



The
DISCIPLINARY BOARD
of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

September
2025
Newsletter



The Keystone Lex

From the Chair

Beginning this new season, I would like to take time to thank all Pennsylvania attorneys who timely completed their 2025-2026 Annual Attorney Registration. Coming to the end of another successful registration cycle, I would also like to extend my gratitude to Disciplinary Board staff who again executed a polished registration process, no small task.



As law schools, faculty, and students settle into a new semester, I wish success to the next generation of hopeful Pennsylvania lawyers and those who guide them toward prudent, ethical, and principled legal practice. Throughout the past few academic years, Disciplinary Board Members and staff have been honored to connect with law students, speaking about the attorney discipline system as well as the ethical obligations that new lawyers will face once admitted to practice. The Board considers it both a privilege and responsibility to invest in the future of the legal profession and underscores thoughtful ethics education and misconduct prevention before disciplinary action.

Each year, we observe September as [Suicide Prevention Awareness Month](#). Despite increasing recognition of the high rates of depression throughout the legal profession, too few are knowledgeable about suicide prevention and overall care for our mental health. It is vital that we not only care for our own mental health and well-being but that we also are informed on the [warning signs](#) that a loved one or colleague may be considering suicide. The Board is grateful for Pennsylvania's participation in the national research project on lawyer mental health led by lawyer behavioral health and well-being specialist Patrick Krill. On behalf of the Board, I thank all Pennsylvania attorneys who generously volunteered their time and sincerity to this project – one that will help to serve our profession for years to come.

No one is alone in his or her struggle. There are countless resources and services available for those who need help. Pennsylvania is fortunate to have [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers](#) as a key support and ally. In addition to LCL's confidential 24/7 hotline at 1-888-999-1941, they offer a multitude of resources to all Pennsylvania lawyers, judges, law students, and family members of legal professionals in need of assistance.

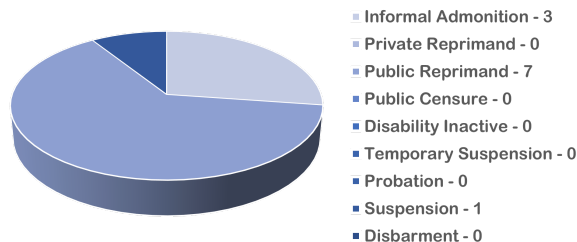
Take care of yourself — this month and always.

With gratitude,

David S. Senoff
Board Chair

Discipline Imposed

August 2025



Public Reprimand

[Alexander Campbell Boose](#)

[Michael Bruce Goodman](#)

[Erik Mark Helbing](#)

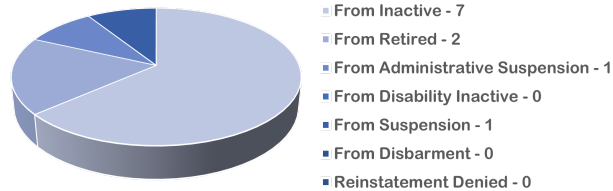
Suspension

[Lisa Ann Johnson](#)

[David Michael Kaplan](#)
[Joseph Dominic Pometto](#)
[Albert Green Reese, Jr.](#)
[Gregory W. Swank](#)

Reinstatements

August 2025



From Inactive

[John I. Blanck, Jr.](#)
[Matthew Alton Cartwright](#)
[Meghan Anne Gorman](#)
[Sandy Jainauth-Barone](#)
[Quyen Tuyet Le](#)
[Colleen Flynn Shanahan](#)
[Justine Noelle Stefanelli](#)

From Retired

[Darien J. Covelens](#)
[Sandra Lee Zell](#)

From Administrative Suspension

[Adam Edward Delph](#)

From Suspension

[Jimmie Moore](#)

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.

