;

(e) prepares opinions on the projects submitted to the Supreme Judicial Council for the construction and implementation of information and communication technologies;

(f) develops, implements and controls the implementation of security procedures for information and communication systems to ensure effective protection of the information resources of the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial authorities.

2. in connection with the software and hardware support and updating the used information and communication systems:

(a) coordinates and assists in planning the provision of the necessary hardware and software in the judicial authorities;

(b) ensures the maintenance and use of hardware and software in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(c) ensures the proper functioning and updating of the software and hardware used by the Supreme Judicial Council;

(d) maintains the working order of all hardware and software systems in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(e) develops guidelines and methodology for working, training and assisting the administration staff and members of the Supreme Judicial Council in working with the implemented hardware and software;

(f) ensures the maintenance of computer equipment, local area networks and communication equipment in the Supreme Judicial Council;

(g) arranges for the purchase of new hardware and software and puts them into service.

3. in relation to the development, implementation and use of the Unified Court Information System:

(a) supervises the developer during the development and implementation of the Unified Court Information System; summarizes the requests received from the courts for the addition of new and/or changes to existing functionalities in the system on the basis of its actual operation and/or changes in the existing legislation; assesses the need to make changes to the system architecture;

- (b) performs the functions of an only and single centralized point of contact between the developer and users of the Unified Court Information System;
 - (c) responds to inquiries and provides technical and methodological assistance with questions and/or problems encountered when working with the Unified Court Information System.
4. in connection with the information support of the activities in the judicial authorities:
- (a) participates in the establishment and update of information systems in the judicial authorities;
 - (b) ensures the development and management of information systems in the judicial authorities;
 - (c) ensures the interoperability of the systems referred to in letter (a) used by the judicial authorities;
 - (d) coordinates activities for the effective implementation of publicity and transparency measures in relation to the publication of judicial acts by the courts.
5. in relation to forensic statistics:
- (a) sends to the district, county, administrative, military, appellate courts, specialized criminal court and specialized criminal court of appeal, updated statistical forms and methodological instructions for their completion;
 - (b) collects and processes statistical information;
 - (c) carries out analyzes of the final results after the periodic processing of the statistical information has been completed;
 - (d) maintains the register of magistrates seconded to the judicial authorities.
6. in connection with the procedures for the re-appointment of magistrates under Article 194 of the Judiciary System Act, assists the Judicial Card, Workload and Forensic Statistics Committee to the colleges judges and prosecutors of the Supreme Judicial Council, for the purpose of:
- (a) participating in the preparation, opening and conduct of procedures for the optimization of staff numbers in accordance with the terms and conditions of Article 194(1) of the Judiciary System Act;
 - (b) completes correspondences in connection with applications for exchange of magistrates pursuant to Article 194(2) of the Judiciary System Act.

Article 73. The Directorate of Competitions for Magistrates assists the performance of the attestation and competition committees to the relevant colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council by performing its functions through two divisions: “Competitions for Judges” and “Competitions for Prosecutors and Investigators”, as follows:

1. in relation to the staff numbers of magistrates in the judicial authorities:
- (a) reflects changes in staff numbers, with regard to the number of posts and vacancies and the roll-call composition of magistrates in the judicial authorities;
 - (b) summarizes and maintains up-to-date information on the staff structure and personnel status of the judicial authorities, the number and type of competitions announced, the planning thereof, the expiring mandates of the administrative heads and the forthcoming dismissal on the basis of Article 165(1)(1) of the Judiciary System Act.
2. in relation to the planning of competitions for junior judges, junior prosecutors and junior investigators:
- (a) carries out activities on planning posts for junior judges, junior prosecutors and junior investigators in the judicial authorities for each subsequent year;
 - (b) supervises the completion of the training of junior magistrate candidates at the National Institute of Justice with a view to their appointment as junior judge, junior prosecutor and junior investigator;

(c) monitors the expiry of junior magistrates under Article 240 of the Judiciary System Act with a view to their appointment as judge, prosecutor and investigator;

(d) participates in the preparation, organization and conduct of the application process for the appointment of eligible candidates for junior magistrates.

