



The
DISCIPLINARY BOARD
of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

**February
2023
Newsletter**



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From the Chair

On behalf of the Disciplinary Board, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Hon. Debra Todd on her formal [installation](#) as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. First stepping into the role this past October following the sudden passing of Chief Justice Max Baer, Chief Justice Todd became the first woman to hold this position, a landmark occasion in the history of Pennsylvania's judicial system. A champion of justice for marginalized and vulnerable Pennsylvanians, Chief Justice Todd is a longstanding pillar of integrity and prudence in both the legal community and the Commonwealth at large. I anticipate sage progress under her continued leadership.



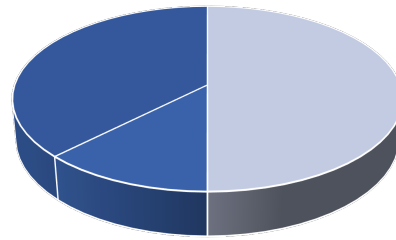
To those attorneys looking to become involved in the Board's work across the state, consider [applying](#) to serve on its volunteer Hearing Committee. Hearing Committee Members comprise an essential component of Pennsylvania's disciplinary system. I highly encourage all interested to explore the duties and expectations of Committee Members through the "Disciplinary Board News" section below.

Stay well,

Jerry M. Lehocky
Board Chair

Discipline Imposed

January 2023



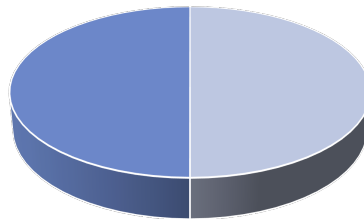
- Informal Admonition - 4
- Private Reprimand - 0
- Public Reprimand - 0
- Public Censure - 0
- Disability Inactive - 0
- Temporary Suspension - 1
- Suspension - 3
- Disbarment - 0

Temporary Suspension
[Thomas Patrick Connelly, Jr.](#)

Suspension
[Samuel Bailey, Jr.](#)
[Jin-Ho Cynn](#)
[Joseph Vaccaro](#)

Reinstatements

January 2023



- From Inactive - 2
- From Retired - 0
- From Administrative Suspension - 2
- From Disability Inactive - 0
- From Suspension - 0
- From Disbarment - 0
- Reinstatement Denied - 0

From Inactive
[Theresa de Jesus Ordonez](#)
[Timothy Andrew Wright](#)

From Administrative Suspension
[Jennifer Rosa Perez](#)
[Anne E. Walters](#)

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 panel:

[Continuing Legal Education Board](#) – 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.

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.

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

Applications are due by February 28, 2023.

Disciplinary Board News

Apply to Become a Disciplinary Board Hearing Committee Member

Annually, the Disciplinary Board is tasked with the appointment of [Hearing Committee Members](#). Duties of Hearing Committee Members include reviewing the recommended disposition of complaints as offered by the Office of Disciplinary Counsel; conducting disciplinary and reinstatement hearings, either as a three-member panel or single designated member; and preparing a written report and recommendation to the Board following disciplinary and reinstatement proceedings.

The Disciplinary Board is committed to appointing diverse Hearing Committee Members, recognizing that diversity of experience, practice area, background, race, gender, and geography is beneficial to the disciplinary process. For Hearing Committee Member positions, the Board considers applicants with at least *seven* years of relevant experience.

Applicants are required to:

- be a member in good standing of the Pennsylvania bar;
- maintain an office for the practice of law within Pennsylvania;
- be willing to participate in in-person disciplinary and reinstatement proceedings; and
- be fully-vaccinated against COVID-19 in accordance with the Board's vaccination policies.

Please review the Hearing Committee Member [duties](#) for more information and [apply](#) today!

HEARING COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Learn more today.
Applications are due March 10, 2023.



The
DISCIPLINARY BOARD
of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania



Applications are due Friday, March 10, 2023.