Disciplinary Board News

2025-2026 Annual Attorney Registration Summary

Annual Attorney Registration opened on May 1st to over 75,000 attorneys who were eligible (and required) to complete annual registration by July 1st. By the July 1st deadline, nearly eighty-six percent of attorneys had completed their registration. Prior to the assessment of the first late fee on July 17th, ninety-seven percent of attorneys had complied. Prior to the assessment of the second late fee on August 2nd, over ninety-eight percent of attorneys had completed the registration process.

Throughout the registration season, numerous email reminders are sent to attorneys with an outstanding requirement at the time of email distribution. These reminder emails (sent from PAAttorneyRegistration@pacourts.us) continue to be sent until an attorney's registration is **complete** or until the Supreme Court Order for Administrative Suspension becomes effective. Emails are sent to various groupings, 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 (first time completing annual registration).

In addition to the above-noted email reminders, a postcard reminder was mailed during the week of July 1st to over 11,700 attorneys. It is crucial that all Pennsylvania attorneys ensure that [current contact information](#) is on file with the Disciplinary Board.

On August 13th, a Supreme Court Order was issued for Administrative Suspension of the remaining noncompliant attorneys. Prior to the effective date of the Order, attorneys can complete their registration and thus be removed from the list of those to be administratively suspended. On September 12, 2025, the remaining 317 unregistered attorneys were administratively suspended for continued failure to comply.

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

REMINDER: Accounts on the Court's UJS Portal are separately maintained from the information on an attorney's file with the Board. To update your attorney file outside of annual registration, please visit the Board's [website](#) for more information. To update your UJS Portal Account information, please visit the Manage my Account page on the [UJS Portal](#).

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.

September		
September 22	Mikel Peter Eggert	Reinstatement Hearing
September 24	Daryl Alan Yount (<i>cont.</i>)	Disciplinary Hearing
September 26	Paul Andrew Raymond Stewart (<i>cont.</i>)	Disciplinary Hearing
September 29	Bradley Adam Winnick	Reinstatement Hearing
October		
October 14 at 10:00 am	David Tevis Shulick	Oral Argument
October 14 at 10:45 am	Richard P. Joseph	Oral Argument
October 27	Tyler Alan Lindquist	Disciplinary Hearing
October 28	John McDanel	Disciplinary Hearing
October 30	Arkady Rayz (<i>cont.</i>)	Disciplinary Hearing
November		
November 17-18	John W. Pauciulo (<i>cont.</i>)	Disciplinary Hearing
November 20	Bruce K. Warren, Jr.	Disciplinary Hearing
December		
December 4	Edward James Kaushas, 2 nd	Disciplinary Hearing
December 9-11	Ryan A. Mergl (<i>cont.</i>)	Disciplinary Hearing
December 16	Jesse J. White	Reinstatement Hearing
January		
January 7	Amy Lee Thomas	Disciplinary Hearing
February		
February 23-24	Jeffrey Larkin Wertz	Disciplinary Hearing

CDC Corner

In Matter of Cappuccio: Reinstatement and the Keller Threshold

The most recent of the Supreme Court's precedential disciplinary decisions is *Matter of Cappuccio*, 338 A.3d 115 (Pa. 2025), a reinstatement case. It is the first precedential opinion from the Court to discuss application of the *Keller* threshold standard where the issue was contested. See *ODC v Keller*, 506 A.2d 872 (Pa. 1986).

The Court disbarred Cappuccio in 2012, retroactive to 2009, for his criminal convictions of endangering the welfare of children, corruption of minors, and furnishing liquor to minors. *ODC v. Cappuccio*, 48 A.3d 1231 (Pa. 2012). Cappuccio was the Deputy Chief District Attorney in Bucks County at the time of his offense and a mentor in a church youth program. The evidence showed that over an eighteen-month period, he furnished three teenage boys with beer and smoked marijuana with them. After one of the boys turned sixteen, Cappuccio started a sexual relationship with him. The parents trusted Cappuccio with their sons in part because of his status as an ADA. The Court cited his holding of public office as the factor which warranted increasing his sanction from a five-year suspension to disbarment.

