



The  
**DISCIPLINARY BOARD**  
of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

**October 2021**  
**Newsletter**



## *From the Chair*

I want to take this opportunity to remind readers that lawyers have an ethical responsibility to stay apprised of recent appellate decisions. As a dog owner, I know first hand how much comfort a furry friend can provide, and I read with interest the recent [unanimous decision handed down on September 22, 2021](#) wherein the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania found that a trial court did not err by allowing use of a trained comfort dog for a witness. The [majority opinion](#), authored by Chief Justice Baer, noted that the issue is one of first impression in Pennsylvania and examined cases on the issue from other jurisdictions.



In follow up to my previous letters, I want to thank all of you who completed your annual attorney registration requirement. On September 10, 2021, a [record low 284](#) attorneys were transferred to “Administrative Suspension” for failure to comply.

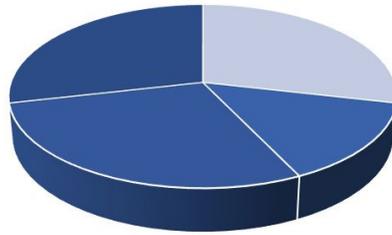
Finally, I am happy to announce that the Disciplinary Board recently completed work on an online filing system for documents and pleadings which can be filed with the Board. On our website, under the “For Attorneys” tab, you may access the *Attorney Gateway*. We expect to expand the types of items included here in the future. I encourage you to review the Board’s website to familiarize yourself with all that is available.

Best wishes to everyone for a safe and happy fall season.

Jack P. Goodrich  
Board Chair

## *Discipline Imposed*

**September 2021**



- Informal Admonition - 2
- Private Reprimand - 0
- Public Reprimand - 0
- Public Censure - 0
- Disability Inactive - 0
- Temporary Suspension - 1
- Suspension - 2
- Disbarment - 2

**Temporary Suspension**

[Nora F. Blair](#)

**Suspension**

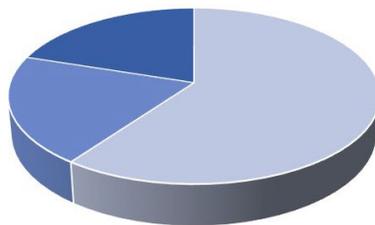
[Stephanie Julia Brown](#)  
[Peter Richard Henninger, Jr.](#)

**Disbarment**

[Robert Patrick Hoopes](#)  
[Daniel P. Vermeychuk](#)

## *Reinstatement Granted*

**September 2021**



- From Inactive - 3
- From Retired - 0
- From Administrative Suspension - 1
- From Disability Inactive - 0
- From Suspension - 1
- From Disbarment - 0

**From Inactive**

[Jennifer Brinkman Flannery](#)  
[Vanessa Linck](#)  
[Wendy Elizabeth Stark](#)

**From Administrative Suspension**

[Regina Cocco](#)

**From Suspension**

[Methuselah Z. O. Bradley, IV](#)

*Note: The above-listed reinstatements reflect only those granted by Supreme Court Order. An attorney listed above whose current license status does not reflect reinstatement has yet to submit the fees necessary to finalize reinstatement.*

# Upcoming Public Proceedings

We encourage you to observe our public disciplinary and reinstatement hearings, oral arguments, and public reprimands on the [Board's YouTube channel](#). View "Upcoming Public Proceedings" at the bottom of the Board's home page, [www.padisiplinaryboard.org](http://www.padisiplinaryboard.org).

## **November**

November 4 - Herbert Karl Sudfeld, Jr. - Reinstatement Hearing  
November 17 - Joshua Lawrence Gayl - Reinstatement Hearing  
November 18 - Joshua Lawrence Gayl - Reinstatement Hearing  
November 30 - Micheal Andrew Rabel - Reinstatement Hearing

## **December**

December 9 - Alan Kane - Disciplinary Hearing  
December 10 - Alan Kane - Disciplinary Hearing  
December 14 - Toussaint T. Tyson - Reinstatement Hearing  
December 15 - Shawn-Ryan White - Disciplinary Hearing

## **January**

January 4 - William Jay Gregg - Reinstatement Hearing  
January 26 - Joshua M. Briskin - Disciplinary Hearing

## **February**

February 23 - Milena Mladenovich - Disciplinary Hearing

***Scheduled proceedings begin at 9:30 am unless otherwise noted.***

# Vacancies

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania is aided by select boards, committees, commissions, and councils consisting of more than 180 appointed volunteers - most, but not all, are lawyers and judges. The panels have a wide range of responsibilities and functions. Some make recommendations to the Court for amendments, revisions, or simplification of court procedural rules. Others regulate the practice of law, oversee continuing legal education for lawyers, and administer funds to assist individuals unable to pay for legal services. Still others advise on keeping the courts free of bias and discrimination and on long-range planning.

