



The
DISCIPLINARY BOARD
of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

February 2025 Newsletter



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From the Chair

On behalf of the Disciplinary Board, I would like to extend our most sincere congratulations to David S. Senoff, Esq. and Shohin H. Vance, Esq. who were recently [appointed](#) the next Board Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, effective April 1, 2025. I look forward to the Board's continued achievement in service of Pennsylvania's public and the highest standards of ethical law practice. I would also like to congratulate Scott B. Cooper, Esq. of Harrisburg and Ryan J. Cassidy, Esq. of Philadelphia who were [appointed](#) to serve as Disciplinary Board Members commencing April 1, 2025. The Board looks forward to their contributions to its mission and work.



It is an honor and privilege to serve this Commonwealth and its communities, including its legal profession. To those attorneys looking to become involved in the Board's work across the state, consider applying to serve on its volunteer Hearing Committee. I highly encourage all those interested lawyers to explore the duties and expectations of Committee Members found in the "Disciplinary Board News" section below. Our Hearing Committee Members truly are an essential element of PA's disciplinary system.

Stay well,

John C. Rafferty, Jr.
Board Chair

Technology Update

UJS Portal Password Policy Change

In December 2024, to improve security, the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania (UJS) changed their password policy. Passwords now must be at least **fourteen characters in length and contain at least three of the following**:

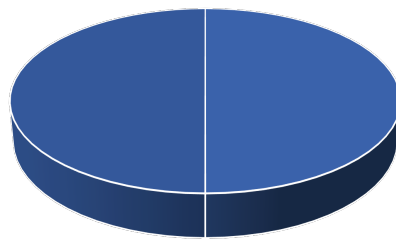
- one uppercase letter
- one lowercase letter
- one number
- one special character (e.g., ! @ # \$ % ^ & *)

What should I do now? If you have not updated your password since the change went into effect, you will need to do so to continue accessing your UJS Portal account. [Log in to your UJS Portal account](#) using your current password and you will be prompted to update your password before continuing to the portal. If you've forgotten your current password, click "Forgot my password" on the log-in page.

To limit issues during annual attorney registration, it is suggested that you [log in now](#) to update your password. For further guidance, please visit the [UJS Portal Help Page](#).

Discipline Imposed

January 2025



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

Temporary Suspension

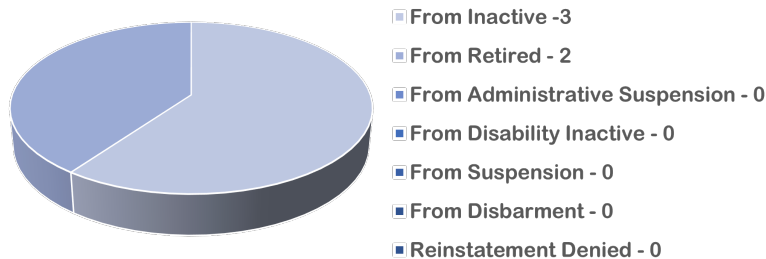
[Malcolm S. Mussina](#)

Suspension

[Albert R. Meyer](#)

Reinstatements

January 2025



From Inactive

[Julie Han Broderick](#)
[Meghan Merry Foulk](#)
[Lisa Anne Rooney](#)

From Retired

[Lisa G. Goetz](#)
[Traci R. Vallano](#)

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

Disciplinary Board Announces Next Chair and Vice-Chair

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has [appointed](#) David S. Senoff, Esq. as Disciplinary Board Chair and Shohin H. Vance, Esq. as Vice-Chair, effective April 1, 2025.

David S. Senoff, Esq.

David S. Senoff was first appointed to the board in April 2020.

Mr. Senoff is a founding member of First Law Strategy Group, LLC, with over thirty years of experience in class-action lawsuits. As one of the lead attorneys involved in seeking justice for the victims of the “Kids-for-Cash” cases and having been instrumental in the creation of the Pennsylvania law regarding the state’s Wage Law, he has taken on some of the toughest public policy fights in Pennsylvania.

Before his appointment to the Disciplinary Board, Senoff served twelve years as a Hearing Committee Member for the Board and three years as a member of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania’s Civil Rules Committee. He also served as a judge pro tempore in the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas, mediating disputes to help resolve cases for all parties.