3. in relation to the announcement of competitions for junior judges, junior prosecutors, junior investigators and for initial appointment, organizes, coordinates and carries out activities for their preparation and holding, and for the purpose:

(a) organizes the acceptance and processing of the candidates' applications for the competition, checks the documents for the eligibility of the candidates, includingly carries out ex officio verification of the applicants' criminal record;

(b) provides the documents of all candidates in the competition to the Attestation and Competitions Committee with a view to deciding the eligibility of the participants who are eligible for the respective position;

(c) publishes on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council lists of admitted and non-admitted candidates, schedules with the distribution of candidates by halls for conducting the written and oral examinations, instructions for participants, chronograms and announcements;

(d) assists the selection boards in conducting the written and oral examinations, checks each candidate's wishes and marks, publishes the ranking on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council, accepts the candidates' applications and prepares the necessary documents for appointment;

(e) provides the ranking results as well as the necessary competitive documentation to the Professional Ethics Committee for the preparation of opinions on the moral qualities of the candidates ranked;

(f) completes the documents throughout the competitive procedure and provides to the Attestation and Competitions Committee for submission to the relevant college of the Supreme Judicial Council the proposal for the initial appointment of the ranked candidates;

(g) summarizes incompatibilities with regard to the requirements of the Judiciary System Act, monitors the deadline for their submission;

(h) sends notices of appointment following the entry into force of decisions on appointment within the respective competitions.

4. in relation to the announcement of competitions for promotion and transfer of a judge, prosecutor and investigator in the judicial authorities, organizes, coordinates and carries out out activities for the preparation and holding thereof, and for the purpose:

(a) arranges for the acceptance and processing of applications from eligible applicants by verifying the eligibility documents of applicants, applying on an official basis to each application personal data from the personnel file as well as the applicant's final attestation;

(b) provides the Attestation and Competitions Committee with the documents of all candidates in the competition with a view to deciding on the eligibility of the participants who are eligible for the post and publishes the lists of admitted and non-admitted candidates on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(c) provides organizational and technical assistance to the competition committees in conducting the written examinations in accordance with the procedure of Article 189(4) of the Judiciary System Act;

(d) publishes the ranking results of candidates participating in the competition on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(e) provides the ranking results as well as the necessary competitive documentation to the Professional Ethics Committee for the preparation of opinions on the moral qualities of the candidates ranked;

(f) completes the documents for the entire competition procedure and submits to the Attestation and Competitions Committee for submission to the relevant college of the

Supreme Judicial Council a reasoned proposal for promotion or transfer of the candidates ranked;

(g) after the entry into force of decisions on transfer or promotion to the relevant competitions, sends notices of appointment;

(h) monitors the timing and implementation of the provision of Article 193(6) of the Judiciary System Act on the announced competitions, preparing materials for the appointment of the candidates following the ranking procedure.

5. in relation to the announcement of procedures for the election of an administrative head, the appointment of acting as administrative head and the appointment of a deputy administrative head:

(a) organizes, coordinates and carries out activities for the preparation and conduct of procedures for the selection of an administrative manager;

(b) processes the applications of the participants in the election of an administrative head by providing public disclosure on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council of the biography, conception and declaration of the candidates, in compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act and the Protection of Classified Information Act;

(c) provides the Attestation and Competitions Committee with the documents of all candidates with a view to carrying out an eligibility check of participants in the selection and the Professional Ethics Committee for the preparation of opinions on the moral qualities of the candidates;

(d) maintains and updates information on announced procedures, including keeping records thereof;

(e) completes the files in connection with the re-appointment in accordance with Article 169(5) of the Judiciary System Act of an administrative head with expired or terminated mandate, as well as in the case of dismissal of the deputy administrative head;

(f) complete the proposals submitted for the appointment of a deputy administrative head with details of the staff numbers of the relevant judicial authority, as well as information on the existence of the requirements under Article 169(2) of the Judiciary System Act, submits the materials to the Professional Ethics Committee for preparing an opinion on the moral qualities of the candidates, and then submits them to a meeting of the Attestation and Competitions Committee;

(g) completes files relating to the appointment of acting as administrative head by virtue of an expiring or terminated mandate, with information on the current roll-call establishment plan of the relevant judicial authority, as well as carries out in accordance with Article 168(7) and (8) of the Judiciary System Act an assessment of seniority between magistrates within the meaning of Article 237 of the Judiciary System Act.