**There are currently vacancies on the following panels:**

- [Criminal Procedural Rules Committee](#) - There are **four** positions available. Applicants should be knowledgeable about the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure and experienced in state criminal practice in Pennsylvania.
  - [Continuing Legal Education Board](#) - There are **three** positions available. Applicants must be active members of the Pennsylvania bar with their primary residency in Pennsylvania. In addition, applicants should be knowledgeable about legal practice and procedures in Pennsylvania state or federal courts.
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## Application Instructions

If you would like to be considered to serve on a board, committee, advisory group, or related independent entity, email the [application](#), cover letter, resume, and other pertinent information expressing your reasons of interest to [SCApplications@pacourts.us](mailto:SCApplications@pacourts.us).

More information may be found on the [Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania website](#).

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**Applications are due by October 31, 2021**

## Disciplinary Board News

### John C. Rafferty, Jr. Reappointed as Member of Pa. Disciplinary Board

Former Senator John C. Rafferty, Jr. has been [reappointed](#) as a member of the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

First appointed to the Board in February 2019, Rafferty's reappointment means he will serve on the Disciplinary Board until April 1, 2025.

Rafferty currently serves of counsel for the Law Office of Hamburg, Rubin, Mullin, Maxwell & Lupin, assisting with legislative initiatives and issues with a primary emphasis on client development, recruitment, and retention. [Read More...](#)



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### Online Filings System Released

In an effort to simplify and streamline the manner in which documents and pleadings are filed with the Disciplinary Board, the Board designed and released an online filing system. Among other documents, filings with the Board may include briefs, petitions for reinstatement, joint petitions in support of discipline on consent, motions, and affidavits.

Office of Disciplinary Counsel staff have been using the new system successfully throughout the summer. Now released to all Pennsylvania attorneys, the filing system is housed within a larger [Attorney Gateway](#) which is accessible via the "For Attorneys" tab on the Disciplinary Board website. The Attorney Gateway landing page allows users to update contact information, create new filings, and view submitted filings.

When creating a filing, a user will confirm relevant contact information and will select from a series of dropdown menus to label and categorize the submission. The user then will upload the desired files into the web form before submitting the filing. The system currently allows documents up to 500 MB to be uploaded.

After a filing is submitted, it will appear on the user's dashboard. The user can track the submission through its processing and will notice that the filing will be designated as "Submitted," "In Review," "Accepted," or "Rejected." While noted as "Submitted," the user has the ability to modify the pending filing via the dashboard. If a submission is rejected, the user will be contacted by the Prothonotary's Office.

All submissions made by a user remain listed on the dashboard until the Prothonotary's Office clears the filing, usually after a case has been formally closed.

A [user manual](#) is available online as guidance.

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### **2021-2022 Annual Attorney Registration Summary**

Annual Attorney Registration opened on April 26 to over 75,600 attorneys who were eligible (and required) to complete annual registration by July 1. By the July 1 deadline, over 87% of attorneys had completed their registration. Prior to the assessment of the first late fee on July 17, nearly 97% of attorneys were in compliance. Prior to the assessment of the second late fee on August 2, over 98% of attorneys had completed the registration process.

Annual registration commencement also kicks off a schedule of numerous email reminders sent to attorneys still needing to complete their registration at the time of email distribution. These reminder emails (sent from [PAAttorneyRegistration@pacourts.us](mailto:PAAttorneyRegistration@pacourts.us)) continue to be sent until an individual's registration is complete. Emails are sent to various groups of attorneys, including:

- all attorneys whose registration is incomplete;
- attorneys who chose to create a mail-in payment voucher, but payment has not yet been received; and
- attorneys admitted to the Pennsylvania bar during the previous registration year.