Senoff has been recognized as a Pennsylvania “Super Lawyer” every year for the past decade and has been named among the “Best Lawyers in America” annually since 2013.

He is a former member of the Board of Governors of the Pennsylvania Association for Justice, where he served on the Amicus Curiae Committee. Senoff also served as an elected member of the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association and served as its Communications Coordinator and Education Coordinator. He is a member of the Insurance Bad

Faith Trial Lawyers Association and the Class Action Trial Lawyers Association.

Shohin H. Vance, Esq.

Shohin H. Vance was first appointed to the board in April 2021.

Mr. Vance is a partner at Kleinbard LLC in Philadelphia where he focuses primarily on appellate litigation, litigation involving governmental entities and officials, State and Federal Constitutional matters, and grand jury investigations.

His experience includes handling appellate matters before the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, where he previously clerked for Justice Thomas G. Saylor. He also has expertise in representing clients in the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, both in its original and appellate jurisdictions.

Additionally, Mr. Vance is an active contributor to the Legal Intelligencer and is a member of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Federalist Society. Mr. Vance has been recognized in each edition of Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch since 2021 for his work in white-collar criminal defense and government relations and, was named a "Rising Star" in the 2024 edition of Pennsylvania Super Lawyers. In 2021, Mr. Vance received the Legal Intelligencer's award for "Lawyers on the Fast Track."

Before attending Penn State Dickinson Law, Mr. Vance gained valuable experience at one of Pennsylvania's top government relations and political consulting firms. There, he contributed to several public policy successes and built a strong portfolio in campaign consulting, earned media, press relations and grassroots organizing.



Scott B. Cooper of Dauphin County and Ryan J. Cassidy of Philadelphia Appointed Members of Pennsylvania Disciplinary Board

The Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has announced the [appointments](#) of Scott B. Cooper, a partner at Schmidt Kramer Injury Law, and Ryan J. Cassidy, a partner and the firm-wide chair of Labor and Employment at Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC, as Members of the Board.

The appointments are effective April 1, 2025 for a term of six years.

Scott B. Cooper, Esq.

A personal injury attorney, Scott B. Cooper specializes in motor vehicle accident and insurance cases. He has been recognized as one of Pennsylvania's top one hundred lawyers by Pennsylvania Super Lawyers annually since 2011.

He has earned several accolades including the Milton D. Rosenberg Award for leadership in victim's rights and the George F. Douglas Amicus Curiae Award for outstanding appellate advocacy.

Mr. Cooper brings extensive experience in legal leadership, having served as president of the Pennsylvania Association of Justice (PAJ) and as chair of its Legislative Policy committee. He currently serves as vice-chair of the Pennsylvania's Supreme Court's Civil Procedure Policy committee and chair of the Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board.

Beyond his legal expertise, Mr. Cooper is actively engaged in community service, including his role on the board of directors for the Joe Allegrini Children's Hero Fund. A frequent lecturer and author, he also serves as an adjunct professor at Widener University Commonwealth Law School.

Ryan J. Cassidy, Esq.

Ryan J. Cassidy brings a wealth of legal expertise, currently serving on his firm's executive committee and board of directors as well as chair of both the Labor and Employment Practice Group and the Compensation Committee.

With decades of experience representing public and private sector employers across Pennsylvania, he is also admitted to practice in New York and New Jersey, as well as before the U.S. Supreme Court and other federal courts.

Prior to joining Eckert Seamans in 2011, Mr. Cassidy was a partner at Reed Smith LLP where he served as deputy chair of the Labor and Employment Practice. His distinguished career began with the clerkship of The Honorable Joseph T. Doyle, former President Judge of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, following his graduation with honors from Widener University School of Law.

In addition to his legal career, Mr. Cassidy previously served two consecutive three-year terms on the board's Hearing committee.



Disciplinary Board Attends Twenty-Second 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 United States and Canada. This year's conference, held from February 5th-6th, featured educational sessions on myriad topics ranging from artificial intelligence (AI) to the uniformity and cooperation across jurisdictions.



The NCLDB is a non-profit organization serving as a clearinghouse for the adjudication process of attorney discipline throughout the United States and Canada. Member jurisdictions of the organization convene yearly to collaborate on matters at hand in the field of lawyer discipline.

