



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

**January 2023**  
**Newsletter**



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## *From the Chair*

As we begin a new year, we are presented with the opportunity to reset and to reflect upon both the successes and the challenges of the previous twelve months. With this opportunity, I encourage you to consider how your personal and professional goals and mindset currently align with your law practice. *What outcomes do you aspire to see for this coming year? What small action can be done today to progress toward those objectives?*

The Disciplinary Board anticipates exciting new features and enhancements to its [website](#) to be released throughout the year.

Ever evolving, the Board actively seeks prudent avenues to better serve both Pennsylvanians and the legal profession. In persistent service and dedication to the public, the Board will continue to livestream its public proceedings via its [YouTube channel](#), reaffirming its commitment to increased transparency and public access.

I look forward to another year of growth and partnership and, on behalf of the Board, wish you all health and happiness in 2023.

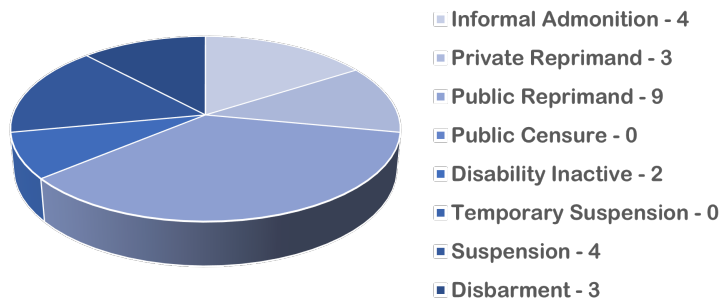
Stay well,

Jerry M. Lehocky  
Board Chair



## *Discipline Imposed*

**December 2022**



#### Public Reprimand

[George W. Bills, Jr.](#)

[Richard E. Bower](#)

[Demetrius William Fannick](#)

[William R. Korey](#)

[Laurence Anthony Narcisi, III](#)

[Marc Alan Roberts](#)

[James J. Ruggiero, Jr.](#)

[Steven Ronald Savoia](#)

[Timothy Nicholas Tomasic](#)

#### Disability Inactive

[Vishal S. Petigara](#)

[Robert Steven Porreca](#)

#### Suspension

[Corey James Adamson](#)

[Jason R. Carpenter](#)

[Wendell K. Grimes](#)

[Shevelle McPherson](#)

#### Disbarment

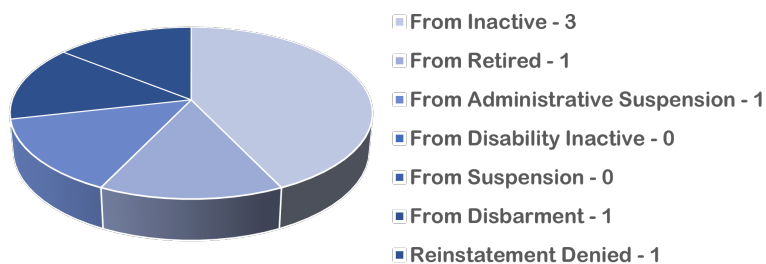
[Jacqueline Patricia Gruhler](#)

[John F. Kennedy](#)

[Dory L. Sater](#)

## Reinstatements

December 2022



**From Inactive**  
[Daniel S. Jonas](#)  
[Robert Joseph Kinney](#)  
[Jonathan Ian Kravis](#)

**From Retired**  
[Amanda Leigh Nordstrom](#)

**From Administrative Suspension**  
[Emily Sarah Bell](#)

**From Disbarment**  
[William Jay Gregg](#)

**Reinstatement Denied**  
[William James Helzlsouer](#)

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

## 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:**

- [Board of Law Examiners](#) – Applicants must be members of the Pennsylvania bar or jurists. In addition, applicants should be knowledgeable about law school curriculum, legal practice, and attorney ethical obligations. Law school faculty may not serve on this Board. Additionally, applicants should not apply for a membership position if, during that position's term of service, they will have immediate family members who will be taking the bar examination or seeking membership in the Pennsylvania bar.
- [Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee](#) – Applicants should be knowledgeable about the Pennsylvania Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure and experienced in juvenile law practice in Pennsylvania, including dependency and delinquency matters.
- [Lawyers Fund for Client Security Board](#) – Lawyer applicants should be knowledgeable about the practice of federal or state law in Pennsylvania and about a lawyer's duties to clients. Non-lawyer applicants should have an interest in supporting public trust and confidence in the legal profession.