Disciplinary Board Attends Annual NCLDB Conference

Each year, the [National Council of Lawyer Disciplinary Boards](#) (NCLDB) holds its annual conference, bringing together disciplinary adjudicators and staff from around the country. This year's conference, held in New Orleans from February 7th-9th, featured educational sessions on myriad subjects ranging from expungement to the use of technology in the disciplinary system.

The Honorable [John L. Weimer](#), Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, delivered this year's keynote address. A volunteer firefighter, former educator, and amateur painter, Chief Justice Weimer impressed the value of diversity of thought and experience in state disciplinary systems and legal communities at large, remarking, "If you do not have diversity in your staff, you have gone to the wrong place." To adjudicators, he urged to "balance toughness with compassion" and emphasized deterrence and rehabilitation over mere punishment. Noting that consistency is key to trust in disciplinary systems, Chief Justice Weimer underscored public service and duty.



Raul Esquivel, Executive Counsel of the Office of Chief Justice John L. Weimer; John L. Weimer,

*Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court; and Jesse G. Hereda, Executive Director of the
Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania*

Three conference sessions featured members of the Pennsylvania delegation. Along with representatives of the Maryland and District of Columbia disciplinary bodies, Disciplinary Board Executive Director Jesse G. Hereda sat on a panel which explored both the challenges and opportunities presented by technology compelled by the COVID-19 pandemic and its transformation of the workplace. Special Counsel Kimberly M. Henderson expounded useful tools for managing obstructionist respondents and ensuring efficient and fair proceedings. She was joined by Aisha L. Cassis and Lucy Pittman of the District of Columbia Board on Professional Responsibility. Disciplinary Board Members David S. Senoff and Shohin H. Vance led a thought-provoking discussion on collateral estoppel within the disciplinary process.



Louisiana Supreme Court at 400 Royal Street in New Orleans

Complementing themes of week's discourse, conference participants also attended special receptions at the Louisiana Supreme Court building and the National WWII Museum. Lieutenant General Christopher F. Burne of the United States Air Force and JAG Corps led the event which included a private viewing of the Tom Hanks-produced short film "Beyond All Boundaries" and an excursion through the museum's Campaigns of Courage Pavilion. In an address to the convocation, Lieutenant General Burne reflected upon personal lessons in ethics and leadership. He recalled an indelible episode from his deployment to the Persian Gulf region in support of Operation Desert Storm, amidst the formidable environment in which he and his subordinates were positioned, that forever shaped his style of leadership.



The National WWII Museum in the Central Business District of New Orleans

The National Council of Lawyer Disciplinary Boards is a non-profit organization serving as a clearinghouse for the adjudication process of attorney discipline throughout the United States and Canada. Executive Director Hereda and Board Prothonotary Marcee D. Sloan currently serve as President-Elect and Secretary, respectively, of the NCLDB Board of Directors. Jesse Hereda led programming for this year's annual conference.

Law School Outreach

Connecting with the Next Generation of Pennsylvania Lawyers

The mission of the attorney disciplinary system is to protect clients, the public, and courts from attorney misconduct. We do this mainly by restricting the ability to practice of lawyers found to have committed serious misconduct, through the imposition of probation, suspensions, and disbarment and by warning lawyers who have committed lesser misconduct, through reprimands, admonitions, and letters of concern. Lately, we have undertaken educational efforts to assist lawyers in improving their practices and avoiding error, thereby – we hope – benefitting everyone.

One of our recent initiatives has been to address law school professional responsibility classes throughout the Commonwealth about the disciplinary system and the ethical obligations the students will face once they are admitted to practice. Over the past six months, the two of us have made joint presentations to four law schools.

Our presentations cover a range of topics. We describe the workings of the disciplinary system, and the other devices that regulate lawyer conduct, such as malpractice insurer requirements, professional association formal opinions, and court rulings on conflicts, frivolous pleadings, and attorney misconduct. We discuss what it means for the profession to be “self-regulating”: Lawyers are afforded considerable discretion to act reasonably and honestly but aggressively to advance their clients’ interests free from excessive government oversight. On the other hand, we emphasize the need for new lawyers to seek help when they confront ethical questions and challenges and to cooperate with our regulatory process.

