



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

**January 2026**  
**Newsletter**



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# *The Keystone Lex*

## *From the Chair*

As we enter another new year, we have occasion to reflect upon the trials, challenges, and successes of the previous twelve months. I encourage you to evaluate your personal and professional goals. *Do they align with your law practice? How can you take meaningful steps toward those goals while honoring the ethics of your chosen vocation?*

The Disciplinary Board, too, continues to refine its work. Its Members and staff strive to strengthen the Board's relationship with the public, the legal community, and the courts.



Central to this effort is the Board's commitment to transparency. All public proceedings are livestreamed on the [Board's YouTube channel](#). I encourage you to take advantage of this access to gain a deeper understanding of the Board's work and the ethics of law practice in Pennsylvania.

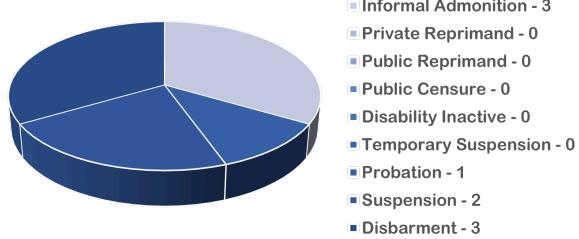
I look forward to new opportunities to advance the Board's mission: to protect the public, maintain the integrity of the legal profession, and safeguard the reputation and independence of the courts. On behalf of the Board, I wish you all a year of good health, strong work-life balance, and meaningful growth.

With gratitude,

David S. Senoff  
Board Chair

## *Discipline Imposed*

**December 2025**



#### Probation

[Tyler Alan Lindquist](#)

#### Suspension

[Bruce K. Warren, Jr.](#)

[Paul T. Sosnowski](#)

#### Disbarment

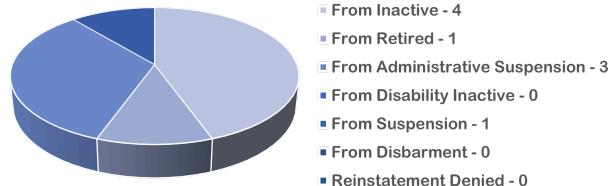
[Kenneth C. Marano](#)

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

[Jennifer E. Watson](#)

## *Reinstatements*

**December 2025**



#### From Inactive

[Kevin Golembiewski](#)

[Aryn Lee Gruneisen](#)

[Joseph Salvatore Herring](#)

[Sheila L. Kissinger](#)

#### From Retired

[Janice Petrella Caccuro](#)

#### From Administrative Suspension

[Jarrod W. Harmon](#)

[James Richard Koban, II](#)

[Albert R. Meyer](#)

#### From Suspension

[Scott Michael Jocken](#)

*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.*

## *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.***

January		
January 15 at 2:00 pm	John A. Gallagher	Oral Argument
January 15 at 2:45 pm	Kelton Merrill Burgess Shaka Mzee Johnson Ian James Musselman	Public Reprimand
January 28-30	Dustin William Cole	Disciplinary Hearing
February		
February 6	John McDanel (cont.)	Disciplinary Hearing
February 23-24	Jeffrey Larkin Wertz	Disciplinary Hearing
March		
March 2	Bruce K. Warren, Jr.	Disciplinary Hearing
March 17-18	Joseph Alexander Scioscia, III	Disciplinary Hearing
March 25-26	Feng Li	Reinstatement Hearing
March 30-31	Erin Alma Pohland	Reinstatement Hearing
April		
April 13	Marco di Prato	Disciplinary Hearing
April 27-28	Lawrence L. Rubin	Disciplinary Hearing
May		
May 4-5	David Paul Clark	Disciplinary Hearing
May 7	David Charles Agresti	Reinstatement Hearing
May 11-13	Aaron Bell	Disciplinary Hearing
May 21	Justin R. Przedzkiecki	Disciplinary Hearing
June		
June 2-4	Joshua Paul Ward	Disciplinary Hearing
June 15-17	Travis Andrew Gordon	Disciplinary Hearing
June 29-30	Elissa Griffith Waldron	Reinstatement Hearing
To Be Scheduled		
Robert M. Tobia – Public Reprimand		

## 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 court entities:**

**Disciplinary Board** — One vacancy is for a non-lawyer elector, and one vacancy is for a member of the Pennsylvania bar. Applicants should be knowledgeable about the Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct and Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement.

**Board of Law Examiners** — Applicants must be members of the Pennsylvania bar. 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.

[Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee](#) — Applicants should be knowledgeable about the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure governing domestic relations matters and should be experienced in family law practice in Pennsylvania.

[Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security Board](#) — This vacancy is for a member of the Pennsylvania bar. Lawyer applicants should be knowledgeable about the practice of federal or state law in Pennsylvania and about a lawyer's duties to clients.

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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 Saturday, January, 31, 2026.***

## *Articles of Interest*

### **Two Pennsylvania Lawyers Agree to Discipline for Neglect**

A pair of Pennsylvania lawyers agreed to disciplinary dispositions involving suspensions, one served and one stayed by probation, for patterns of neglect, lack of diligence, and related issues.

[Paul T. Sosnowski](#) of Philadelphia faced disciplinary charges on two counts – a serious pattern of neglect, in one case, and a second for conviction of Driving Under the Influence which was not reported to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel. Over a period of about eight months, he failed to comply with discovery or with orders related to discovery and failed to inform his clients of the filing of documents requiring action or of his lack of professional liability insurance. He scheduled a meeting intended to prepare his clients for trial two days before the scheduled trial but failed to appear for the meeting. At this point, the clients retained other counsel who entered an appearance and made a motion for continuance of the trial. However, the motion was denied, the clients were barred from presenting a defense, and the court strongly advised them to settle. The clients settled for \$22,500 under pressure. Sosnowski contributed \$13,000 to the settlement and \$2,500 to the cost of the clients obtaining new counsel. Sosnowski also displayed a lack of diligence and failed to comply with promised actions in the disciplinary inquiry. He admitted that this conduct violated nine Rules of Professional Conduct relating to diligence, competence, and communications.

Sosnowski was also convicted of Driving Under the Influence at the highest level of blood alcohol testing. He was sentenced to imprisonment of three days to six months, fined \$1,000, and required to pay the costs of prosecution. He failed to report this conviction to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel as required by [Pa.R.D.E. 214\(a\)](#). He also failed to respond to the disciplinary inquiry for nearly six months despite multiple requests for an extension.

Sosnowski admitted to a serious problem with alcohol and was attending two Alcoholics Anonymous meetings per day. Mitigating factors included his admission of wrongdoing, payment of a substantial portion of the cost of his misconduct to the clients, and efforts at rehabilitation. He agreed that a suspension of one year and one day was appropriate. The Supreme Court granted the joint petition for consent discipline and suspended Sosnowski for one year and one day.

The case of [Tyler Alan Lindquist](#) of Erie County resulted in a different outcome. Lindquist admitted to a severe pattern of neglect, failure to take required actions, and misrepresentations intended to conceal these failures in nine cases. As a mitigating factor, he provided psychiatric testimony indicating that, during the time of his misconduct, he was suffering from depression and anxiety and, while in solo private practice, was unable to afford medical treatment or medications. He left private practice and took full-time employment as an assistant public defender, an employment situation in which he has medical insurance coverage and is taking needed medication. He agreed that his actions warranted suspension but offered a plan for probation under the supervision of the Chief Public Defender as a practice monitor. The parties agreed that he should receive a

disposition of suspension for one year and one day, stayed in full, with probation for a period of two years with the Chief Public Defender as his practice monitor. The terms of his probation require him to continue his ongoing mental health treatment, including taking prescribed medication as recommended by his health care provider(s). A three-member panel of the Disciplinary Board recommended this resolution to the Supreme Court, and the Court granted the joint petition for consent discipline by order dated December 30, 2025.

Some readers may wonder why the disposition of a suspension for one year and one day is often imposed in such situations. This interval is derived from [Rule 218\(a\)](#) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement, regarding reinstatement. The rule provides that an attorney who has been suspended for "a period exceeding one year" may not resume practice until reinstated by order of the Supreme Court which requires the attorney to file a petition for reinstatement and demonstrate current fitness to practice law in a reinstatement hearing. A suspension for one year and one day is thus the minimum suspension which will require the attorney to prove fitness before resuming the practice of law.

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#### **Lawyer Who Once Represented Home Depot Barred from Suing It**

A Federal court in California has [disqualified a lawyer](#) from representing the plaintiffs in a personal injury suit against hardware giant Home Depot, based on a finding that she had represented the company in similar lawsuits while with a different law firm more than a decade ago.

Judge John A. Mendez of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California issued an [Order Granting Motion to Disqualify Counsel](#) on December 2, 2025, disqualifying attorney Michele Meyers and her firm, Singleton Schreiber, LLP, from representing plaintiff Joshua Ryan in a case against Home Depot alleging that he suffered injuries from a defective skid-steer loader that he had rented from Home Depot. The case was initially filed by another attorney, but that counsel engaged several attorneys in the Singleton firm, including Meyers, as co-counsel in the case.