Professor Gary Marchant—Regents and Foundation Professor of Law and Faculty Director of the Center for Law, Science, and Innovation at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law—and Judge Yvette D. Roland of the State Bar Court of California spoke on AI and its effects and implications on legal ethics. In addition to the benefits that the use of AI may provide to law practice, Professor Marchant articulated the drawbacks of current AI usage such as biased outputs, data privacy concerns, and the potential for overreliance on AI-generated work.

Tracy L. Kepler, Risk Control Consulting Director of the Lawyers Professional Liability Division at CNA Insurance, and District of Columbia Board on Professional Responsibility Member Tom Gilbertsen addressed evolving disciplinary approaches toward substance use and mental health challenges. Both stressed the importance of accessible and substantive resources for struggling lawyers as well as lawyer well-being as the core of ethical law practice. Ms. Kepler affirmed, “We are human beings. We help one another.”

Other conference sessions addressed unusual defenses in lawyer discipline, updates in jurisdictions around the U.S. and Canada, and more. Pennsylvania Disciplinary Board Vice-Chair Gretchen A. Mundorff and Board Prothonotary Marcee D. Sloan presented a session exploring how to recruit a diverse and qualified Hearing Committee pool in addition to how to train, support,

and appreciate those Hearing Committee Members. Ms. Sloan and Board IT Systems Support Specialist Teri A. Stoltenburg also discussed public transparency and methods to disseminate publicly-available Board information. They covered such features as the Board's pending and recent cases webpages, its Case Research Collection, the online complaint form available in nine languages, and more.



Board Vice-Chair Gretchen A. Mundorff and Prothonotary Marcee D. Sloan led a conference session expounding the recruiting, training, supporting of Hearing Committee Members.

Executive Director of the PA Disciplinary Board, Jesse G. Hereda, currently serves as Immediate Past President of the NCLDB Board of Directors. At the conference, Mr. Hereda presented a commemorative plaque to President Aisha L. Cassis (DC Board on Professional Responsibility) on behalf of the NCLDB Board. Ms. Cassis's term will end on June 30, 2025 at which time she will be succeeded by current President-Elect Karen M. Daley, Associate Counsel of the Michigan Attorney Discipline Board.



NCLDB Immediate Past President Jesse Hereda (PA Disciplinary Board) presents President Aisha L. Cassis (DC Board on Professional Responsibility) with a plaque honoring her tenure of leadership.

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 who have been licensed to practice law for at least *seven years*.

Applicants are required to:

- be a member in good standing of the Pennsylvania bar;
- be licensed to practice law for at least seven years;
- maintain an office for the practice of law within Pennsylvania; and
- have no prior history of discipline.

Applicants should be willing to:

- serve a minimum of at least one three-year term;
- participate at disciplinary and reinstatement proceedings; and
- attend Hearing Committee Training, if possible.

The next Hearing Committee Training will be held in-person in Hershey, PA on July 23, 2025.

Completed [applications](#) are due by March 7, 2025. Hearing Committee Members will be appointed by the Board in April 2025 and will begin serving their term on July 1, 2025. Preview the Hearing Committee Member [duties](#) for more information and [apply](#) today!



HEARING COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Learn more today.
Applications are due March 7, 2025.

 The
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of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

Follow Us on Bluesky

In addition to [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#), users can now keep up with Disciplinary Board news and resources on [Bluesky](#). Follow us at [@dboardpa.bsky.social](#)!



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.

February		
February 27 February 28	Alexander Geoffrey Tuttle	Disciplinary Hearing
March		
March 4	Ryan D. Breen	Reinstatement Hearing
March 5	John A. Gallagher	Reinstatement Hearing
March 10	William E. Vinsko, Jr.	Disciplinary Hearing
April		
April 14 April 15	Daryl Alan Yount	Disciplinary Hearing
April 16	Mikel Peter Eggert	Reinstatement Hearing
April 21 April 22 April 23 April 24 April 25	Paul Jude Winterhalter	Disciplinary Hearing
April 29	John Harper Estey	Reinstatement Hearing
May		
May 13	Scott Michael Jocken	Reinstatement Hearing
May 15 May 16 May 19	Gary P. Lightman	Disciplinary Hearing
May 20 May 21	Meredith Rand Allie	Disciplinary Hearing
June		
June 3	Albert R. Meyer	Reinstatement Hearing
June 10 June 11	Paul Andrew Raymond Stewart	Disciplinary Hearing
June 24	Carl J. Greco	Reinstatement Hearing
June 26	Daniel Michael Dixon	Reinstatement Hearing
To Be Scheduled		
Ryan A. Mergl - Disciplinary Hearing		