6. in relation to dismissal, reinstatement and promotion of magistrates in connection with applications and proposals for this, assists organizationally, technically and expertly the activity of the Attestation and Competitions Committee to to the respective college.

7. in relation to the procedures for re-appointment of magistrates pursuant to Article 194 of the Judiciary System Act, assists the Attestation and Competitions Committee of the college of prosecutors to the Supreme Judicial Council, and for the purpose:

(a) participates in the preparation, opening and conduct of procedures for the optimization of staff numbers in accordance with the terms and conditions of Article 194(1) of the Judiciary System Act;

(b) completes files in connection with applications for exchange of magistrates pursuant to Article 194(2) of the Judiciary System Act.

8. in relation to the optimization of the staff numbers of the judicial authorities, supports the activity of the Attestation and Competitions Committee of the respective college, maintaining

a database and updating the information on the number and type of dismissed and opened magistrate positions.

9. in relation to the conduct and keeping of the personnel files of judges, prosecutors and investigators:

(a) draws up, keeps and stores the personnel file of every judge, prosecutor and investigator in the Republic of Bulgaria both in paper and electronic form, collecting, applying, paginating, stringing through, describing and scanning electronically all documents concerning the career development of magistrates, information for trainings and qualifications, change of position and rank, attestation, penalties, awards and incentives, change in remuneration, acts of the Inspectorate of the Supreme Judicial Council, audit reports etc .;

(b) keeps, maintains and updates both in paper form and in an electronic database, publicly available on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council, a Central Public Register of Magistrates' Declarations under Article 195a(1) of the Judiciary System Act, which enters data from the magistrates' declarations filed in compliance with the requirements of Article 195a(1) of the Judiciary System Act;

(c) keeps, maintains and updates an electronic register of mentoring judges, mentoring prosecutors and mentoring investigators, summarizing the orders of the administrative heads of the judicial authorities for the appointment of magistrates – mentors, as well as their development reports and opinions for the work of the junior, respectively, the originally appointed magistrate.

Article 74. The Magistrates Attestation Directorate performs the following functions:

1. assists the Attestation and Competitions Committees of the colleges of judges and prosecutors in the exercise of their powers in connection with the procedures conducted for the attestation of magistrates, by:

(a) performing the activity of collecting, verifying and summarizing the information and documents, received from the judicial authorities and the Inspectorate of the Supreme Judicial Council, relevant to the Uniform Attestation Form under the normative framework in the field of attestation;

(b) assisting the work of the members of the Attestation and Competitions Committees in the conduct of preliminary, for permanent status, periodic and extraordinary attestation procedures, and formulating relevant draft decisions on each of the procedures based on the decisions made by the committees;

(c) collecting and summarizing the information received from the judicial authorities necessary for the preparation of reasoned opinions on the professional qualities of the candidates to participate in the election of administrative heads and the appointment of alternate administrative heads;

(d) keeping correspondence with the judicial authorities and with the certified magistrates when conducting and finalizing the procedures under Section IV of Chapter Nine of the Judiciary System Act;

(e) monitoring and summarizing the received back parts of notice of the Uniform Attestation Forms regarding the lack or presence of objections to them with a view to applying the subsequent procedural rules under the Judiciary System Act;

(f) publishing in the register in the internal network for exchange of information in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council copies of the attestation forms of magistrates by types of judicial authority.