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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](#).

***Applications are due by Tuesday, January 31, 2023.***

## *CDC Corner*

### **Third-Party Payment of Legal Fees**

*Is it ethically permissible for an attorney to accept payment from a third-party to represent a client? Are there guidelines for how an attorney must handle this situation?* The answer to both questions is “yes”.

This situation is not uncommon. Parents pay attorneys to represent their children, even into adulthood. Insurance companies pay for their insureds’ representation in claims arising under the policy. Employers, including government entities, find and pay lawyers to represent their employees in work-related suits. I am represented by counsel paid by the Disciplinary Board in the *Greenberg v. Lehocky, et al*, the federal civil rights action over RPC 8.4(g), where I am a party-defendant in my official capacity. Friends sometimes altruistically volunteer to assist with fees, but so too do mob bosses when their underlings are under a criminal investigation which may target the boss.

The Rules of Professional Conduct recognize that the arrangement holds some risk and impose prerequisites. [Rule 1.8\(f\)](#) states:

*A lawyer shall not accept compensation for representing a client from one other than the client unless:*

- 1. the client gives informed consent;*
- 2. there is no interference with the lawyer’s independence of professional judgment or with the client-lawyer relationship; and,*
- 3. information relating to representation of a client is protected as required by Rule 1.6.*

This is a conflict rule. Even where the attorney does not represent multiple persons in the same matter—a practice with its own dangers, e.g., *ODC v. Baldwin*, 225 A.3d 817, 842 (Pa. 2020); see also *In re Grand Jury Investigation*, 983 A.2d 1097, 1106 (NJ 2009) (“There cannot be any current attorney-client relationship between the lawyer and the third-party payer.”) — the attorney’s personal interest in being paid may influence the advice he gives to the client in a way that favors the payer. See RPC 1.7(a)(2); [Peter A. Joy & Kevin C. McMunigal, “Paying Witnesses’ Attorneys,” \*Criminal Justice\* \(Fall 2022\).](#)

Because of this potential for conflict, RPC 1.8(f) emphasizes considerations that ought to govern any representation. There must be no interference with exercise of an attorney’s judgment on behalf of the client nor his obligations to the client. The Rule’s comments cross-reference [Rule 5.4\(c\)](#) which again identifies the third-party payer context as one in which the lawyer must be vigilant to exercise uncompromised judgment on the client’s behalf, and only the client’s behalf. RPC 1.8(f) also reminds the attorney to safeguard confidential information because the payer often may want to know what the client is saying and planning to do such as whether the client plans to implicate the payer in wrongdoing. These exhortations recognize that a payer often has self-interested motives. See Comment [11].

Finally, the Rule requires the client's informed consent to the arrangement. It doesn't specify the risks of which the client must be advised, but implicit in this requirement is that the client must be told that there are risks. At minimum, the lawyer must identify the third-party payer. See RPC 1.8, Comment [12].

The New Jersey Supreme Court has proscribed specific guidelines for third-party payment arrangements:

- The client must give informed consent after being advised of the risks and alternatives.
- The payer cannot try to influence the attorney's judgment.
- The lawyer cannot concurrently represent the payer.
- The lawyer may not communicate with the payer concerning the substance of the representation.
- The payer must pay promptly in the ordinary course of business.
- The payer cannot discontinue payment without court approval. The client's election to pursue a course disadvantageous to the payer never is reason to shirk the payment obligation.