At Cappuccio's reinstatement hearing in 2023, the Hearing Committee found that Cappuccio had proven an exemplary case of rehabilitation and remorse and recommended reinstatement. 338 A.3d at 125. The Board did not disagree about Cappuccio's rehabilitation but concluded, relying on *Keller*, that Cappuccio's misconduct in 2008 was "so egregious that he should be forever barred from the practice of law" and recommended against reinstatement. *Id.* at 123.

In *Keller*, the Supreme Court instituted a threshold requirement for attorneys seeking reinstatement from disbarment: "whether the magnitude of the breach of trust would permit the resumption of practice without a detrimental effect upon the integrity and standing of the bar or the administration of justice nor subversive of the public interest." 506 A.2d at 875. If the attorney cannot clear the *Keller* threshold, he never can be reinstated. Only disbarred attorneys face this threshold requirement; suspended attorneys do not.

The Supreme Court granted reinstatement to Cappuccio. The Court observed that only once in the forty years since *Keller* has it imposed a permanent bar against reinstatement, in *In re Phillips*, 801 A.2d 1208 (Pa. 2002)(non-precedential order). Phillips was a former prosecutor who had been convicted in federal court of conspiring while in private practice with others, including a judge, to fix cases through bribery. 338 A.3d at 134.

All reinstatement decisions are intensely fact-bound, and *Cappuccio* is no different, but three important principles emerge from the *Cappuccio* opinion.

First, the Court clarified that there is no *per se* rule that attorneys who commit misconduct while in public office are forever barred from practicing law. *Id.* This is consistent with the Court's rejection of any *per se* sanction standards. *E.g.*, *ODC v. Altman*, 228 A.3d 508, 519 (Pa. 2020).

Second, the Court distinguished *Cappuccio* from *Phillips* principally on the grounds that Cappuccio's misconduct "did not involve the same level of intertwinement with his legal employment." 338 A.3d at 135. Unlike Phillips, Cappuccio did not use his position as an officer of the court or a public official to try to get away with his crimes. *Id.*

Finally, after holding that Cappuccio cleared the *Keller* threshold, the Court discussed the [Rule 218 of the Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement](#) requirements for reinstatement. Many opinions and Board reports emphasize the remorse and rehabilitation an attorney must show to win reinstatement. Here, the Court cited as evidence of remorse and rehabilitation Cappuccio's statements showing appreciation of his misconduct and the damage it caused, his engagement in treatment and community service, and tangible acts of rehabilitation, such as his voluntary assistance to law enforcement and to other offenders to prevent misconduct like his. *Id.* at 121, 137-38. This discussion provides guidance to reinstatement petitioners on how to satisfy Rule 218.

Thomas J. Farrell
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

Articles of Interest

Pittsburgh Lawyer Suspended for Incompetence

A Pittsburgh lawyer was suspended after the Disciplinary Board found that numerous errors and failures in litigation before the Pennsylvania Environmental Hearing Board resulted from incompetence and lack of familiarity with that agency's procedures and requirements rather than neglect or dishonesty.

[Lisa Ann Johnson](#)'s disciplinary case arose out of litigation in a single case before the PA Department of Environmental Protection and the PA Environmental Hearing Board. The Disciplinary Board found that she undertook, on a pro bono basis, a complex water quality case on behalf of a lifelong friend from the rural community in which she grew up. She had reservations about handling litigation due to her lack of litigation experience and disclosed this to her clients. She made efforts to retain counsel to assist in the matter early on but was not successful.