2. in relation to the administrative servicing of the Attestation and Competitions Committees to the colleges of judges and prosecutors:

(a) provides for the organizational and technical meetings of the Attestation and Competitions Committees and their working groups;

- (b) technically formulates in minutes the decisions adopted by the committees;
 - (c) publishes on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council the signed agenda for the forthcoming meeting of the Committees, the minutes of the meetings, as well as other information or instructions concerning the decisions made by the Attestation and Competitions Committees;
 - (d) keeps minutes of the meetings of the Committees until they are archived in the appropriate order;
 - (e) coordinates with the Directorate of Human Resources, Administrative and Technical Services and Classified Information and the Directorate of Competitions for Magistrates of the performance of the tasks arising from the decisions of the Committees;
 - (f) ensures the technical preparation and sending of letters and documents in implementing the decisions of the Attestation and Competitions Committees to the relevant bodies and persons concerned.
3. collects, maintains, updates and analyzes statistical information related to the attestation procedures, by:
- (a) compiling, keeping and storing electronically information on each procedure for attesting a magistrate from its opening to the completion by an act of the collective body;
 - (b) compiling, maintaining and storing electronically a database /tables, reports/ of attestation procedures related to competitions held and ongoing;
 - (c) analyzing and processing statistical information in connection with the attestation procedures and producing verifications and reports;
 - (d) preparing annual planning for the upcoming procedures for the attestation of judges, prosecutors and investigators by type of certification and judicial authorities;
 - (e) monitoring the deadlines for receipt of proposals and the opening of procedures for attestation upon submitted proposals, in accordance with the statistically reported period from the previous one or the date of entry into the judicial authority;
4. completes and prepares for the report of the members of the Attestation and Competitions Committees the files on the proposals for promotion in a higher rank of magistrates;
5. prepares draft responses and gives opinions on received requests, appeals and proposals within the competence of the Directorate;
6. conducts legal representation in cases initiated in appeals against decisions of the respective college, regarding the adoption of a complex evaluation by attestation or promotion to a higher rank and remuneration.

Article 75. The International Activity and Protocol Directorate performs the following functions:

1. with regard to the international activity of the Supreme Judicial Council:
- (a) coordinates and provides organizationally the activities and contacts of the Supreme Judicial Council with other national, foreign and international and judicial institutions and authorities on matters related to international cooperation;
 - (b) maintains the information necessary for the institutional and international contacts of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (c) examines the international initiatives in the field of activity of the Supreme Judicial Council and brings them to the attention of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (d) coordinates the work of the Supreme Judicial Council in reporting on the implementation of the measures of the Cooperation and Evaluation Mechanism and carries out the accompanying coordination activities with the participation of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council in the meetings with experts from the European Commission on the Cooperation and Evaluation Mechanism;

- (e) coordinates the work of the Supreme Judicial Council in reporting on the implementation of the specific goals, measures and activities of the Roadmap to the Updated Strategy to Continue the Judicial Reform, for which the Supreme Judicial Council is the responsible institution or partner institution;
 - (f) carries out a systematic dialogue at expert level on the development of the EU Justice Scoreboard and analyzes the results for the Republic of Bulgaria for the needs of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (g) cooperates with the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice on the provision of information on the evaluation of European judicial systems by the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ);
 - (h) prepares information and participates, as assigned by the Supreme Judicial Council, in the work of interdepartmental working groups on issues related to international judicial cooperation;
 - (i) organizes and coordinates activities related to the membership of the Supreme Judicial Council and representatives of the judiciary in the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary, the Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network for the Judiciary, the European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters, the European Judicial Network, the Regional Cooperation Council, the Consultative Council of European Judges and other international organizations;
 - (j) by request of committees of the Supreme Judicial Council for the needs of their activities, makes inquiries to foreign judicial councils and institutions with similar activity, in the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and translates and summarizes the responses received;
 - (k) communicates with foreign judicial councils, prepares answers and distributes, by jurisdiction, inquiries concerning the structure and functioning of the judiciary in the Republic of Bulgaria;
 - (l) organizes and coordinates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Bulgaria to the EU the participation of representatives of the judiciary as national experts in EU structures and foreign missions;
 - (m) prepares for the conclusion of bilateral agreements and the implementation of subsequent commitments;
 - (n) maintains and updates information related to the international activity of the Supreme Judicial Council on the website of the Supreme Judicial Council;
 - (o) carries out other activities related to international cooperation of the judiciary.
2. with respect to the record-keeping activity of the Supreme Judicial Council:
- (a) prepares, coordinates and implements the organization, conduct and minutes of official and working meetings of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council, conferences, seminars, round tables etc .;
 - (b) organizes and coordinates visits of foreign delegations and prepares draft programs for their visits;
 - (c) keep the international correspondence of the Supreme Judicial Council and makes written translations for the needs of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council, the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial authorities; makes translation of documents related to the participation of representatives of the judiciary in international meetings and, where necessary, provides external interpreters in the conduct of international meetings and events;
 - (d) organizes the missions abroad of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council, magistrates, judicial officers and experts seconded by decision of the Judicial College, the college of prosecutors and the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council, prepares orders for foreign missions and organizes the issuance and registration of passports;