*983 A.2d at 1105-06*

The New Jersey decision does not bind lawyers practicing in Pennsylvania, but Pennsylvania lawyers can benefit from its guidance.

Above all else, the rules shout one guiding principle: no matter who pays, all the lawyer's duties run without diminution to the client, not the payer.

Thomas J. Farrell  
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

## *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](#). You can also view "Upcoming Public Proceedings" at the bottom of the Board's [home page](#).

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

<i><b>January</b></i>		
January 23 January 24 January 25	Joseph D. Lento	Disciplinary Hearing
January 31	Lawrence E. Bolind, Jr.	Disciplinary Hearing
<i><b>February</b></i>		
February 2	Gordon D. Fisher	Disciplinary Hearing
February 3 February 15	George Paul Chada	Disciplinary Hearing
February 21	Ashley Drue Martin	Disciplinary Hearing
<i><b>March</b></i>		
March 6 March 7 March 8	Patrick C. Carey	Disciplinary Hearing
March 9	Joseph M. Yablonski	Disciplinary Hearing
March 15 March 16	Gary Scott Silver	Disciplinary Hearing
March 21	Gina Yvonne Toppin	Disciplinary Hearing
<i><b>April</b></i>		
April 4	John T. Lynch, Jr.	Reinstatement Hearing
April 11	William J. Weiss	Disciplinary Hearing
April 25	John P. Halfpenny	Reinstatement Hearing
<i><b>To Be Scheduled</b></i>		
Anthony C. Cappuccio - Reinstatement Hearing		
Anthony Hugh Rodrigues - Public Reprimand		

## *Articles of Interest*

### **Reinstatement Denied for Ill-Prepared Lawyer**

A suspended Allegheny County lawyer learned that reinstatement from suspension is not a privilege to be taken lightly when the Supreme Court denied his application for reinstatement after an adverse report by the Disciplinary Board.

[William James Helzlsouer](#) was suspended for one year and one day by the Supreme Court on January 23, 2020, based on three separate matters involving neglect, mishandling of his IOLTA account by allowing his adult son unauthorized access to the account, failing to hold entrusted funds properly, failing to promptly refund unearned fees, and engaging in the unauthorized practice of law while suspended. On August 6, 2021, he filed a petition for reinstatement. But after a hearing, a three-member Hearing Committee recommended denial of his application. The Disciplinary Board concurred with that recommendation, and the Supreme Court accepted its recommendation and denied reinstatement.

Helzlsouer's problems began early in the proceeding. The Hearing Committee directed that both sides provide a list of witnesses and exhibits which he failed to timely provide. Fewer than twenty-four hours before the hearing, he attempted to send a list to the Hearing Committee members but failed to file it properly. He requested a continuance at the beginning of the hearing, but it was denied. He was not permitted to offer his witnesses and exhibits due to his failure to comply with the order. He filed his brief late although it was accepted by the Hearing Committee. Two months later, he filed a Motion to Open the Record and attempted to file a Supplemental Brief to the Committee which were both rejected.

The Hearing Committee found that Helzlsouer's answers to several questions on his reinstatement questionnaire were incomplete, false, or substantially inaccurate. The Committee found fault with his failure to address two disciplinary complaints filed against him during his suspension, his suspension from the bar of the United States District Court, and questions regarding his continuing legal education hours and outstanding judgments. The Committee noted that he had three prior incidents of discipline, including two three-month suspensions. They also cited two incidents where he engaged in law-related activities while suspended. They concluded that he presented no evidence of efforts to ameliorate the circumstances of the conduct leading to the complaints against him and that he showed no remorse or acceptance of responsibility for his wrongdoing. Finally, the committee cited his lack of preparation, deference to the process, and compliance with the pretrial and briefing schedules as evidence of a lack of competence to practice.