Communications regarding registration requirements are only sent electronically. Because of this, it is crucial that all Pennsylvania attorneys ensure that [current contact information](#) is on file with the Disciplinary Board – specifically within 30 days of any change pursuant to [Pa.R.D.E. 219\(d\)\(3\)](#). Without current contact information, we are not able to remind you of outstanding requirements.

On August 11, a Supreme Court Order was issued to administratively suspend the remaining noncompliant attorneys. Prior to the effective date of the Order, attorneys have the opportunity to complete their registration and thus be removed from the list of those to be administratively suspended. On September 10, 2021, a record low 284 attorneys were administratively suspended for continued failure to comply.

**Thank you** to all the attorneys who registered timely this year!

## *Articles of Interest*

### **Celebrating Pro Bono Service**

Pro bono legal work affords greater access to justice for all Pennsylvanians. Each October, pro bono endeavors across the United States are celebrated. Many within the legal profession volunteer free services to individuals with low income and limited access to legal assistance. Every year, thousands of PA attorneys find joy in meaningful service to their local communities and fellow Pennsylvanians.

[In 2018](#), the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania created [emeritus status](#) for retired PA attorneys to contribute their expertise and time to legal aid organizations. Emeritus attorneys fulfill valuable roles by bolstering legal aid and other nonprofit programs to help close the gap between the need

for and the availability of free legal assistance.

This summer, the Disciplinary Board launched its [“Pro Bono” webpage](#) to connect PA attorneys with available resources to perform pro bono legal work. Here, users can learn more about emeritus status and explore pro bono opportunities sponsored by the PA IOLTA Board, the PA CLE Board, and other statewide organizations. Visitors can also view recent pro bono news from the Board as well as [Chief Justice Baer’s 2021 letter to the Bar](#) imploring all PA attorneys to consider contributing time and financial support to legal aid providers.

The availability of free, high-quality legal services has the power to improve the trajectory of communities. The Disciplinary Board extends its sincere gratitude to all PA attorneys who have answered the call to action and encourage those not yet performing pro bono legal work to actively seek opportunities to serve in the coming year.

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### **Pennsylvania Lawyer Reprimanded for Behavior in Deposition, Failure to Obey Orders**

A Philadelphia lawyer received a reprimand based on her conduct during a deposition and for failing to comply with orders entered in sanctions proceedings.

[Julie Chovanes](#) represented a pharmaceutical company in a case in a California Federal court, admitted on a pro hac vice basis. During a deposition of the company’s founder, she adopted an aggressive approach, lodging numerous objections, instructing her client not to answer questions 39 times, arguing with plaintiff’s counsel, coaching her witness through suggestive objections, and leaving the room at one point. Opposing counsel filed a motion for sanctions. The Magistrate Judge granted the motion for sanctions, finding that her conduct disrupted the deposition and that her demeanor in teleconferences as “flippant, overly aggressive, truculent, and quick to confrontation.” The Magistrate Judge ordered her to pay \$28,502.03 in sanctions, self-report the findings to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel, and file a declaration of compliance. She failed to comply with the order, but filed an untimely objection to the order. A District Judge denied the objection due to untimeliness, leaving the sanctions order in effect. Chovanes did not appeal either order, but still failed to comply with the order. The Court then referred the matter to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

Chovanes and the Office of Disciplinary Counsel entered into a Joint Petition for Discipline calling for a public reprimand. Chovanes agreed that her conduct violated [Rule 3.1\(a\)\(1\) of the California Rules of Professional Conduct \(Cal.R.P.C.\)](#), asserting a position without probable cause for the purpose of harassment; [Cal.R.P.C. 3.2](#), use of means with no purpose other than to delay or prolong the proceeding; [Cal.R.P.C. 3.4\(f\)](#), knowingly disobeying and obligation to a tribunal; [Cal.R.P.C. 8.4\(d\)](#), conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice; and [Rule 203\(b\)\(7\) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement](#), failure to respond to a letter of inquiry.

The Joint Petition noted cases in which lawyers were disciplined for disruptive conduct in litigation, and stipulated that Chovanes’ conduct was less serious than those cases. It also cited her lack of prior discipline, admission of wrongdoing, expression of remorse, and cooperation with Disciplinary Counsel as mitigating factors.