- (e) prepares, maintains and updates information on the needs of the Supreme Judicial Council for persons seconded by the judicial authorities;
- (f) organizes the admission of citizens in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (g) coordinates and controls the process of preparing printed and audio-visual materials in order to build a positive image and promote the activities of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (h) performs other protocol activities assigned by the Director of the Directorate.

Article 76. The Directorate of Human Resources, Administrative and Technical Services and Classified Information performs the following functions:

1. regarding the human resources management in the Supreme Judicial Council and in the administration of the judicial authorities:

- (a) organizes competitions for the appointment, recruitment and selection of officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (b) draws up and keeps acts relating to the emergence, amendment and termination of employment relationships in the Supreme Judicial Council and other acts in the field of human resources management;
- (c) draws up, updates and stores jobs and roll-call schedules in the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (d) organizes and supports the development and updating of the job descriptions of the employees of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and keeps the approved ones;
- (e) organizes activities for the evaluation of the performance of the position of the employees of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (f) proposes a comprehensive human resources management policy at the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (g) ensures the preparation of service cards of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council and of the employees of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and keeps a register of the prepared ones;
- (h) keeps and stores personal personnel files of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council and of the employees of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (i) organizes the training of the employees of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council, proposes for approval by the Secretary-General an annual training calendar and keeps a register of the trainings;
- (j) performs activities for ensuring healthy and safe working conditions in the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (k) maintains the public register of declarations under Article 35(1) of the Counter-Corruption and Unlawfully Acquired Assets Forfeiture Act, filed by the employees of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council, of the Secretary-General and of the Internal Audit Directorate;
- (l) keeps a register of property declarations;
- (m) organizes and prepares the meetings of the Judicial Administration Committees of the colleges of judges and prosecutors by:
 - (aa) collecting, summarizing and controlling the drawing up of the establishment plans of the judicial authorities for judicial officer positions;
 - bb) processing the proposals of the administrative heads for changes in the number of judicial officers, for the creation of new and reduction of old positions;
 - (cc) keeping records and statistics assigned by the Judicial Administration Committees of the colleges of judges and prosecutors;
 - (dd) participating/preparing draft methodological guidelines for the work of the judicial administration;

ee) participating/preparing draft typical job descriptions for judicial officers in the judicial authorities;

ff) participating in the preparation of the drafts of the classifier of positions under Article 341(1) and (3) of the Judiciary System Act.

2. in connection with the administrative service of the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council:

(a) organizationally provides meetings of the plenary session and the colleges;

(b) adopts and summarizes in a draft the proposals for inclusion in the agenda for plenary and collegium meetings;

(c) introduces the plenary and collegium review materials into a program for conducting paperless meetings;

(d) prepares a draft minutes of draft decisions by the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(e) enters information on the proposals under consideration into the program for reflecting the vote of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(f) conducts an editorial and stylistic review of the minutes of the plenary and collegium meetings;

(g) stores, in the original, the acts of the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council;

(h) keeps the complete verbatim report and brief records of decisions taken by the plenary and collegium meetings, together with the originals of the materials under consideration;

(i) draws up excerpts from the full verbatim report and brief minutes of the decisions adopted at plenary and collegium meetings;

(j) prepares cover letters to the excerpts of the brief minutes of the decisions taken by the plenary and collegium meetings and ensures that they are sent to the bodies and persons concerned within 3 working days of the preparation of the brief minutes;

(k) organizes and coordinates the performance of tasks arising from plenary and collegium decisions;

(l) keeps an electronic service record for the implementation of plenary and collegium decisions;

(m) prepares, coordinates and controls the schedule for use of the halls and organizes their technical provision;

(n) assists other structural units in the preparation and holding of meetings of working groups, meetings, etc.