Upon review of the Hearing Committee's report, the Disciplinary Board stated, "Upon the totality of the evidence before us, we conclude that Petitioner has failed to meet his burden of proving his moral qualifications, competency and learning in the law by any standard, much less clear and convincing, nor has he shown clearly and convincingly that his reinstatement would not be detrimental to the integrity and standing of the bar and the administration of justice, nor subversive of the public interest." The Disciplinary Board recommended that reinstatement be denied, and in an [Order](#) dated December 7, 2022, the Supreme Court did so.

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### **Lawyer Unable to Navigate Filing Website Gets No Sympathy**

Utah lawyer Steven Call [found out the hard way](#) that a last-hour login to an electronic case filing system is a risky proposition. He did not find the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in a forgiving mood.

Call was representing a bank in disputing the bankruptcy discharge of a rancher who defaulted on a loan and sold cattle listed as collateral, according to the bank. The bank was given a deadline sixty days after the first meeting of creditors to file a complaint objecting to discharge.

After depositing the debtor until 3:00 p.m. on the same day, Call raced to complete and file a complaint by the midnight deadline. He logged on to the bankruptcy court's ECF system at 11:40 p.m. He attempted to file the complaint but ran into two problems. First, he was unable to enter the amount of the demand in the appropriate field after attempting to insert a dollar sign into a field that allowed only integers. Once he got past that, he prepared to file the complaint but believed he had to complete the payment process first. Unable to locate a payment window, he left the ECF system at 11:58 p.m. to email the complaint and documents to opposing counsel. He returned to the system and succeeded in filing the complaint at 12:16 a.m. His assistant completed the payment process the following morning.

Predictably, the Bankruptcy Judge dismissed the bank's complaint as untimely. The District Court agreed, and the bank appealed to the Court of Appeals. In an [Order](#) entered December 14, 2022

the Tenth Circuit affirmed the dismissal.

The Court found that the bank was not entitled to relief because the factors that led to the later filing were counsel's own fault and were not failures of the system. As to the entry of the amount of the demand, the Court found that the field would have functioned properly even if left blank, and the malfunction probably occurred because Call entered a dollar sign and failed to delete it, contrary to the training he had been through in order to be enrolled in the ECF system. The Court found that this problem only consumed about five minutes of the time Call was logged onto the system and that he still had nearly fifteen minutes to complete the process when it moved on. As to the payment problem, the Court found that Call failed to realize that, under the procedures of the ECF system, he could not complete the payment process before filing the complaint. He repeatedly used the back button on his browser which was not a feature employed by the ECF system. When he abandoned the process at 11:58 to email the documents to opposing counsel, he lost the opportunity to timely file the complaint. The Court noted that he was able to file the complaint promptly once he returned to the system.

The bank argued that it was entitled to an extension of time to file due to the inaccessibility of the clerk's office as authorized under [Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9006\(a\)\(3\)](#). The Court found that the rule did not apply as the evidence supported the Bankruptcy Court's conclusion that the fact that the ECF system was functioning properly meant the clerk's office was not inaccessible. The Court also rejected a claim that the bank was entitled to equitable relief as no failure of the ECF contributed to the untimely filing of the complaint.

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### **Lawyers Give Advice on Avoiding Deepfake Challenges to Evidence**

We have written before on deepfake technology – the use of high-tech resources such as artificial intelligence to create realistic but false video evidence. We have discussed [the threat](#) that deepfake technology poses to the reliability of evidence and [how to spot](#) deepfakes.

Two lawyers from the District of Columbia firm [Wilmer Hale](#) have addressed the opposite question: how does a trial attorney avoid having evidence challenged or questioned with unsubstantiated accusations of the use of deepfake technology? [Brent Gurney](#) and [Matthew Ferraro](#) address the issue in an [article](#) on the firm's website entitled "The Other Side Says Your Evidence Is A Deepfake. Now What?".

Gurney and Ferraro begin by examining a number of cases in which video evidence was challenged on technological grounds, including a case arising from the January 6, 2021 US Capitol attack where an FBI expert was questioned and unprepared to address whether video evidence from the event might have been altered.