The students have been well-taught about the Rules of Professional Conduct. They also, however, show understanding and interest about some of the ethical challenges they will face: how to run a practice, how to advance clients' rights and causes while showing due respect to the courts and adversaries, and how to respond to misbehavior by other lawyers. We've received several questions, insightful and touching, about how to help colleagues with mental health and substance problems. Unfortunately, this is no surprise. Our colleagues at Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers tell us that more than twenty-five percent of their clients are law students.

We also talk to the students about the joys of practicing law. Yes, it can be stressful, and it is always challenging. But lawyers help people. The profession allows us to do that with an independence and efficacy that few other professionals enjoy these days. Both of us, we tell the students, have confronted challenging issues of right and wrong, justice and injustice, nearly every day of our combined seventy years of practice. Meeting those challenges and solving them bring a sense of achievement that we try to convey to the students.

Our experience has filled us with optimism about the coming generation of lawyers, and we intend to continue this outreach program. We've extended the invitation to all the law schools in the Commonwealth.

Jerry M. Lehocky
Board Chair

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>February</i>		
February 21	Ashley Drue Martin	Disciplinary Hearing
<i>March</i>		
March 6 March 8	Joseph D. Lento	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>April</i>		
April 3	Anthony C. Cappuccio	Reinstatement Hearing
April 4	John T. Lynch, Jr.	Reinstatement Hearing
April 11	William J. Weiss	Disciplinary Hearing
April 12	Anthony C. Cappuccio (cont.)	Reinstatement Hearing
April 25	John P. Halfpenny	Reinstatement Hearing
<i>May</i>		
May 15	Kelley Elizabeth Clements Keller	Reinstatement Hearing
May 17 May 18	Bruce Martin Ginsburg	Disciplinary Hearing
May 22	Kelley Elizabeth Clements Keller (cont.)	Reinstatement Hearing
May 23	Richard P. Kimmins	Disciplinary & Reinstatement Consolidated Hearing
May 25	Jeffrey Michael Childs	Disciplinary Hearing
<i>June</i>		
June 7	George Paul Chada	Disciplinary Hearing
June 21 June 22	Kenneth Andrew Rubin	Reinstatement Hearing
June 27	John R. Parroccini	Disciplinary Hearing
<i>To Be Scheduled</i>		
Patrick C. Carey – Disciplinary Hearing		
Anthony Hugh Rodriques – Public Reprimand		

Articles of Interest

Top Disciplinary Board Cases of Interest of 2022

Each year, we review the cases decided by the Disciplinary Board and/or the Pennsylvania courts

and identify cases of greatest interest. Cases may be considered of interest because they raise or decide issues that cast light on ethical considerations in the practice of law, address emerging technology or practice trends, involve prominent individuals or major news in the Pennsylvania legal community, or are based on unusual or remarkable facts.

The following ten cases caught our attention:

[William H. Lynch, Jr.](#)'s problems arose from an obsession that got out of hand. After striking up a friendship and text correspondence with a woman he met at the train station, he began sending her suggestive and explicit text messages. After she indicated she was not interested in a romantic or sexual relationship but only friendship, he began a course of increasingly threatening and belligerent conduct with over ninety sexually explicit, derogatory, and profane text messages over the course of a few days. He then threatened to use his status as an attorney against her, threatening to file a legal action and to make complaints to the police and sending her a "spoliation" letter. He attempted to file three criminal complaints against her, appeared at her workplace, and reminded her he had weapons available to him. His victim filed a complaint with the police, and he was arrested the same day and freed on bail with the condition that he have no contact with his victim. Nonetheless, he sent her a card demanding that she meet with him to return gifts he had given her and attempted to telephone her in violation of the conditions of his bail. He was convicted of the misdemeanor of stalking and placed on a two-year probation after two days of incarceration. At a hearing he testified that he was remorseful but spoke only of the effects of the incident on himself, not of the impact on his victim or the wrongfulness of his conduct. The Hearing Committee recommended a suspension for one year and one day, but the Disciplinary Board urged the Supreme Court to suspend Mr. Lynch for three years, which it did.