3. in connection with record-keeping and archival activities:

(a) administers, introduces and maintains a database in the Supreme Court Council's document register in the administrative information system for document management;

(b) receives, registers, distributes and reflects the movement of incoming and internal correspondence according to its addressees;

(c) records and dispatches outgoing correspondence;

(d) arranges for the receipt, processing, collection, storage and use of documents in the current and institutional archives;

(e) consults and prepares certified copies of documents stored in the current and institutional records;

(f) organizes the expert opinion of the value of the documents from the institution archive, their processing and submission to the Central State Archives;

(g) participates in the preparation for the destruction of non-valuable expired documents.

4. in connection with the transport services, logistical supplies and maintenance of the administrative buildings of the Supreme Judicial Council:

- (a) provides transportation services to the members and administration of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (b) organizes the activities for the acceptance, registration, operation, repair, maintenance and scrapping of motor vehicles;
- (c) ensures the technical assistance and maintenance of the administrative buildings of the Supreme Judicial Council, systems and facilities and states the ongoing construction and repair work;
- (d) organizes and controls compliance with the regulatory and technical requirements for fire protection in the administrative buildings of the Supreme Judicial Council;
- (e) organizes and carries out the material and technical supply to the Supreme Judicial Council of machines, equipment, spare parts, inventory, organizational equipment, supplies and materials;
- (f) organizes and provides cleaning and is responsible for sanitary and hygienic conditions in the administrative buildings of the Supreme Judicial Council.

5. with regard to classified information:

- (a) develops a plan for the protection of classified information by organizational, physical and technical means;
- (b) organizes the examination procedures under Article 47 of the Protection of Classified Information Act and keeps a register of the authorizations granted;
- (c) ensures that the level of classification of information in the Supreme Judicial Council is properly determined;
- (d) carries out periodic checks on the movement and reporting of material and documents containing classified information, as well as keeps records of cases of unauthorized access and measures taken;
- (e) organizes and provides training in the field of classified information protection;
- (f) maintains a registry for classified information;
- (g) is responsible for the availability and proper reporting, acceptance, use, distribution, dispensation, collection and storage of materials containing classified information;
- (h) keeps a list of officers admitted to work with materials containing classified information;
- (i) monitors the deadlines for the protection of classified information;
- (j) arranges for the timely submission to the archive of materials with the classification level removed.

Article 77. The Public Relations Sector operates as follows:

1. ensures the interaction of the Supreme Judicial Council with the mass media;
2. prepares and implements the information policy of the Supreme Judicial Council and coordinates its implementation;
3. assists the representative of the Supreme Judicial Council in the exercise of his or her functions before the media and public organizations;
4. provides information on the official website of the Supreme Judicial Council;
5. ensures transparency and publicity of the activity of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration and organizes the statutory access to information;
6. organizes and conducts information campaigns on the activity of the Supreme Judicial Council, and coordinates the implementation of the internship program of the Supreme Judicial Council;
7. monitors and analyzes press publications related to the work of the Supreme Judicial Council and the judiciary;
8. analyzes the effectiveness of the media representation of the Supreme Judicial Council, prepares periodic reports for the members of the Supreme Judicial Council;

9. organizes, after the conclusion of the session, a press briefing of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council, and informs them on the issues discussed at the session;
10. organizes, summarizes, selects and provides periodic information to the media on the issues of the agenda and the work of the Supreme Judicial Council;
11. provides access to media information to the work of the committees and the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council in a manner determined by a decision of the Supreme Judicial Council;
12. organizes, coordinates and assists the statements of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council in the mass media;
13. assists in the organization, implementation and coordination of the Communication Communication of the Judiciary 2014–2020;
14. ensures coordination and interaction with the services of other judicial authorities, agencies, organizations and institutions;
15. maintains an archive of media coverage of the work of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 78. (1) The Financial Controllers Unit reports directly to the Secretary General of the Supreme Judicial Council and operates as follows:

1. exercises ex-ante control over the legality of all documents and actions related to the financial activity of the Supreme Judicial Council, in accordance with the Public Sector Financial Management and Control Act and the methodology approved by the Minister of Finance;
2. carries out the necessary inspections and expresses its opinion on the legality before taking the decisions to commit and incur expenses related to the financial activity of the Supreme Judicial Council;
3. exercises ex-ante control over the absorption activities of the European Structural Funds and other donors.