They cite Federal Rules of Evidence regarding the authentication of electronic evidence including videos. They note that [Rule 902\(13\)](#) allows for the authentication of a "record generated by an electronic process or system that produces an accurate result" if "shown by a certification of a qualified person" in a manner set forth by the rules, and [Rule 902\(14\)](#) allows for the authentication of "[d]ata copied from an electronic device . . . by a process of digital identification, as shown by a certification of a qualified person." They point out that [Rule 903\(11\)](#) requires a proponent to give an adverse party reasonable written notice of the intent to offer the record and must make the record and certification available for inspection prior to trial so that the party has a fair opportunity to challenge them.

They discuss ethical aspects of challenges to such evidence and note that the ABA's Criminal Justice Standards for the Defense Function prohibit defense counsel from making objections to



evidence without a reasonable basis. They also observe the “reverse CS/ effect” in which jurors expect dramatic high-tech evidence even in routine cases based on their experiences seeing TV courtroom dramas featuring such effects.

They offer advice for lawyers to prevent and meet challenges to video evidence:

- Follow the Federal Rules of Evidence;
- Do not take the admissibility of any evidence for granted;
- Provide circumstantial evidence to help establish the authenticity of imagery and video;
- Prepare forensic witnesses to address questions around authenticity and deepfakes; and
- Be knowledgeable about the technology you are using.

For parties considering evidence proffered by the opposition, they suggest:

- Reviewing disclosed evidence in advance of the trial;
- If media is questionable, considering retaining an expert to evaluate and explain issues of authenticity; and
- Only questioning evidence when there is a good faith basis for doing so.

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### **Lawyer Barred from Rockettes Show Based on Facial Recognition Software**

[Last month](#), we took note of the ongoing conflict between Madison Square Garden Entertainment Corporation and several law firms who have sued the company or any of its subsidiaries. MSG sought to ban any lawyers associated with the firms from attendance at any of its facilities but was told by a judge it had to admit any of the lawyers who appeared at the venue with a valid third-party ticket.

The vendetta reached a new level of intensity in December when one of the company's venues used [facial recognition technology](#) to identify and turn away an associate at one of the law firms as she entered the building to accompany her daughter on a Girl Scouts field trip.

Kelly Conlon, an associate at Davis, Saperstein & Salomon in New Jersey, [reported](#) that she entered Radio City Music Hall with her daughter and the Girl Scout troop for a performance by the Rockettes. She heard a security warning about a woman with long dark hair and a grey scarf over the loudspeakers, and security guards confronted her at the metal detectors. The guards told her that “our recognition picked you up” and identified her as a banned party. Her firm represented parties suing a restaurant under the MSGEC umbrella, but she does not practice in New York and was not involved in the litigation. She said that her daughter continued into the arena to see the show with her troop while she waited outside, an experience she described as [“embarrassing” and “mortifying”](#).

MSGEC issued a statement defending its action, stating that the banned firms had been notified twice of the company's policy. MSG venues have been using facial recognition technology [since at least 2018](#) for security purposes, but Conlon insisted she posed no security threat. “I was just a mom taking my daughter to see a Christmas show,” she asserted.

## *Attorney Well-Being*

**Using Grounding Techniques to Combat Stress and Anxiety**

Anxiety and stress can often become distracting and unsettling and can prompt detachment from the present moment. At home, they can cause one to disengage from otherwise quality time with loved ones or to be unable to sufficiently rest and recharge for the coming day. In legal practice, this disconnect may cause an attorney to lose focus on his or her work, to neglect client needs, or to act in an uncharacteristic manner – and sometimes develop a pattern of behavior that [may lead](#) to disciplinary action. Almost everyone experiences some level of problematic stress or anxiety in his or her lifetime, but there are simple techniques that can quickly and easily alleviate physiological manifestations.

“Grounding techniques” are mental and physical exercises that aid in management of stress or anxiety by deepening one’s cognizance of surroundings and creating *healthy* detachment from stressors. As recently [expounded](#) in *Psychology Today*, “Grounding techniques work by ‘grounding’ you in the present moment and pulling you away from intrusive thoughts or feelings... [distancing] yourself from [a negative] emotional experience.”