A three-member panel of the Disciplinary Board approved the Joint Petition. By order of the Chair of the Disciplinary Board, the public reprimand was administered on October 7, 2021.

A California appeals court has [ruled that a provision in a contingent fee agreement that gave personal injury lawyers the “sole discretion” to settle a client’s case was void](#) and a violation of the client’s right to approve any settlement.

Lawyers from Jolly Berry Law, a firm located in Mission Viejo, California, entered into a contingent fee agreement with Sayedeh Sahba Amjadi, a client in an auto accident case. A provision in the agreement gave the law firm the authority to accept settlement offers for client, as long as the lawyers thought in good faith that the settlement offer was reasonable and in the client’s best interest.

The case proceeded to the eve of trial, but the relationship between Amjadi and her counsel soured. On the morning of trial, plaintiff’s attorneys sought to be relieved as counsel for plaintiff based upon a conflict of interest, but the trial court denied their motion. Then, Amjadi’s counsel approached defense counsel about a potential settlement for \$150,000, an amount she had previously rejected. The defense agreed, and counsel accepted the settlement in reliance on the clause in the contingent fee agreement. Due to the settlement, the trial judge dismissed the complaint.

Amjadi found the settlement inadequate, and hired new counsel who filed a motion to vacate the judgment. When the motion was denied, she appealed. The Fourth Appellate District in the California Courts of Appeal [reversed the judgment of dismissal](#). The Court found that [Rule 1.2 of the California Rules of Professional Conduct \(Cal.R.P.C.\)](#), which states that “a lawyer shall abide by a client’s decision whether to settle a matter,” governs the result and renders the language in the law firm’s contingent fee agreement null and void. As a result, it found that the settlement was entered without authority and was voidable by Amjadi.

The Court further noted possible violations of [Cal.R.P.C. 1.6](#) (confidential communications), [1.7](#) (conflicts of interest), and [1.9](#) (duties to former clients). Accordingly, it referred the lawyers involved in acceptance of the settlement to the State Bar of California for disciplinary investigation.

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### **Pennsylvania Supreme Court Approves Comfort Dogs for Witnesses**

In a [unanimous decision handed down September 22, 2021](#), the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania found that a trial court did not err by allowing use of a trained comfort dog for a witness.

An important witness to a murder was 14 years old and has autism. She expressed a fear that testifying would lead to retaliation by a gang. Prosecutors submitted a motion that she be allowed to testify in the presence of a trained emotional support dog, who would be concealed behind the witness stand out of the jury’s view. The trial court allowed the use of the comfort dog, and the witness testified. The defendant was convicted of multiple charges including third-degree murder.

On appeal, the defendant argued that the use of the comfort dog was prejudicial, because the dog’s presence generated sympathy for the witness within the jury, and that the Commonwealth failed to establish the necessity for the use of the dog. The appellant noted that many states that have addressed this issue have employed a test balancing the ability to gain truthful testimony from a witness by reducing his or her trauma against the potential prejudice to the defendant. The appellant argued that the trial court failed to get on record the required evidence that the use of the dog was necessary to enable the witness to testify.

The [majority opinion](#), authored by Chief Justice Baer, noted that the issue is one of first impression in Pennsylvania, and examined cases on the issue from other jurisdictions. It adopted

a rule found in a Connecticut case and declared:

The trial court should consider the particular facts and circumstances for the request to have a dog accompany the particular witness, the extent to which the dog's presence will permit the witness to testify truthfully, completely and reliably, and the extent to which the dog's presence will obviate the need for more drastic measures to secure the witness' testimony... The trial court should balance these factors against the potential prejudice to the defendant and the availability of measures to mitigate any prejudice, such as limiting instructions and procedures to limit the jury's view of the dog.

The majority opinion then examined the trial judge's disposition of the motion, and noted that he held a hearing on the motion, referred to the dog as a "service animal," required that it enter and exit the courtroom out of the jury's sight and be hidden from the jury during the testimony, and twice instructed the jury not to take the presence of the dog into consideration in evaluating the witness's credibility. The Court concluded that these precautions were sufficient to allay prejudice to the defendant, and affirmed the conviction.