The Court noted that motions to disqualify counsel are "strongly disfavored" and that the motion raised an issue of a conflict involving successive representation under [California Rule of Professional Conduct 1.9\(a\)](#) which requires a showing of a substantial relationship between the subject matter of the past and current representation. The record reflected that, between 2011 and 2014, Meyers, who was then with a different law firm, was part of a small team of lawyers that represented Home Depot in over one hundred personal injury cases, many of which involved similar though not identical facts and theories. The Court found that she had received confidential information in this capacity which could be relevant to the representation of her current client. The Court noted that Home Depot does not have the burden of showing what confidential information was disclosed. Meyer argued that the information she had received was general and not relevant to the case before the court, but Judge Lopez concluded that Home Depot had met its burden of proving a substantial relationship of subject matter and that Meyer must be disqualified under Rule 1.9(a).

Judge Lopez then addressed the question of whether her firm was also vicariously disqualified from the representation. He noted that, once an attorney's personal conflict of interest is established, the burden shifts to the firm to show that it has screened the disqualified attorney from participation in the case or sharing any confidential information with the attorneys handling the matter. Since the Singleton firm had not provided any procedures for screening Meyers from the case and had, in fact, included her on its litigation team, Judge Lopez held that the firm must be disqualified as well.

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#### **"Vampire Law" and "Vibe Coding": Legal Lexicographer Finds New Words in Legal Vocabulary**

Each year, [William Burton](#), author of *Burton's Legal Thesaurus*, issues a list of new terms that have come into use in legal circles. His list for 2025 includes the following terms you may (or may not) want to add to your working vocabulary.

- "Vampire law" arises in discussion of gun control and rights and refers to laws that seek to regulate the ownership and possession of weapons on private property.
- "Vibe coding" refers to programming routines that allow users to use natural language prompts and artificial intelligence to write their own code (What could possibly go wrong?).
- "Cog war," short for cognitive warfare, describes the act of using false or misleading information to manipulate a foreign adversary.

“Dark patterns” are deceptive designs used online to manipulate consumers into certain actions.

- “Algorithmic wage discrimination” is the act of paying individual workers, such as gig workers, different hourly wages for similar work, often calculated using digital data relating to worker location, worker behavior, and other factors.
- “AI personhood” is the concept of granting legal rights or status to advanced AI systems.
- “Day One rights” refers to the concept that employees’ rights begin on their first day of work and that employers must notify employees of their rights and benefits on their first day of a new job.

The times, they are a-changin’, and so is the language.

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### **New York Lawyer Sues the IRS, Demanding It Recognize Pets as Legal Dependents**

We Americans love our pets, and many of us consider them family members. A New York lawyer wants that taken literally as a matter of law. She has sued the IRS, demanding that her Golden Retriever be declared a legal dependent for tax purposes.

Amanda Reynolds, an attorney licensed in New York and Utah who focuses largely on civil litigation insurance defense, recently [filed a complaint](#) in the Eastern District of New York, together with Finnegan Mary Reynolds. Finnegan, it turns out, is her eight-year-old Golden Retriever. Reynolds argues that Finnegan is entirely dependent on her for food, shelter, medical care, training, transportation, and daily living. Finnegan has no independent income, resides exclusively with her, and has annual expenses exceeding \$5,000. Reynolds argues that Finnegan meets every meaningful element of dependency recognized under [section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code](#). She contends that companion dogs have care responsibilities that mirror, and sometimes surpass, those of human dependents. Noting that the IRS does provide tax advantages for some service dogs, she argues that companion dogs provide much the same support to their owners, and that the distinction between them is arbitrary and lacks a rational basis.

Getting past the leap of logic that equates a companion animal with a human child, as defined in Section 152(f)(1), we note that the eligibility of a child not a full-time student is limited to the age of eighteen or less. This raises for us the question: Is that in human years or dog years?

*(A useful chart for understanding the difference between service, therapy, and emotional support dogs is found [here](#).)*

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### **British Barrister Who Wrote a Novel About an Ethically Challenged Barrister Is Disbarred**

A British barrister, formerly a prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), who wrote a novel about a barrister with the CPS whose “reckless behaviour was irresistibly good fun,” found that life sometimes imitates art, when [he himself was disbarred](#).

[Ravi Sidhu](#) drew on his own experiences as a prosecutor to write *Call This Justice*, a complicated tale (lasting 490 pages) about a prosecutor’s conflicting loyalties and casual relationship with professional ethics.