[Jimmie Moore](#) was a senior judge of the Philadelphia Municipal Court. In 2012, he took steps to challenge U.S. Representative Robert A. Brady for the congressional seat for the 1st Congressional District. He had difficulty raising funds and accumulated a campaign debt. In February of that year, he met with Rep. Brady, who attempted to persuade him to drop his campaign and wait until Rep. Brady stepped down in two years to run for the office. Mr. Moore demanded the sum of \$120,000 to pay his campaign debt. Rep. Brady agreed to pay \$90,000 toward his debt, which was delivered through various fraudulent means. Mr. Moore did not report the transaction in his campaign reports. He was charged with and pled guilty to several Federal campaign offenses and sentenced to two years' probation. The Hearing Committee recommended that Mr. Moore be suspended from the practice of law for four years, but the Board recommended disbarment. The Supreme Court elected to suspend him for four years.

[Read all](#) top ten cases, including the matters of Richard S. Ross, Milton E. Raiford, Jay L. Yackow, John E. Toczydlowski, Richard E. Bower, Charles S. Shainberg, William R. Korey, and William James Helzlsouer.

ABA Journal Lists Top 2022 Stories

The Journal of the American Bar Association has released its [list](#) of the top ten legal news stories of 2022. The following stories got the nod:

1. [Milbank smashes the associate pay scale with yet another raise](#): Milbank announced that it is raising associate pay by \$10,000 to \$20,000, to range from \$215,000 to \$385,000.
2. [US News releases its 2023 law school rankings](#): Yale still #1 while the University of Chicago slips past Harvard to #3.
3. [Law schools overperformed on the bar exam](#): Some who are not big names surprised.

4. [Judge disparaged lawyer, apparently unaware of livestream](#): Don't assume the mic is off. On the other hand, maybe don't say things like that even when it is.
 5. [Law grad passes bar on twentieth try](#): Twenty tries over thirty years for 1985 graduate, but he still has not been admitted to practice.
 6. [Backlash follows lawyer's recorded celebratory comments about how he won his case](#): See comment to #4.
 7. [Law firms came 'dangerously close' to losing almost a quarter of their associates in 2021, report says](#): 23.2%, to be exact.
 8. [After Davis Polk sets new bar for associate raises, Cravath ups the ante](#): Maybe this explains #7.
 9. [Three law schools dinged for low bar pass rates](#): The flip side of #3. One school's pass rate dropped by 15%.
 10. ["Shameful" insular cases should be overruled, Gorsuch says, as SCOTUS rules against Puerto Rico resident](#): Did you know Puerto Rico's residents can't get social security disability benefits even if they paid the taxes? Justice Gorsuch didn't mince words.
-

Minnesota Suspends Combative Lawyer

The Supreme Court of Minnesota suspended a lawyer with a pattern of losing his temper and engaging in loud and profane arguments with court personnel.

[Peter James Nickitas](#) was no stranger to the disciplinary system, having received three admonitions and two suspensions for his prior behavior. When he came up on disciplinary charges in two cases, the court was not inclined to cut him much slack.

In one case, Nickitas represented a client who was seeking to proceed under an in forma pauperis (IFP) application. His client had filed an IFP application previously. Nickitas telephoned the court and spoke to a staff member who informed him that a new IFP form would be needed. Nickitas "became belligerent and used obscene and offensive language while describing his frustrations with the court's process." He demanded that the court operations supervisor speak to the judge assigned to the case. The court operations supervisor contacted the judge's law clerk, who confirmed that a new application to proceed IFP would be required. When the court operations supervisor called Nickitas to inform him, he again used offensive language and abruptly ended the conversation. Nickitas subsequently filed a supplemental application which the court granted.