(2) The terms and conditions for carrying out ex-ante control shall be determined by the Internal Rules for ex-ante control at the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 79. The Stenographers Unit organizes and implements the preparation of brief minutes of the decisions taken and a full transcript of the meetings of the plenary session and the colleges of the Supreme Judicial Council, as well as transcripts of other events of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Section IV **Officers in the Administration of the Supreme Judicial Council**

Article 80. (1) The activity of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council is carried out by judicial officers under employment.

(2) Changes in the place and nature of the judicial officer's work shall be carried out by the employer under the terms of Article 120 of the Labor Code.

(3) Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council shall carry out their activities in accordance with the Judiciary System Act, the Labor Code and the legislative acts related to them, on the basis of job descriptions approved by the Secretary-General.

Article 81. (1) Secondment and specialization abroad of judicial officers shall be carried out by the Secretary-General.

(2) Secondment of officers in the country and the use of paid or unpaid leave by them shall be authorized by the Secretary-General.

Article 82. (1) Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be obliged to carry out their official duties impartially and accurately in accordance with their functional and official characteristics.

(2) For exemplary and accurate performance of their official duties, judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be entitled to honors and awards in accordance with rules approved by the Secretary-General.

(3) Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council may form and become members of organizations that protect their professional interests.

(4) Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council shall be politically neutral in the performance of their official duties.

Article 83. (1) Additional duties may be assigned to judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council temporarily – up to forty-five working days a year for official reasons.

(2) In case of official necessity, judicial officers shall be obliged to perform their official duties outside working hours.

(3) In the performance of their official duties, judicial officers shall be legitimized by a service card with their three names and position indicated.

Article 84. Judicial officers are obliged to keep as confidential the information that has become known to them within the service and affect the interests of citizens, legal entities and the state.

Article 85. In the performance of their duties and in public life, judicial officers must have conduct that does not undermine the prestige of the judiciary and conforms to the Code of Ethics for judicial officers adopted by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 86. (1) The officer is obliged to execute the lawful acts and orders of his or her supervisors, as well as their orders related to the exercise of their powers.

(2) The officer shall not be obliged to execute an order directed against him or her, his or her spouse or relatives in a straight line without restrictions, in a collateral line up to the fourth degree and in marriage up to the second degree includingly. In such a case, he or she is obliged to immediately notify his or her employer, who in turn must outsource the performance to another officer.

Article 87. (1) Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council shall receive remuneration determined for the position held in accordance with the classifier of positions in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council and the National Institute of Justice, issued by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

(2) In the performance of his or her official duties on weekends and holidays, the judicial officer shall receive an additional remuneration in the amount determined by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 88. (1) The officers of the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council are obliged to insure against accident at the expense of the budget of the judiciary.

(2) Compulsory social and health insurance shall also be provided at the expense of the budget of the judiciary.

Article 89. Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council are entitled to paid annual leave and to additional paid annual leave in amounts determined by the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 90. Judicial officers in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council are paid each year an amount of clothing up to two monthly average salaries for those employed in the budgetary sphere.

Article 91. A judicial officer in the administration of the Supreme Judicial Council who has acquired the right to an old-age pension and, upon dismissal, is entitled to a lump sum cash benefit of as much gross monthly remuneration as the years of service in the judiciary, but no more of ten gross monthly salaries.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

§ 1. The Rules are adopted on the basis of Article 30(2)(15) of the Judiciary System Act with a decision of the plenary session of the Supreme Judicial Council under Minutes No. 3 of 07.02.2019.

§ 2. The Rules shall enter into force on the date of their promulgation in the State Gazette.

§ 3. The Rules on Organization of the activities of the Supreme Judicial Council and its administration, adopted by decision of the Supreme Judicial Council under Minutes No. 25 of 16.06.2016, are hereby repealed.

**REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COUNCIL: /s/**

BOYAN MAGDALINCHEV