Alas, Sidhu ran into trouble for creating a different kind of fiction. An independent disciplinary tribunal considering charges brought by the [Bar Standards Board](#) found that he was instructed to act for a client through chambers. He issued five invoices on chambers’ letterhead outside the chambers system that directed fees be paid into a personal account, dishonestly created the misleading impression that the matter was being conducted through chambers, and avoided his financial obligations to chambers. Although he argued that the billings were an innocent mistake, the tribunal concluded that his “motivation … was to avoid paying chambers’ money in relation to fees received” and his “intention [was] to benefit financially from the work he had undertaken.” The panel found that this conduct gave the client a false impression that her case was conducted under official business when it was not. In light of the aggravating factor that the client was a vulnerable person who had recently been bereaved, the tribunal concluded that disbarment was the appropriate sanction.

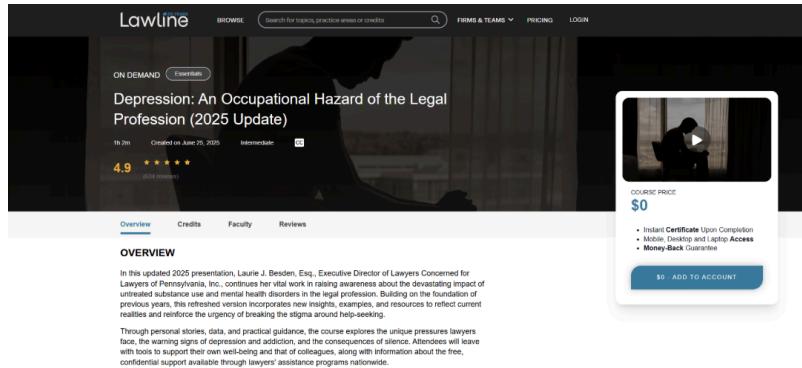
Perhaps Sidhu could fall back on a career as a novelist specializing in literary legal fiction.

# Attorney Well-Being

## Free Online Mental Health and Well-Being CLE Opportunities

Did you know that [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania](#) offers free online CLE opportunities through Lawline that promote mental health and overall well-being within the legal profession? Myriad topics include work-life balance, technology and mental health, recognizing signs of depression, and more.

View all recommendations and offerings on LCL's [website](#).



## Explore the Disciplinary Board's Lawyer Well-Being Webpage

The Disciplinary Board's "[Lawyer 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](#).



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*



### **Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts Accepting Applications for Legal Intern Positions**

The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) is currently seeking [Legal Interns](#). The position requires a commitment of thirty-five hours per week during the summer and ten hours per week during the academic year, spanning from May 2026 through May 2027. Applications are invited from first- and second-year law students who possess a working knowledge of legal terminology and procedures and exhibit strong written and oral communication skills.

*Applications must be received by **January 31, 2026**.* Prospective applicants can learn more and apply [here](#).

## *From the Pennsylvania Bar Association*



## Happy New Year from the Pennsylvania Bar Association

Welcoming 2026, the Pennsylvania Bar Association extends warm new year greetings. The PBA is coming off a strong and productive year, one marked by meaningful advocacy, robust member engagement, and continued service to the legal profession and the communities we serve. Together, members and staff have built tremendous momentum, and the PBA looks forward to everything that will be accomplished in the year ahead.

### ***Big News for 2028: National Mock Trial Comes to Hershey***

The PBA is thrilled to share that Pennsylvania has been selected as the host site for the 2028 National High School Mock Trial Championship which will take place in Hershey from May 6-8, 2028. This is an extraordinary opportunity to showcase our statewide commitment to law-related education and to elevate one of our most impactful programs. The PBA looks forward to working with volunteers, educators, and partners across the Commonwealth to make this a truly exceptional event. Visit the [PBA's website](#) for additional details.



### ***CLE Is Ramping Up for the New Year***

The Pennsylvania Bar Institute is kicking off 2026 with a strong slate of winter programming. These programs offer excellent opportunities to earn credits early in the year while sharpening skills and staying current on professional standards. Visit [pbi.org](#) for additional details.

### ***Events to Look Forward to 2026: Save The Date!***

- Conference of County Bar Leaders: State College, February 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>
- Annual Meeting: Pittsburgh, May 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>
- Committee/Section Day: Harrisburg, November 19<sup>th</sup>

For additional events, please visit our calendar at [pabar.org](#).

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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 [pabar.org](#) or follow on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.*

## 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](#)

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