In another case, Nickitas again represented a client seeking to proceed under the IFP procedure. The client was also facing a filing deadline. For some reason the client was reluctant to fill out the full IFP form and chose to rely solely on his eligibility for medical assistance. Nickitas advised the client that more information would be needed, but failed to warn him of the urgency of the application created by the filing deadline. A judge denied the application for insufficient information but gave the client two weeks to submit the information. Both Nickitas and the client testified that they did not receive the order denying the application and granting the extension. The day after the extension expired, Nickitas called the civil division office to inquire about the status of the application. While speaking with the lead worker, Nickitas became irate and began screaming accusations and profanity at the worker so loudly that her supervisor could hear him from ten feet

away. When transferred to the supervisor, Nickitas continued to scream and use profane language, including using disparaging, obscene, and profane language toward the judge. After Nickitas hung up, the supervisor consulted the judge, who decided to grant him an extra week to provide the information, but directed that the supplemental application be directed to her rather than pass through the usual channels. Nickitas submitted a revised application, but also sent the Chief Judge a three-page letter about the matter which the Chief Judge viewed as “aggressive”. The signing judge entered an order granting the IFP application. Apparently unaware of this, Nickitas sent the signing judge a letter, copied to the Chief Judge, accusing the signing judge of engaging in discrimination, of which the Chief Judge stated he had “never seen a letter as inappropriate or disrespectful”. The Supreme Court found that there was no basis for the accusations of discrimination.

The Supreme Court found that Nickitas had engaged in misconduct including incompetently representing a client; using abusive and obscene language and conduct toward court staff; knowingly making false statements about the qualifications or integrity of a judge; and attempting to improperly pressure the court. It found aggravating factors in his prior disciplinary history for similar conduct, his experience as an attorney, and his lack of remorse. It rejected his argument that his work for legal aid was a mitigating factor. The Court suspended him indefinitely with no right to apply for reinstatement for 120 days and assessed \$900 in costs.

Alex Jones Attorney Suspended for Discovery Leaks

In August, many observers were surprised during the trial of the defamation case by families of the Sandy Hook school massacre against controversial radio host Alex Jones. Counsel for the plaintiffs examined Jones on statements he made in emails. Jones was visibly taken aback by the fact that opposing counsel possessed his emails. It was revealed the documents had been released to plaintiff’s counsel by his own attorneys without Jones’s knowledge.

But the careless disclosure was not limited to Jones’s emails. His counsel also released confidential medical information about some of the plaintiffs in violation of a protective order. This carelessness resulted in a decision by a Connecticut judge [suspending](#) the license of one of Jones’s attorneys.

In a [memorandum decision](#) issued January 5, 2023, Judge Barbara Bellis suspended lawyer Norm Pattis for his handling of the “sensitive discovery materials.” Pattis’s associate sent the documents to another attorney who passed them on to Texas counsel F. Andino Reynal. Reynal’s firm sent plaintiff’s counsel a link to the evidence. Realizing the disclosure was improper, plaintiff’s counsel notified Reynal and gave him ten days to deactivate the link, but he failed to claw back the evidence.

[Judge Bellis found](#) that Pattis allowed disclosure of the protected information and “did so carelessly, taking no steps to designate the materials as protected by court order, mark them as confidential, or inform the recipients that they were in possession of sensitive and protected documents...” She added, “Litigants routinely turn over their most private and sensitive information to opposing counsel who are total strangers and reasonably expect that opposing counsel will safeguard the information without even the need for a protective order. Indeed, our civil justice system is premised on the trustworthiness of lawyer – officers of the court.”

Judge Bellis found mitigating factors, including Pattis’s lack of prior discipline or dishonest motive, but also aggravating factors including his substantial experience, lack of diligence in an affidavit produced for the court, failure to acknowledge his conduct was wrongful and the vulnerability of the victims. She ordered that Pattis be suspended from the practice of law for six months. Pattis

has stated his intention to appeal.

Where Are Ye, Ye?