She was unable to resolve the matter and, after a year of working with the Department of Environmental Protection, filed a Notice of Appeal with the Environmental Hearing Board ("EHB"). She had never engaged in litigation before, had never practiced before the EHB, and was unfamiliar with its procedures. Over the following year and a half, she attempted to litigate this complex case before the EHB but failed to adequately prepare herself to do so competently, failed to conduct discovery or file appropriate documents, and made numerous false statements. Many of these statements resulted from her misunderstanding of the facts, but she continued to assert them after her mistakes were called to her attention. She also filed motions to disqualify opposing counsel and the hearing judge that were not supported by the evidence. The Disciplinary Board found that her conduct in the litigation violated seven of the Rules of Professional Conduct, including ones involving frivolous matters, false statements of fact, and conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice. But it found that most of the violations arose out of incompetence in violation of [Rule of Professional Conduct 1.1](#). She also violated [Pennsylvania Rule of Disciplinary Enforcement 402\(c\)](#) by publicly revealing a disciplinary complaint filed by her client against opposing counsel at a point where it was not public.

Johnson admitted that she knew she lacked the experience to litigate such a complex matter and that her actions were driven by her emotions and perception that her clients were suffering, and that their health and clean water were at stake. Her credibility was bolstered by her personal connection as a lifelong friend to one of the clients and credible testimony that they could find no other lawyer to help them. The Board found mitigation in the fact that she took on the representation pro bono with the goal of obtaining clean, potable water for her clients. She continued to deny that any of the statements she and her clients made were false although the Board found they were not supported by credible evidence. The Board noted that she subsequently litigated a complex matter before the EHB competently with the assistance of co-counsel and that she had recognized the pattern of overzealous, emotional approach to the litigation as inappropriate and learned from the experience.

After analyzing mitigating and aggravating factors and reviewing prior disciplinary cases, the majority of the Disciplinary Board concluded that a suspension for one year was the appropriate measure of discipline. One member submitted a dissenting statement, joined by two others, citing numerous mitigating factors and recommending a suspension for six months. A second dissenting statement argued that Johnson had not fully grasped the extent of her misconduct and recommended that she be suspended for one year and one day which would require her to demonstrate her rehabilitation in a reinstatement proceeding.

Upon review of the majority and dissenting recommendations, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania suspended Johnson for a period of one year with six months to be served and the remaining suspension stayed in favor of a six-month probation.

Of Dogs and Inanimate Objects: North Carolina Lawyer Enjoined for Bizarre Filings, Animal Shelter Incursion

A North Carolina court entered a Temporary Restraining Order barring a lawyer from practicing law while disciplinary proceedings are pending, citing evidence including that she filed pleadings naming buildings as parties and entered an animal shelter on false pretenses trying to get a

client's dogs back.

A judge of the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division entered the [order](#) against lawyer Taylor Dant on the application of the North Carolina State Bar. The Findings of Fact stated that Dant filed a series of lawsuits against her former employer, McMillion and McMillion Law, LLC. After the first two were dismissed and she filed a third, the Defendants moved for sanctions which the judge informed the parties he would grant. A few hours later, Dant sent the judge an unsolicited, lengthy, and largely incoherent email. In her email, along with rehashing several aspects of the McMillion cases, Dant discussed matters wholly unrelated to the merits of the cases. The judge then issued an order dismissing the third case and prohibiting Dant from filing any future lawsuits arising out of the core facts of the cases.

In another case, she represented a client from whom 150 dogs had been seized and who was facing animal cruelty charges. At one point, the judge entered an Order for Disposition of Evidence that afforded the client a two-week window during which she or her designee could travel to the shelter and view the dogs, after which point the dogs would be released from evidence in the criminal case and eligible for adoption. Dant then appeared at the shelter wearing medical scrubs and rubber gloves and informed the director of the shelter that she had a subpoena authorizing her to inspect the entire shelter including outbuildings, storage units, and vehicles, and take two of the dogs with her. The director stated that she could view the dogs as the court order allowed but could not inspect the shelter or take any dogs with her; Dant left following this assertion. Court concluded that the "subpoena" was specious and unenforceable.