The stress of law practice and the consequent [emotional fatigue](#) put those in the legal profession at [elevated risk](#) for mental health challenges. As an individual recognizes that a negative feeling (be it worried thoughts or intense unease) or a physical symptom, like quickening heart rate, starts to become overwhelming, simple exercises can help to calm and to refocus attention on other healthy coping strategies. Grounding techniques are [particularly beneficial](#) in combatting strong pangs of stress or anxiety during a panic attack or sensation of dissociation. Ultimately, consistent practice of grounding suspends or lessens reactions to stressors and builds self-trust and self-efficacy.

*What are some basic grounding techniques helpful to lawyers?*

- **Engage your senses with the 5-4-3-2-1 technique.** One of the most common grounding methods, this [exercise](#) calls first for slow, deep breaths. After establishing a satisfying breath, identify *five* things that you see around you. These should be stationary objects such as a cup of paperclips or a painting on the wall. Next, identify *four* things that you can touch (e.g., the keys on of your computer’s keyboard or the mesh of your desk chair). Identify *three* things that you can hear (e.g., an active printer or traffic outside). Then, identify *two* things that you can smell (e.g., hand sanitizer or your lunch). Finally, identify *one* thing that you can taste (e.g., coffee or a breath mint). This and each subsequent practice may be repeated until a calmer state is reached.
- **Describe your environment in detail.** Scan the room, exploring its physical features, large and small. For example, you might notice that your pen cup holds three black pens, two blue pens, a gray mechanical pencil, one green highlighter, and one yellow highlighter. Continue to move your eyes throughout the room for as long as is needed to feel calm.
- **Do a mental scan of your body.** This [technique](#) begins by focusing attention to the top of your head. Then, slowly move your attention down your body to your toes. Acknowledge sensations felt at each point of your body.
- **Focus on your breath.** Slowly inhale through your nose, observing how your chest and stomach move as your lungs fill with air. Then, exhale carefully through your mouth. Once again, repeat this [exercise](#) as many times as is warranted.
- **Play a game of categories.** Mentally list items in a chosen category (e.g., college sports mascots or countries of South America), and see how many you can remember. Such [brain games](#) are effective in distracting the mind from anxious thoughts.
- **Play with numbers.** Like listing items within a category, number games can assist in detaching from intrusive thoughts. Try counting backward from one hundred by fours. When one number sequence is completed, move on to a similar progression, such as counting backward from one hundred by threes.
- **Visualize something you are positively anticipating, big or small.** This might include

anything from playing a board game with your child after dinner to going on an extended vacation overseas.

*How might grounding techniques be utilized most successfully?* When practicing grounding, consider a few useful tips and reminders.

- Grounding can be done discreetly at any time or place.
- Begin exercising grounding sooner rather than later. The earlier a negative mood cycle is caught, the easier it likely will be to manage.
- Keep thoughts neutral by addressing objective facts only. Avoid making qualitative judgements. For example, say to yourself, “The carpet is blue” but eschew any opinions of the carpet or the color blue.
- Retain a handy list of grounding techniques that you find work best for you. You might enter a note into your phone or other personal device or place an index card or sticky note at your desk.

When faced with mental fatigue and frequent stressors, it is easy to become anxious and overwhelmed, and attending to anything else can become a formidable challenge. However, regular practice of anxiety and stress management can support a deeper connection to the present moment and to personal and professional priorities.

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#### **LCL Executive Director Laurie Besden Advocates for “Leading with Redemption”**

[Lawyers Who Lead](#), a weekly podcast produced by Lawline, recently released a two-part interview with Laurie Besden, Executive Director of [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania](#).

In the [first episode](#), Besden recounts her own journey struggling with addiction through law school and in law practice while, in [the second](#), she expounds her subsequent journey through recovery and redemption.

Access the full podcast episodes and transcripts via the [Lawyers Who Lead website](#).