California law firm Greenberg Traurig has had enough of representing rapper Ye, formerly known as Kanye West and Yeezy, but there's just one problem: they [can't find him](#) to serve a notice of withdrawal.

The law firm is seeking to withdraw from representing the mercurial musician in a copyright case after Ye made antisemitic comments, including a tweet that he wants to go "death con 3 on Jewish people" and praised Hitler on the Alex Jones (This is certainly the first time in this publication's history we have referenced Alex Jones in not one, but two, stories.) *Infowars* show.

The firm advised the court that it had attempted to serve Ye through one of his representatives, which efforts "were not fruitful," by calling him at his last known cellphone number, which has apparently been deactivated and by a process server. The firm is seeking an extension of time for service and leave to serve by publication and by sending letters to his last known addresses. According to [Above the Law](#), Greenberg is the fifth Biglaw firm to withdraw from representation of the embattled celebrity.

Attorney Well-Being

Why Does the Practice of Law Tend to Challenge Mental Health?

A significant trove of data collected since 2016 indicates that the prevalence of mental health disorders and problematic alcohol use are significantly higher (upwards of two- and three-fold higher) among the legal profession compared to the general population and even when compared to other highly educated professionals outside of the legal field.

It appears that for many, these issues develop in law school and are exacerbated by the significant stressors of legal practice. Students who begin law school with no major pre-existing mental health conditions frequently develop mental health challenges before their 3L year and do so at rates higher than other graduate students.

For legal professionals with pre-existing mental health issues (such as depression, anxiety, an eating disorder, etc.), and those in recovery from mental health and/or substance use disorders, the stressors of law school and legal practice frequently exacerbate these conditions. It is common for individuals to self-soothe or 'self-medicate' symptoms of stress, anxiety, attention deficit disorder, and many other mental health issues with alcohol and other substances or maladaptive behaviors (e.g., excessive gambling, eating, shopping, etc.). Furthermore, lawyers in their first ten years of practice experience the highest rates of problematic alcohol use and mental health struggles as compared to their peers with more practice experience.

The practice of law tends to attract traditionally 'Type A' high achievers with perfectionistic traits who often struggle to meet their own self-imposed and often impossibly high standards, which in turn may lead to self-defeating thinking, anxiety, and depression. Law school and legal practice are often hypercompetitive, conducive to black and white, 'all-or-nothing' or 'win-lose' thinking and adversarial in nature. Lawyers often develop a degree of skepticism or cynicism both as a result of

practicing law and in order to successfully anticipate all potential negative outcomes while representing their clients.

It is particularly challenging to 'leave' this kind of thinking and approach behind at the office when heading home each day without letting it bleed into and negatively affect one's personal life, mental and physical health, and relationships over time.

Legal professionals often embrace self-reliance to an extreme, work long hours under significant pressure, and report low levels of autonomy and self-efficacy as well as exceedingly elevated levels of stress and burnout. Lawyers are trained and paid to have 'all the answers' and to solve other people's problems which often makes it challenging for such professionals to reach out for help for themselves, often falsely believing they can just 'suck it up' and fix their mental health issues on their own. Fear of damage to reputation and standing and the stigma associated with these issues make it even harder for lawyers to admit that they may need support.

These are but a few contributing factors to the high levels of mental health and alcohol use disorders found among lawyers. The historical culture of law practice and its permissiveness towards frequent alcohol use are significant contributors to the development of problematic drinking as well. The results of a [2016 landmark survey](#) of over 12,000 practicing attorneys in the U.S. revealed that up to 21% of all attorneys and 32% of those attorneys under age 30 exhibited at-risk, problematic drinking with possible dependence based on medically-accepted screening tests, compared to rates of only 12% found in other highly-educated professionals assessed by the same criteria. A startling 28% of lawyers met criteria for the diagnosis of depression (vs. 8.4% prevalence in the general population per the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health), 19% met criteria for an anxiety disorder, and a disconcerting 11.5% reported having suicidal thoughts at some point in their career.