In a [concurring opinion](#), Justice Donohue expressed the view that the prosecution offered no evidence that the presence of this comfort dog would alleviate the witness's safety concerns and enable more reliable and complete testimony as required by the Connecticut test. However, she noted that defense counsel did not object to the lack of evidence demonstrating that the comfort dog would aid the witness in testifying truthfully and reliably, and that the issue was therefore waived on appeal, and so she concurred in the judgment of affirmation.

According to a [survey by the Animal Legal and Historical Center at Michigan State University](#), sixteen states have laws allowing the use of facility/courthouse dogs in some legal proceedings.

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### **Facebook Follies: October Edition**

It seems that every month we find stories related in some way to that ubiquitous presence in our lives – Facebook.

A New Jersey lawyer [escaped ethics charges](#) because he didn't understand Facebook privacy settings. The Supreme Court of New Jersey dismissed ethics charges against John Robertelli based on his use of Facebook postings to show that a litigant who was claiming a disabling injury was wrestling. The material had been downloaded by his paralegal, who sent the litigant flattering messages and gained access to the litigant's account when he accepted her friend request. The Office of Attorney Ethics filed a complaint alleging Robertelli violated an ethics rule that bars lawyers from communicating with a represented party without the consent of the party's lawyer.

[The Court's opinion](#) noted that both sending a "friend" request and enticing or cajoling the represented client to send one are prohibited forms of conduct under RPC 4.2. However, it noted that when the conduct occurred in 2008, Facebook was in its infancy, and that Robertelli, who had just acquired a computer a few years before the incident and was safely described as not computer savvy, may well have had a good faith misunderstanding of Facebook privacy settings, and probably did not realize that his paralegal had gained access to the images only by direct contact with the opposing party. The Court dismissed the ethics charges, but its decision may be a ticket good for one ride only, as it opined, "Lawyers must educate themselves about commonly used forms of social media to avoid the scenario that arose in this case. The defense of ignorance will not be a safe haven." It referred the matter to the Advisory Committee on Professional Ethics for consideration of whether any additional social media guidelines or amendments are needed.

A California judge was [publicly admonished](#) after joining a Facebook group calling for the recall of

the district attorney whose office prosecuted cases before him, and for tweets, retweets, and comments that suggested bias.

Judge Michael J. O’Gara posted comments criticizing Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón for failing to seek sentencing enhancements, and commented, “Some of the judges are fighting Gascón’s directives and we need them to stay. They are heroes.” He also clicked the “like” icon for a comment that said, “Please let me know what I can do to help with [an opponent’s] run. I work in court. The morale is extremely low.” The admonishment noted that O’Gara also liked tweets appearing to reflect strong political points of view, conveying bias against victims of sexual assault and disdain for women, opposing immigrants, supporting capital punishment, and seeming critical of those exercising their First Amendment rights to protest.

O’Gara withdrew from the Facebook group within a month and later deleted his Twitter app and deactivated his account. He expressed contrition for his social media activity and accepted that his actions were inappropriate. The Commission voted to impose a public rather than a private admonishment by a 6-4 margin.

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### **The Queen’s Countergambit: Georgian Chess Champion Sues Netflix**

A trailblazing Georgian female chess champion is [suing Netflix over her portrayal in the miniseries \*The Queen’s Gambit\*](#). Chess legend Nona Gaprindashvili made history as the world’s first female grandmaster and was the female world chess champion from 1961 to 1978, and the over-65 women’s champion as recently as 2019.

What enraged Gaprindashvili was a single line in the miniseries, in which a commentator on protagonist Beth Harmon’s match against a Russian male chess champion states that Gaprindashvili never faced men, while the camera dwelled on a female actor presumed to represent her. She had competed against at least 59 male chess players by the date set in the miniseries, including 28 of them simultaneously in one game.

Gaprindashvili filed a [complaint](#) against Netflix in the Central District of California, Western Division, alleging that the representation that she never faced men was false and defamatory, and constituted false light invasion of privacy and defamation per se.<sup>1</sup> She seeks \$5 million in damages.