Dant filed another case in the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina by a 130-page Complaint against over sixty defendants, four of which were buildings including two courthouses, a city annex, and an apartment complex. The Court noted that as inanimate objects, buildings lack any legal personhood or capacity to be sued. The complaint alleged a state-wide conspiracy against her and her clients while making reference to alleged human trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, car manufacturer Vinfast's CEO, the Bissell Pet Foundation, and the North Carolina Board of Elections. The Court noted that the complaint showed "a noticeable increase in incomplete thoughts, sentence fragments, and, at times, the wholesale abandonment of the structural conventions that generally govern writing."

Based on this pattern of conduct, the Court concluded that Dant's ongoing misconduct demonstrates that she may have "a mental and/or physical condition which significantly impairs her professional judgment, performance, or competence as an attorney" that poses a significant risk of harm to clients, the public and the administration of justice.

North Carolina does not have a procedure like [Pennsylvania Rule of Disciplinary Enforcement 301\(d\)](#) which allows for the temporary suspension of an attorney on disability grounds before a full hearing and adjudication of disability, so North Carolina law allows a judge to use equitable powers to bar an attorney from practicing on an interim basis. The Court invoked that power to enjoin Dant from practicing while the disciplinary inquiry is pending.

Dant [told](#) WRAL News in a text, "I have a law degree, multiple law licenses, and I'm an attorney. Why would I hand a subpoena and pretend to be a veterinarian when the people there know exactly who I am, as we've met in court before. Nobody pretended to be a veterinarian, why would we?"

Knock, Knock: North Carolina ADA Reprimanded for Late Night Raid on Neighbor

An Assistant District Attorney in North Carolina was reprimanded after a late-night inebriated call on a neighbor, supposedly in search of illegal drugs.

The Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar [issued](#) a reprimand against Wake County attorney Adam M. Everett. The Committee found that Everett, who was employed as an Assistant District Attorney at the Wake County District Attorney's Office, knocked on the door of a neighbor in his Raleigh apartment building at 1:00 am, accusing the neighbors of using and selling marijuana. He had been drinking alcohol and was impaired at the time. He also wore a pistol in a holster. He informed the neighbors he worked at the District Attorney's office, requested information about their drug use, and demanded to come in and conduct a search for illegal drugs. When they refused him entry, he threatened to obtain a search warrant.

The Grievance Committee did not specify what Rules of Professional Conduct this conduct

violated but issued a reprimand and warned him not to repeat the conduct.

Digging the Dirt: Court Staffers Forced to Recover Files from Garbage Dump

However badly your day has gone, be thankful you were not working for the New Orleans Clerk of Criminal District Court.

A furor arose in the city's legal community when photographs [were published showing](#) court employees wading ankle-deep through a garbage dump, trying to retrieve court records that were mistakenly discarded and deposited in the dump with other garbage.

Recriminations flew quickly. Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry [ordered](#) a Louisiana State police investigation, and Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill demanded an explanation from the Clerk of Courts. Clerk of Criminal District Court Darren Lombard in turn blamed city officials, noting that due to a lack of record storage space, records had been housed in trailers and containers due to "longstanding absence of a secure, dedicated Clerk of Court storage facility." He charged that employees of the Department of Public Works had moved and subsequently disposed of the records. He dispatched court employees to recover what they could and said they discovered an entire container filled with official Clerk records had been dumped into a debris field and mixed with general trash. Lombard said, "Documents were strewn across the yard, caught in the wind, and scattered beyond the secured perimeter."

Joe Threat, the New Orleans chief administrative officer, [told NOLA.com](#) that the city has entered into a lease to buy agreement for a new site to store all court documents.

Attorney Well-Being

Secondary Trauma: The Impact of Client Woes on Lawyers' Health

Many articles have been published detailing how high-stress an occupation the practice of law can be, [including by the PA Disciplinary Board](#). The danger is especially great for lawyers at risk of secondary trauma – vicarious damage suffered by lawyers representing people going through experiences of great suffering.