Articles of Interest

Pennsylvania Attorney Reprimanded for Failure to Refund Fee

A Luzerne County attorney agreed to a public reprimand after failing to return a fee paid in advance until the client prevailed in a claim to the Lawyers Fund for Client Security.

[Mark M. Mack](#) of Kingston, PA entered into a Joint Petition agreeing to imposition of a public

reprimand. The stipulated facts established that a client retained his firm to represent his stepson in a criminal matter.

When the attorney who was handling the matter left the Mack firm, the client came to the firm's office intending to seek other counsel. After speaking with another attorney, he decided to continue with the firm and paid a fee of \$9,000 in advance.

Approximately three weeks later, the client appeared at the law office but was informed that his second attorney had left the firm. At that point, the client requested a copy of his file and a refund of the fee paid in advance. A staff member advised the client he could pick up the file and a refund check, but when the client arrived on August 16, 2023, he was given the file but no refund check.

The client made several telephone calls and sent a letter to Mack requesting a refund of his fee. Mack did not respond to any of these communications and did not refund the fee.

The client filed a complaint with the [Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security](#). On March 18, 2024, the Fund informed Mack that the client's claim had been approved in the amount of \$9,000. On April 18, 2024, Mack reimbursed the client with a check for \$9,000.

Mack acknowledged that his conduct violated [Rules of Professional Conduct 1.5\(a\)](#) [charging a clearly excessive fee] and [1.16\(d\)](#) [failing to refund an advance payment of fees that has not been earned]. He agreed to imposition of a public reprimand.

Colorado Panel Orders Disbarment of Prosecutor for Faking Text Messages, Destroying Evidence

A Colorado disciplinary judicial panel has [ordered the disbarment](#) of a former prosecutor based on finding that she falsified text messages to frame a colleague for sexual harassment, then destroyed evidence to conceal her misconduct.

A panel of the Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge [found](#) that Yujin Choi, who was a prosecutor with the Denver District Attorney's Office, fabricated several text messages to create an impression that a colleague was harassing her. A forensic examination revealed that the messages were not sent from the colleague's phone and, in fact, that he had blocked her number long before the episode occurred. In addition, the investigation revealed that the messages were sent from Choi's own phone to herself. She provided the investigators with a spreadsheet purportedly showing a log of her text messages, but the examination of metadata revealed that she had altered the spreadsheet to insert the messages at issue. At one point, she told investigators that her cellphone had been destroyed by falling into a bathtub, and that she subsequently spilled a glass of water on her laptop computer, also destroying it—on the same evening. The District Attorney's Office terminated her employment based on the results of its investigation.

The panel concluded that Choi had falsified the text messages that set off the whole incident, fraudulently altered the spreadsheet of her messages to support her story, and then intentionally destroyed her devices as investigators pressured her to make them available for examination. The committee concluded that this conduct violated Colo. RPC 8.4(c) which prohibits a lawyer from engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation. They also found a violation of Colo. RPC 8.4(h) which provides that it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in any conduct that directly, intentionally, and wrongfully harms others and that adversely reflects on a lawyer's fitness to practice law. They determined that this conduct directly, wrongfully, and intentionally harmed the colleague implicated in the messages and caused him

reputational and emotional injury. Her refusal to admit wrongdoing, her persistence in the pattern of dishonesty, and the elevated harm caused by an attorney in a position of public trust were listed as aggravating factors. The panel noted that she “poisoned the morale of the DA’s Office, contributing to an environment in which victims feared they might be disbelieved and others feared they might be wrongly accused.”

Based on the American Bar Association Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions and Colorado case law, the panel concluded that disbarment was the appropriate sanction and ordered her disbarred. The disbarment, which is subject to appeal, will take effect on issuance of an “Order and Notice of Disbarment.”