Jennifer C. Zampogna, M.D.

Director of Operations, Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania

Originally published in 2022, this article is part of a [series](#) produced in partnership with [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania](#), exploring lawyer well-being as misconduct prevention. Topics include challenges to mental health, stress and burnout, preventative strategies, employer support, and seeking support through LCL.

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

“

Am I perfect every day?

Absolutely not.

Progress, not perfection.

”

Laurie Besden

On Leading with Redemption (Part 2)



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.



LAWYERS CONCERNED FOR LAWYERS
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



Hon. Debra Todd Formally Installed as Pennsylvania's First Female Chief Justice

On January 20, 2023, the Honorable Debra Todd was sworn in as the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania's first female Chief Justice. The ceremony was held at the Omni William Penn Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh.

Acknowledging the significance of her installation, Chief Justice Todd noted her early dream of becoming a lawyer and "the strong and determined women who paved the way". She affirmed, "Today I share this historic moment with all Pennsylvanians, especially our children whose hopes and dreams will shape the future and make the world a place where nothing is out of reach. I realize I'm the first female Chief Justice, but I know I won't be the last."

A Lawrence County native, Chief Justice Todd earned her J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and her LL.M. from the University of Virginia School of Law. She commenced her legal career as an in-house litigation attorney for U.S. Steel Corporation before transitioning to trial practice focused on complex civil litigation. Starting in 2000, she served as a Judge in the Superior Court of Pennsylvania and first was elected to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 2007.

Visit the Unified Judicial System's website for more information about [Chief Justice Debra Todd](#) and to view the full [press release](#) on her installation.



SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA
Pennsylvania Interest on
Lawyer Trust Accounts Board

The IOLTA Board is pleased to share with Pennsylvania's legal community its [2022 Annual Report](#). In support of its mission, nearly \$29 million in grant funds financed the delivery of free civil legal aid to low-income Pennsylvanians in 2022.

The 2022 Annual Report features client stories from KidsVoice Pennsylvania, Neighborhood Legal Services, and Penn State Law as well as a testimonial from an attorney at Northwestern Legal Services about the positive impact of the Loan Repayment Assistance Program on her ability to work in public service.

The IOLTA Board strongly encourages law firms to patronize [Platinum Leader Banks](#) for their IOLTA accounts. Platinum Leader Banks voluntarily pay a premium interest rate on IOLTA accounts, thereby increasing funding available for civil legal aid.

The IOLTA Board is extremely grateful for the voluntary financial support received from members of the private bar. A list of donors begins on [page 20](#) of the report.

To learn more about the IOLTA Board, please visit paiolta.org or contact the IOLTA office directly at (717) 238-2001.

From the Pennsylvania Bar Association



It's Easy: Read Aloud and Help Educate Young Students About Our Constitution and Judicial System

The [Pennsylvania Bar Association](#) and [The Rendell Center](#) are partnering to recruit lawyers and judges to read aloud to students in grades 2-5 during the month of February in celebration of Black History Month.

Interested in volunteering? It's simple and takes only 30-45 minutes. Choose one of the available books provided electronically. Read from the comfort of your office through a Zoom connection with students; staff will assist with technology. Use the non-partisan lesson guide and discussion questions provided by the Rendell Center to converse with students about the chosen book, our Constitution, the judicial system, and the Rule of Law. In-person classroom visits are an option for those in connection with a local school.

Attorneys and judges who have, in the past, read to students through this program have found it to be a rewarding and positive experience. Please [register](#) via The Rendell Center's website to arrange a virtual or in-person classroom visit.

This opportunity also will be offered in March in honor of Women's History Month and in May for Law Day celebrations.

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.

Resources

[Pending Cases](#)

[Recent Cases](#)

[Case Research Collection](#)

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[Rules](#)

[Search Opinions](#)

[FAQs – For the Public](#)

[FAQs – For Attorneys](#)

[Pro Bono](#)

[Annual Report](#)

[PA CLE Board](#)

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