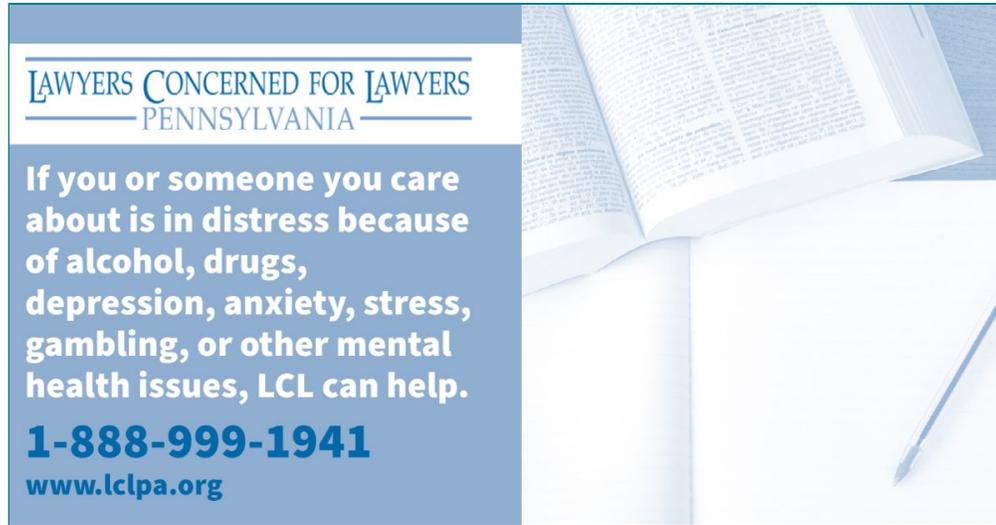
The complaint notes that the [novel by Walter Tevis](#) on which the series was based accurately reported that Gaprindashvili had competed against men, but Netflix changed the line for dramatic effect. Netflix refused Gaprindashvili’s demand for a public statement acknowledging the falsity of the statement, an apology, and a retraction.

Gaprindashvili’s counsel commented, “This whole program, *The Queen’s Gambit*, is aimed to show that women can succeed, and how their heroine overcame prejudice. But in doing so, they trashed the real person who had really been the trailblazer.” Netflix said in a written statement, “Netflix has only the utmost respect for Ms. Gaprindashvili and her illustrious career, but we believe this claim has no merit and will vigorously defend the case.”

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<sup>1</sup>She also complains of being described as Russian, when she was born and resides in the Republic of Georgia.

# Attorney Well-Being



**LAWYERS CONCERNED FOR LAWYERS  
PENNSYLVANIA**

**If you or someone you care about is in distress because of alcohol, drugs, depression, anxiety, stress, gambling, or other mental health issues, LCL can help.**

**1-888-999-1941**  
[www.lclpa.org](http://www.lclpa.org)

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL) is a confidential and safe resource for Pennsylvania attorneys and their family members who may be struggling with their mental health or substance use. An astounding one in three legal professionals will face these issues at some point in their career. Since 1988, LCL has confidentially assisted and supported thousands of individuals who have faced a myriad of challenges (including grief, stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, gambling problems, problematic alcohol or prescription drug use, etc.), helping them navigate through dark and difficult times. Members of our profession are dying because they are afraid or unable to ask for help. If you or someone you know is struggling, please call us. You may save a life. There is help and there is hope.

## Resource Guide for the Legal Profession During COVID-19

**Confidential 24/7 Helpline: 1-888-999-1941**

Lawyers-only support meetings

Peer and staff support & resource coordination

LCL resources are free, voluntary, & confidential

Free CLE, resources, and information at [www.lclpa.org](http://www.lclpa.org)

Assessment by a healthcare professional to determine a customized treatment plan, if indicated

# Around the Court



## Courts Publish New Video Highlighting Role of Interpreters and Language Access Coordinators

The ability to communicate effectively throughout judicial proceedings is crucial to the equal access to Pennsylvania courts. The Unified Judicial System recently published a video on their website, briefing court participants on their right to the appropriate interpreter for all relevant case matters.

This new [video](#) introduces site users to the roles of interpreters and Language Access Coordinators within the court system. In differing capacities, both aid individuals requiring language services. The video illustrates the process of working with a coordinator, details how an interpreter will assist in court proceedings, and highlights material language resources available throughout court spaces.

The video is presented in American Sign Language, spoken English, and English closed captioning. “I Speak” resource cards are available in a variety of languages on the [“Language Access & Interpreter Program” webpage](#).