A recent article in the *ABA Journal* [discusses](#) the effects of secondary trauma. The article refers to a [2003 study](#), reported in the *Pace Law Review*, which found that, compared with mental health providers and social services workers, attorneys demonstrated significantly higher levels of secondary traumatic stress and burnout.

The article relates the stories of lawyers who suffered secondary trauma when their clients were gravely injured. One was a prosecutor who offered a woman entry into the Witness Protection System in exchange for testimony against her abusive husband. The husband tapped her calls and maimed and injured the woman horribly. The stress and guilt the lawyer experience led to serious health problems that required surgery, and she left the prosecutor's office to follow a less stressful career in insurance defense.

Another lawyer represented a woman and her grandson who suffered severe injuries when struck by a driver fleeing police pursuit. The woman needed a leg amputation, and her grandson suffered disfiguring scars. The city denied liability for the injuries, and the case was difficult and stressful to litigate. Finally, the lawyer's wife told him he needed to find a way to distance himself from his emotional involvement in the litigation and be present for his family. He scaled back his practice in order to recommit to his family.

Another lawyer recalled the impact of a case where a man crossing the street was struck by a car, fell back, and hit his head on the pavement resulting in traumatic brain injury. The man couldn't remember his wife or his children, and he was unable to care for himself. Less than two years later, the man died. The case so unnerved the lawyer that he needed therapy to recover from it.

[Emily Lewis](#), a criminal justice program managing attorney with the Animal Legal Defense Fund in Portland, Oregon, observes that the accumulation of trauma across multiple cases can be especially damaging.

The article discusses approaches lawyers suffering secondary trauma from their emotionally disturbing cases can take, such as therapy, meditation, breathing, music, and exercise approaches to relieve the stress and refocus the lawyer on a healthy state of mind. It is crucial for lawyers to understand that such methods are also important *preventative* practices that can help anyone to maintain strong mental health and well-being. Maintaining healthy boundaries and increasing emotional stamina can help to fortify legal professionals from burnout and secondary trauma, protecting both personal and professional lives.

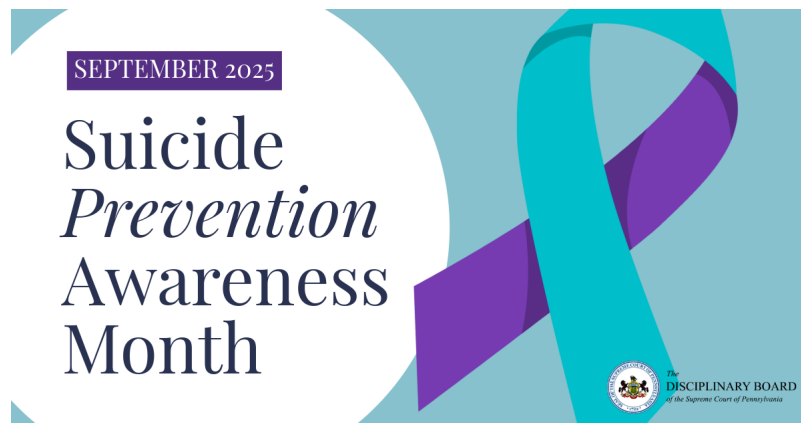
September Is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, and despite high rates of depression throughout the legal community, far too few are educated about mental health and suicide prevention. Thankfully, there are numerous resources tailored to the unique experiences of the legal community. Our friends at [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers](#) (LCL) provide a confidential hotline at **1-888-999-1941** open to all Pennsylvania lawyers, judges, law students, and family members of legal professionals in need of support. Among their offered resources and services are:

- General information, resources, and free literature;
- Referral to a qualified healthcare provider for a free and confidential consultation and diagnosis;
- Development of a personalized treatment plan, if indicated, by a healthcare professional;
- Assistance with treatment admissions;
- Peer support from a recovering law student or lawyer who has faced and overcome similar mental health or substance use challenges;
- Resource coordination and ongoing support by LCL staff; and
- Information on lawyer- and law student-only support groups.

Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it is often preventable. Knowing the warning signs for suicide can save lives. Learn about [behaviors that may indicate](#) that someone is thinking about suicide via the National Institute of Mental Health website.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at "988" immediately. Consider adding the lifeline (988) to your phone now; it could save a life later.



Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers' Brian S. Quinn Featured on Pennsylvania Bar Association's Law in the Family

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers Education and Outreach Coordinator, Brian S. Quinn, Esq., was recently featured on the Pennsylvania Bar Association's *Law in the Family* podcast. Quinn discusses "the many stresses of the legal practice, while injecting his own personal experiences and unique perspective, and how LCL can help those in the legal profession and their family members in distress."

Find this episode of *Law in the Family* on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), or [Amazon Music](#).

Pennsylvania Bar Association
Family Law Section

Law in the Family

PODCAST





Episode 56 - How To Help Lawyers With Mental Health/Substance Use Challenges
 Guest: Brian Quinn
 Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania
 Camp Hill, PA

Explore the Disciplinary Board's Lawyer Well-Being Webpage

The Disciplinary Board's "[Lawyer Well-Being](https://padisciplinaryboard.org/for-attorneys/well-being)" webpage connects Pennsylvania attorneys with pertinent resources, [articles](#), events, and CLE opportunities to better understand and support their mental health and well-being. To access the Board's "Lawyer Well-Being" page, visit padisciplinaryboard.org/for-attorneys/well-being.

LAWYER WELL-BEING

Connect to available resources to better understand and support mental health and well-being, particularly as they relate to the legal profession.

padisciplinaryboard.org/for-attorneys/well-being





Digital resources
 Informative articles
 Upcoming events
 CLE opportunities

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](#) 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

Last year, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania adopted amendments to the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement (Pa.R.D.E.) relating to confidentiality of proceedings, providing for three exceptions to the requirement of confidentiality under [Pa.R.D.E. 402\(d\)](#). Included in these exceptions is the allowance for Disciplinary Counsel to make a referral of an attorney to [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania](#) (LCL) and share information as part of the referral. *However*, it is crucial to note that LCL may *not* report information about a subject attorney back to the Disciplinary Board. LCL is a **confidential** assistance program for the Pennsylvania legal community and their family members.

Around the Court



Pennsylvania Supreme Court Adopts Policy on Court Personnel Use of AI

By [Order](#) dated September 9, 2025, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania adopted an [Interim Policy](#) on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence by Judicial Officers and Court Personnel.

The purpose of the policy is to promote and ensure the safe and appropriate use of GenAI by court personnel. "Personnel" include judges; employees of boards, committees, and court-related panels established by the Supreme Court; county-level court employees under the supervision and authority of the President Judge of a Pennsylvania judicial district; and contractors.

Personnel are authorized to use or install GenAI tools approved by Leadership on Unified Judicial System (UJS) Technology Resources. Uses permitted under the policy include:

- i. to summarize documents;
- ii. to conduct preliminary legal research, provided the tool used was trained on a comprehensive, up-to-date collection of reputable legal authorities;
- iii. to draft initial versions of documents, such as communications, and memoranda;
- iv. to edit and assess the readability of public documents; and
- v. to provide interactive chatbots or similar services to the public and self-represented litigants.

The policy stresses that personnel shall comply with all laws, including copyright law. They must also comply with all ethical and professional conduct rules and UJS policies. These include but are not limited to the Code of Judicial Conduct, the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges, the Code of Conduct for the Employees of the Unified Judicial System, and the Rules of Professional Conduct.

The policy states that personnel must become proficient in the technical capabilities and limitations of AI tools before using them and maintain that proficiency. Each person using the technology will be personally responsible for the accuracy of their work and for compliance with the policy.

