

For Immediate Release

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Raising awareness when a lawyer is disciplined

HARRISBURG — The agency that regulates the practice of law in Pennsylvania is making it easier for the public to determine when an attorney is disciplined.

The Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania is posting notice on its website when an attorney is disbarred, suspended or publicly reprimanded. The board also is issuing news releases to media outlets in communities where the attorney does business when any new action happens.

Although the board has a longstanding practice of notifying the news media of all disciplinary actions, the notices typically appear only in the legal notices section of classified advertising. The notices also appear in legal trade publications, read mostly by lawyers. The latest effort is designed to broaden the reach of the disciplinary notices and boost public awareness of the actions.

The board's website — www.padisciplinaryboard.org — lets consumers search recent actions on attorneys, including Supreme Court orders issued detailing the actions and reasons. To access the postings go to the Home Page of the website, place your cursor over the Look Up option box and click on Supreme Court Actions.

The move to allow the public to more easily gain access to such actions partly was prompted by events earlier this year when it was discovered that a Dauphin County lawyer who was forced to surrender his law license failed to notify his clients. Some of those clients claimed they were bilked out of millions of dollars.

The Disciplinary Board was created by the Supreme Court in 1972 to consider and investigate the conduct of any attorney admitted to practice law in Pennsylvania. The board launched its mobile-friendly website in 2012, making it more convenient for attorneys and consumers to get information about lawyers, disciplinary proceedings, fees and other matters.

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