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*The Disciplinary Board now offers its complaint forms as PDFs in fourteen languages, each available for download on the Board's [website](#). If you or someone you know would like to speak with an interpreter in order to communicate with the Disciplinary Board, please consult the [telephonic interpreting table](#).*

## *From the Pennsylvania Bar Association*



### **October Is Pro Bono Month**

**Thank you** to the many lawyers helping Pennsylvanians who are facing difficult legal circumstances but do not have the expertise or financial resources to help themselves. The Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) appreciates your time and willingness to provide professional legal services at no fee or a reduced fee.

For those who have not yet found a way to [provide pro bono legal work](#), or who have questions about how to get started, PBA hopes the information below will inspire you to take action to provide legal services that will change someone’s life for the better.

Each year, PBA members do far more than just provide representation and advice to the thousands whose access to justice otherwise would be obstructed. Members screen and refer clients; recruit, train, and mentor fellow volunteers; prepare educational and pro se materials; and lead fundraising efforts. [Lawyers Saluting Veterans](#) offers free legal services to military veterans across the state; the [Family Law Section](#) provides resources and expertise on adoption, divorce, and various other domestic relations; the [Section on Real Property, Probate, and Trust Law](#)

provides a virtual wills clinic in partnership with the SeniorLaw Center; and other PBA members volunteer with local [Wills for Heroes](#) programs that have prepared nearly 19,000 estate packages for first responders and veterans over the past thirteen years.

Past PBA Presidents and Boards have consistently shown their support for legal aid by lobbying at national, state, and local levels. The PBA has advanced recommendations calling for pro bono service and has increased funding for civil legal aid, loan forgiveness for legal aid attorneys, and exploration of civil Gideon. For the twelfth year, the Pennsylvania Bar Foundation's [Loan Repayment Assistance Program](#) will distribute annual forgivable grants to legal aid attorneys. Since its launch in 2010, the program has awarded over 1,000 loans (collectively valued at over \$3.8 million) to over 300 attorneys employed by IOLTA-funded civil legal services organizations across Pennsylvania.

The need for pro bono legal work is real and growing. Despite all the efforts of the PBA and the thousands of lawyers and judges who take pro bono cases and support legal aid, only one in five low-income Pennsylvanians who encounter legal issues ever talk to an attorney. As many as two-thirds of eligible Pennsylvanians who visit a legal aid office have been turned away because the local offices, even with pro bono support, do not have sufficient resources to accommodate.

Technology can connect you to people who need your legal expertise and can provide tools and resources to make it easier and more convenient for you to help. The PBA has several resources to assist you and to ultimately move us all closer toward one of the defining principles of our legal system – equity and justice under law for all. Visit PBA's [Pro Bono Services webpage](#) to explore offerings.

[Pennsylvania Free Legal Answers](#) is a virtual online option based on the walk-in clinic where clients request brief advice and counsel about a specific civil legal issue. Lawyers provide information and basic legal advice without any expectation of long-term representation. There is the option, if the lawyer wishes to pursue such representation, for the lawyer to take on the client for fuller pro bono representation.

[Paprobono.net](#) offers an online legal community that provides information and resources for pro bono attorneys, legal aid attorneys, public defenders, and other legal advocates interested in increasing access to justice. This site contains resources to assist lawyers in their representation of low-income or disadvantaged clients.

[PALawhelp.org](#) provides information on civil legal issues and answers to many civil legal questions. It was originally created as a place for clients to find resources but many of the 100,000 plus users each month are attorneys who use it as an easy reference.

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*PBA would love to hear about pro bono services you or a colleague are performing so that they can recognize your invaluable work. To learn more about pro bono opportunities or to share your pro bono experiences, contact PBA Pro Bono Coordinator [David Trevaskis](#).*

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*Please note that the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) are separate organizations. For more information about PBA, visit their [website](#).*

## *We Want To Hear From You...*

We are always on the lookout for stories of interest relating to legal ethics, new issues in the practice of law, lawyer wellness, and funny or just plain weird stories about the legal profession. If you come across something you think might be enlightening, educational, or entertaining to our readers or social media followers, [pass it along](#). If you're our original source, there may be a hat tip in it for you.

## *Resources*

[Pending Cases](#)

[Recent Cases](#)

[Case Research Collection](#)

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[FAQs – For the Public](#)

[FAQs – For Attorneys](#)

[Pro Bono](#)

[Annual Report](#)

[Rules](#)

[Discipline Statistics](#)

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