The policy takes effect December 8, 2025.

Pennsylvania Courts to Host Regional Summits on Behavioral Health in the Courts

Supreme Court Justice Kevin M. Dougherty recently [announced](#) a series of regional summits focused on the role of Pennsylvania's Courts in addressing Pennsylvania Courts' relationship with the growing mental and behavioral health crisis. Justice Dougherty explained, "Courts across

Pennsylvania are seeing the growing impact of mental and behavioral health issues on the individuals who appear before us. One of the biggest challenges we face in addressing behavioral health issues is breaking down silos that prevent people from getting care and support they need.”

He affirmed, “Effective and holistic problem solving cannot be done alone, and collaboration is essential to improve access to care and quality of life for Pennsylvanians affected by serious mental illness and other behavioral health concerns. These regional summits will give us a chance to come together as partners to ensure our responses are more informed, compassionate and effective.”

Led by Justice Dougherty, the series is part of PA’s [Behavioral Health in the Courts](#) initiative. They are intended to deepen the partnerships between the courts, behavioral health providers, and various community stakeholders in order to better the situations of court users with mental and behavioral health challenges.

Events will be held from September through December in Allegheny, Bedford, Chester, Lehigh, Luzerne, Union, Warren Counties.

View the full press release and event schedule [here](#) on the Unified Judicial System’s (UJS) website.

Learn more about the Office of Behavioral Health [here](#) on the UJS website.

From the Pennsylvania Bar Association



September Updates from the Pennsylvania Bar Association

National Pro Bono Month

With October serving as National Pro Bono Month, it is time to honor the legal professionals who dedicate their time and expertise to serving those in need. This year’s theme, “Supporting Communities Through Pro Bono,” recognizes that legal service is not just a profession—it’s a calling to uplift and empower.

Across Pennsylvania and beyond, law firms, bar associations, and legal aid organizations will host events and initiatives to spotlight the transformative power of pro bono work. From clinics and trainings to recognition ceremonies, the month is filled with opportunities to celebrate and recommit to justice for all. The Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) has a plethora of events for those looking to engage. More information can be found at pabar.org.

PBI Named Best CLE Provider in The Legal Intelligencer’s “Best Of 2025” Awards

The Pennsylvania Bar Institute (PBI), the continuing legal education arm of the PBA, is honored to be named Best CLE Provider in *The Legal Intelligencer’s* prestigious “Best Of 2025” awards.

This recognition highlights PBI’s unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible, and innovative CLE programming tailored to the evolving needs of legal professionals across PA and beyond. With a comprehensive catalog of live webcasts, on-demand courses, and in-person events, PBI continues to set the standard for excellence in legal education.

Recent innovations, including enhanced digital learning platforms and the popular ProPass subscription, have made continuing education more convenient and comprehensive than ever before.

PBI extends its gratitude to *The Legal Intelligencer* for this recognition and thanks the legal

community for its continued trust and support.

PBF Expands Loan Repayment Support for Legal Aid Attorneys

The Pennsylvania Bar Foundation (PBF) is proud to announce expanded support for attorneys serving communities through legal aid. Through its Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP), PBF continues to provide meaningful financial relief to eligible attorneys working at IOLTA-funded legal service organizations—helping to ease the burden of law school debt while strengthening access to justice across the Commonwealth.

New for the 2026 loan year:

- Higher Salary Cap: Attorneys earning up to \$90,000 annually are now eligible to apply.
- Rural Incentive: Additional support may be available for attorneys working in one of Pennsylvania's forty-eight rural counties, subject to funding availability.

The LRAP is designed to empower attorneys to focus on what matters most: serving clients in need without the added stress of overwhelming student loan payments.

Applications are due by October 15th. Don't miss this opportunity to reduce financial burden while making a lasting impact. Visit the [PBF website](#) to learn more and apply today.

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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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