ABA Formal Opinion Addresses Duties of Organization Counsel to Individuals

The [American Bar Association Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility](#) has authored [Formal Opinion No. 514](#) to provide [guidance to lawyers representing organizations](#) about conduct that may create legal risks for the organization’s constituents.

“Constituents” are individuals associated with the organization, such as executives, employees, officers, and board members. Model Rule 1.13(a) explains that the organization can only act through its duly authorized constituents, and all of counsel’s communications must pass through them. When the lawyer communicates information and advice to those constituents, the organization is the lawyer’s client, and the lawyer’s duties flow to the organization’s interest. However, the constituents communicating with the lawyer may not always understand that the advice is intended solely for the organization’s benefit and is not intended for the individual constituent’s own personal benefit or interests. The lawyer may have an obligation under the circumstances to prevent or rectify the constituents’ misunderstanding. The opinion addresses situations where the lawyer knows or reasonably should know that the constituents are likely to have their own legal interests at stake – for example, where the lawyer is advising the organization about possible future conduct for which the constituents may be subject to personal civil or criminal liability, and the lawyer does not intend to create a client-lawyer relationship with the constituent or assume fiduciary or contractual duties to the constituent.

An organization’s lawyer does not owe the organization’s constituents a duty of competence or other duties established by a client-lawyer relationship. The lawyer must assess whether the organization’s decision makers would want or expect to be told when proposed conduct has significant legal implications for constituents. The lawyer may need to include the legal risks to nonclient constituents among the subjects of discussion. It will be up to the decision makers to determine whether the organization wishes to engage the lawyer to analyze the legal risk to constituents. This determination is up to the decision makers and is governed by organization law rather than the Rules of Professional Conduct.

The opinion goes on to discuss the lawyer’s duties to constituents who are not clients. [Model Rule 4.1](#) compels the lawyer to be truthful in such communications. [Model Rule 1.13\(f\)](#) provides, “In dealing with an organization’s directors, officers, employees, members, shareholders or other constituents, a lawyer shall explain the identity of the client when the lawyer knows or reasonably should know that the organization’s interests are adverse to those of the constituents with whom the lawyer is dealing.” The Committee notes that the Model Rules require an organization’s lawyer to take reasonable measures to avoid or dispel constituents’ misunderstandings about the lawyer’s role.

In conclusion, the opinion states, “An organization’s lawyer would be well advised to instruct organization constituents about the lawyer’s role early and often during the relationship, not only

at times when constituents might rely to their detriment on a misunderstanding of the lawyer's role. Educating organization constituents who may receive the lawyer's advice in the future will lay the groundwork for later situations where lawyers may be advising the organization on matters with legal implications for the organization's constituents."

Note that this opinion is advisory only. It is not binding on the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania or any other Court.

Law School Now Requires Students to Get Artificial Intelligence Certification

Case Western Reserve University School of Law [has become the first](#) (although certainly not the last) to [require its students](#) to achieve certification in Artificial Intelligence (AI). In a press release, Avidan Y. Cover, Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the School of Law, stated, "By integrating AI education into the foundational curriculum, we are not only addressing the demands of a rapidly evolving legal landscape but also empowering our students with the tools and knowledge they need to navigate and lead in a technology-driven profession."

Beginning in February, first-year students will be required to take the "Introduction to AI and the Law" program, taught by lecturer Oliver Roberts, co-head of the AI Practice Group at Holtzman Vogel, and developed in partnership with Wickard.ai. The press release states that the program "will immerse students in the fundamentals of artificial intelligence and its impact on the legal world." Topics covered will include:

- Understanding AI fundamentals;
- Practical applications in legal practice;
- Ethical and regulatory guidelines;
- Best practices for data and client management; and
- Driving innovation and addressing legal challenges.

The program is not just designed to promote the use of AI technology but will also educate students in problems and traps to be avoided in its use. Joe Patrice of *Above the Law* comments, "A graduating lawyer in the latter half of the 2020s will need to know what the major legal AI products are, how they work, and how NOT to use them."

Fed-Up Fed Judge: Do Lunch and Work This Out

Chief U.S. District Judge R. David Proctor of the Northern District of Alabama is known as a jurist with little patience for petty squabbling by lawyers. So when counsel for the plaintiff in a sexual harassment case tried to condition grant of a motion to extend on forbearance by the defendant from filing a motion to dismiss, Judge Proctor [was not pleased](#).