*If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health challenges or substance abuse, call LCL's confidential hotline at (888) 999-1941.*

## Weekly Leadership Insight

“

Sometimes we go on like we have  
forever...

If the pandemic taught us anything,  
it's time is limited.

It's also our greatest resource.

So be as present as you can to  
maximize simple gifts.

”

Laurie Besden

On Leading with Redemption (Part 1)



Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers is a confidential and safe resource for Pennsylvania attorneys and their family members who may be struggling with their mental health or substance use. 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. If you or someone you know is struggling, please call us. You may save a life.



**There is help, and there is hope.**



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PENNSYLVANIA

**lclpa.org | 1-888-999-1941**

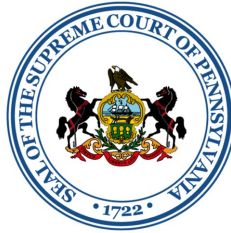
**Evaluation by a  
healthcare professional**  
**Information and literature**  
**Peer and staff support**  
**Assistance with interventions**  
**Recovery meetings**  
**Online resources and CLE**

[Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers](https://www.lclpa.org/) is a confidential assistance program for the Pennsylvania legal community and their family members. LCL may not report information about a subject attorney back to the Disciplinary Board.

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

*Around the Court*





### Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Releases New Official Photograph

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has released a new official photograph of its six Justices. Following the passing of Chief Justice Max Baer in October of this past year, the Honorable Debra Todd ascended to the position, becoming Pennsylvania's first female Chief Justice. Chief Justice Todd is joined in the portrait by Justices Christine Donohue (a former Disciplinary Board Member) and Kevin M. Dougherty in the bottom row and Justices P. Kevin Brobson, David N. Wecht, and Sallie Updyke Mundy in the top row.



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### Pennsylvania Courts Continue to Fight Human Trafficking in the Commonwealth

January is [National Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#), and the Unified Judicial System recently released a new infographic highlighting key data about human trafficking in Pennsylvania, including the total number of cases and offenses from 2017 through 2021 and the counties with the highest number trafficking offenses. During this five-year period, 1,096 human trafficking offenses were filed in the Commonwealth with over one-third of those offenses citing involuntary servitude.

Read the full [press release](#) on the Unified Judicial System's website.

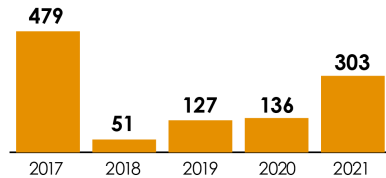
## Human Trafficking in Pennsylvania



**Human trafficking** is a type of human rights abuse where people profit from the exploitation of others – mainly through the use of **force, fraud or coercion** to manipulate victims into engaging in sex acts or labor/services in exchange for something of value. Those under age 18 who exchange sex for something of value are human trafficking victims, regardless of whether force, fraud or coercion is involved.

**259** human-trafficking **cases** were filed over the past five years.

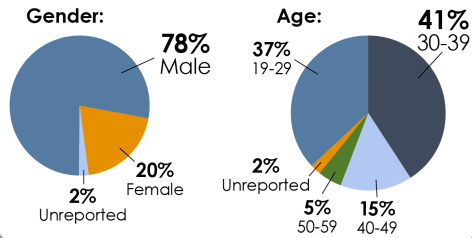
**1,096** total human-trafficking **offenses** were filed:



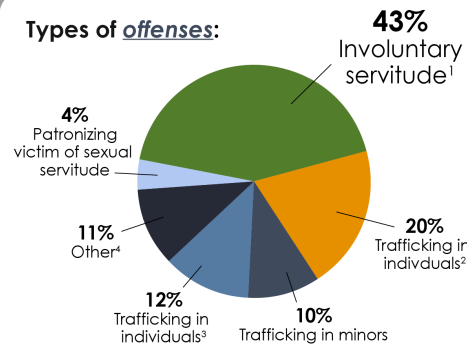
### Victims of human trafficking may:

1. Not have access to their own **travel or ID documents**
2. Not be in control of their own **financial records, money or bank account**
3. Have very few **personal possessions**
4. Work excessively **long/unusual hours** with little or no pay
5. Not able to clarify **their address/living situation**

### Demographics of defendants convicted:



### Types of **offenses**:



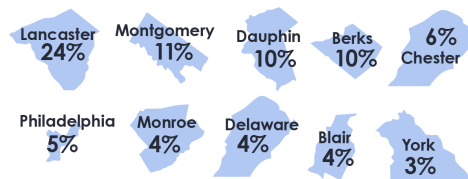
<sup>1</sup> duress through force, debt coercion, physical restraint, etc.

<sup>2</sup> recruits/entices/solicits

<sup>3</sup> benefits financially

<sup>4</sup> obstruction of justice, unlawful conduct, nonpayment of wages etc.

### Counties with highest number of human-trafficking **offenses** filed:



All human trafficking data from 1/1/2017 to 12/31/2021. Human trafficking offenses filed and disposed as convictions as recorded in Pennsylvania's Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS) and Magisterial District Judge System (MDJS), Title 18, sections 3002 (A), 3012 (A, B1 - B13), 3016, 3013 (A, A1, A2), 3011 (A, A1 - A3.B) and 3014 (1.2).

AOPC

## The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania: Making History for Over Three Hundred Years

Last year was an auspicious one for the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania which celebrated its [300<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#). The Court actually [dates back to 1684](#) as a provincial court but was formally created in the [Judiciary Act of 1722](#) along with the Courts of Common Pleas of Philadelphia, Bucks, and Chester Counties. The Court is more than seventy years older than the U.S. Supreme Court, and through its antecedent, more than a century. It was one of the first American courts to publish its opinions in bound books and to assert the power to declare legislative acts unconstitutional in *Respublica v. Duquet*, [2 Yeates 493](#) (1799). It was the first high court in any jurisdiction to have an African-American Chief Justice (Robert N. C. Nix, Jr., 1984) or a female African-American Justice (Juanita Kidd Stout, 1988).

# *From the Pennsylvania Bar Association*



## **Volunteers Needed for PBA's 2023 High School Mock Trial Program**

Volunteers are needed to watch, score, and provide helpful feedback to student competitors in the PBA Young Lawyers Division [2023 High School Mock Trial program](#). The competition officially kicked off with the release of the case materials in mid-December and will culminate with the statewide competition on March 24-25, 2023 in Harrisburg. In its fortieth year, PBA's high school mock trial program is one of the largest secondary-level academic competitions in the nation. It provides students on over 290 teams from across the Commonwealth with the opportunity to act as lawyers and witnesses in simulated civil trials before actual judges and panels of juries. Each year, the winning student team goes on to represent Pennsylvania in the national competition.

With many opportunities to volunteer at regional, district, and state levels, lawyer volunteers assist students as team advisors, scorekeepers, and regional coordinators. Please visit the PBA Young Lawyers Division [webpage](#) to learn more about how the program operates and how to volunteer.

The students and team coaches work exceptionally hard to prepare for these trials. Volunteers feel inspired by their hard work, and their time spent scoring the trials provides valuable help as students further refine their skills. The high school mock trial program is an important (and fun!) experience to better educate future generations about the American judicial system and the essential role of the courts.

Without judges and lawyers upholding the rule of law, the nation's democracy could not exist. And without the hundreds of lawyers and judges that volunteer for these mock trials, Pennsylvania's high school mock trial program could not exist. **Thank you to all who have volunteered with this program in the past. PBA invites all who are interested to get involved this year.** It is a rewarding and worthwhile investment of time and professional expertise!

*The Mock Trial Competition is one of a series of law-related and civic education programs conducted by the PBA to demystify the law for Pennsylvanians. It is funded in part by the [Pennsylvania Bar Foundation](#).*

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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 are our original source, there may be a hat tip in it for you.

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