In response, he entered an [Order](#) excoriating the professionalism of this action. He wrote, "There is generally no good reason that an extension such as this should be opposed, let alone denied. The Golden Rule—do unto others as you would have them do unto you—is not just a good rule of thumb for everyday life. It is a critical component of legal professionalism." He added, "Such nonsense wastes time, damages professional relationships, and makes the lawyer withholding consent (or conditioning it) appear petty and uncooperative. Judges rightly expect lawyers to handle minor procedural issues like extensions without unnecessary conflict, and refusing to do so is unprincipled."

In addition to granting the motion for extension, Judge Proctor ordered the parties to go to lunch

together and to discuss how they can act more professionally in the conduct of the case. He required Plaintiff's counsel to pay the check and Defendants' counsel to leave the tip. Further, he directed them to file a joint report of the results of the lunch date.

The parties [complied](#) with this direction. Their [report](#) states that they dined at Saw's BBQ in Hoover, Alabama and discussed "the practice of law, families, some big-ticket items for the 2024 holiday season, everyone's small town bona fides, and the plan for communication going forward in this matter." They concluded that "a healthy dialogue regarding professional norms ensued." Plaintiff's counsel paid the \$74 bill, and Defendants' counsel left a \$74 tip.

At least on the surface, this seems to constitute a happy ending. Certainly, the server would agree.

Attorney or Lawyer: What's in a Name?

Attorney or lawyer – is there a difference in the meaning of the words?

A recent article in the *ABA Journal* [raises the question](#) of whether there is any substantial difference between the terms. The article notes that in common usage, both for the general public and within the legal community, the terms are often treated interchangeably or as synonymous. The article quotes several individuals speculating on what the difference between the terms might be, some of which are inconsistent.

The most interesting comment comes from Oliver Morrissey, the owner of Empower Wills and Estate Lawyers in Sydney (Australia, we presume). He notes that historical English common law identified distinct roles, such as "barrister," "solicitor," and "attorney" in which legal professionals might serve in different functions. Those who appear in court are generally referred to as barristers while solicitors primarily advise clients and handle business out of court. Attorneys were appointed to act as representatives in legal matters, particularly in courtrooms. He notes that, over time, especially in the United States, these roles merged, and the language used to describe them did as well.

Delving into dictionaries sheds light on the distinction. *Merriam-Webster* defines "[attorney](#)" as "one who is legally appointed to transact business on another's behalf, *especially*: LAWYER." It defines "[lawyer](#)" as "one whose profession is to conduct lawsuits for clients or to advise as to legal rights and obligations in other matters."

Black's Law Dictionary expands on this distinction: "In the most general sense this term denotes an agent or substitute, or one who is appointed or authorized to act in the place or stead of another." It should be noted that this definition does not incorporate admission to the bar. Surely, legally-educated people are aware of the concept of an "attorney in fact," who need not be a member of the bar. It goes on to define "attorney at law" as "an advocate, counsel, or official agent employed in preparation, managing, and trying cases in the courts. An officer in a court of justice, who is employed by a party in a cause to manage it for him." *Black's* then defines "lawyer" as "a person learned in the law; an attorney, counsel, or solicitor; a person licensed to practice law."

Parsing these definitions, it appears that "attorney" implies one who works in a representative role on behalf of another, particularly in the courts, while "lawyer" refers more generally to one's background and qualification.

Whether one sees a distinction here or not, the terms are used fairly interchangeably in Pennsylvania professional conduct law. The Rules of Professional Conduct uses the term "lawyer"

almost exclusively (ninety-nine percent of references, other than those to “attorney-client” relationship or privilege). The Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement (eighty-nine percent of references) and Rules of the Disciplinary Board (ninety-two percent) opt for “attorney.” So, whether one is engaged in representing clients or not, do take seriously communications from the “Attorney Registration Office.”

Attorney Well-Being

Upcoming Speaker Panel to Feature Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania Executive Director

Columbus School of Law at the Catholic University of America, located in Washington, DC, will host a [virtual speaker event](#) featuring Hon. William R. Carpenter of Montgomery County, Special Agent Stephanie Shark of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of PA Executive Director Laurie Besden. "Justice, Recovery, Resilience, and Redemption: A Story of Unlikely Connections" will be presented via Zoom on Tuesday, February 18th at 12:30pm. Register for this event [here](#).

Catholic Law's Office of Student Life presents

Justice, Recovery, Resilience, and Redemption: A Story of Unlikely Connections



Join us for an insightful and inspiring event as three powerful voices share their personal and professional journeys intersected by one criminal case. This event dives deep into the intersections of substance use and addiction, the criminal justice system, personal redemption, and the importance of wellness and ethical conduct for lawyers.

Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 12:30 p.m.

Virtual zoom event.

Please use QR code to register.



For disability accommodations, please contact the Office of Student Life and Special Events at law-slse@cua.edu



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Columbus School of Law

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.

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



The
DISCIPLINARY BOARD
of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania



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](http://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

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 Unified Judicial System Honors Black History Month

In celebration of February's Black History Month, the Pennsylvania Courts honored Black jurists who have served on the state's appellate courts by [releasing](#) a new video highlighting their achievements and contributions to the Commonwealth's judicial system.

Pennsylvania Court Administrator Andrea Tuominen articulated, "We are proud to shed light on the Black jurists who have made significant contributions to the legal profession and the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania."

View the full video [here](#).



Pennsylvania Courts Reaffirm Efforts Against Nationwide Behavioral Health Crisis

Pennsylvania Courts recently reaffirmed their commitment to combatting the nationwide behavioral health crisis. Justice Kevin Dougherty, who has spearheaded PA's efforts, explained, "Across the nation, courts have seen the behavioral health crisis grow in severity, frequency and intensity and the Pennsylvania judicial system is not immune. Pennsylvanians are struggling and finding too many barriers on the road to help and self-sufficiency. We must change that, and I am pleased to champion the need for systemic change in Pennsylvania's court system."

Last year, Pennsylvania Courts [established](#) its Office of Behavioral Health "to identify gaps in the system, to address key issues including access to services and support, and pinpoint intersections between at-risk populations and the courts in a wide range of matters, including truancy, domestic relations, juvenile delinquency and dependency, criminal justice and civil commitments." The office explores the "intersections between at-risk populations and the courts" and examines "truancy, domestic relations, juvenile delinquency and dependency, criminal justice and civil commitments."

In partnership with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, a statewide mental health summit was held in October with key support from other government and community leaders and organizations. This event brought together over five hundred court officials, health professionals, and other stakeholders to collaborate on bettering court responses to behavioral health challenges.

Read the full January 2025 press release [here](#). Learn more about the Office of Behavioral Health [here](#) on the Unified Judicial System's website.

From the Pennsylvania Bar Association



Celebrating Black History Month

Originally, African American historian and author Dr. Carter G. Woodson wanted Black History Month to be a week of promoting Black history and culture, selecting February as it was the birth month of advocates Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, fifty years after the conception of the holiday, President Gerald Ford expanded the week into a full month which is what we now recognize.

Black History Month is integral to the Pennsylvania Bar Association. February recognizes both the historic and current Black Americans who are helping to transform our country in a multitude of professions. This holiday is connected to the PBA's mission statement, providing attorneys with [the tools](#) to promote justice and advocacy to underserved communities.

Save the Dates

- **Conference of County Bar Leaders, March 6th-8th in Gettysburg:** In a culture that is increasingly filled with noise, distractions, and multiple demands for our attention, we can

all use help to get better at learning to focus our time and energy on the substantive and meaningful things that really matter and make a difference. *This year's CCBL lineup is designed to help!* Consider this year's many great leadership sessions as part of your road map for success in life and leading your bar association. A block of rooms has been reserved for CCBL. Make guest room reservations directly with Wyndham Gettysburg to obtain the group rate. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

- **Annual Meeting, May 7th-9th in Lancaster:** It's time to mark calendars for the Annual Meeting! Stay tuned for information regarding registration and programming. A block of guest rooms is being held for the Annual Meeting at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square. Group Rates are \$169 per night plus applicable taxes. Group rates guaranteed only until 5:00 pm on April 12th. To make a reservation by phone, call 1-888-850-6146. For additional information, please go to pabar.org.

PBA thanks you for your support!

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.

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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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