

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

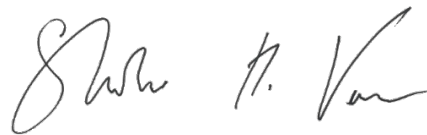
OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL	:	
Petitioner	:	
	:	No. 120 DB 2026
v.	:	
	:	Attorney Registration No. 318336
JOHN ROBERT CAFFESE	:	
Respondent	:	(Monroe County)

ORDER

AND NOW, this 28th day of September 2026, in accordance with Rule 215(g), Pa.R.D.E., the three-member Panel of the Disciplinary Board having reviewed and approved the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent filed in the above captioned matter; it is

ORDERED that JOHN ROBERT CAFFESE, be subjected to a PUBLIC **REPRIMAND** by the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as provided in Rule 204(a) and Rule 205(c)(9) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement.

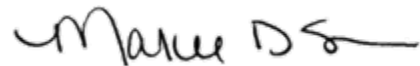
BY THE BOARD:



Board Chair

TRUE COPY FROM RECORD

Attest:



Marcee D. Sloan
Board Prothonotary
The Disciplinary Board of the
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, : No. 120 DB 2026

Petitioner

v.

JOHN ROBERT CAFFESE,
Respondent

:
:
:
:
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:
Atty. Registration No. 318336
: (Monroe County)

JOINT PETITION IN SUPPORT OF DISCIPLINE ON CONSENT
PURSUANT TO Pa.R.D.E. 215(d)

Office of Disciplinary Counsel (hereinafter "ODC"), by Thomas J. Farrell, Esquire, Chief Disciplinary Counsel, and Jennifer E. Tobias, Esquire, Disciplinary Counsel, and Respondent, John Robert Caffese, Esquire, who is represented by Brett Riegel, Esquire, file this Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent under Rule 215(d) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement (hereinafter "Pa.R.D.E.") and respectfully state and aver the following:

1. ODC, whose principal office is situated at Pennsylvania Judicial Center, 601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 2700, P.O. Box 62485, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17106, is invested, pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 207, with the power and duty to investigate all matters involving alleged

misconduct of any attorney admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and to prosecute all disciplinary proceedings brought in accordance with the various provisions of said Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement.

2. Respondent, John Robert Caffese, was born in 1986 and was admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on October 31, 2014. Respondent's Attorney Registration number is 318336. His address of record is 1200 Blue Mountain Circle, Saylorsburg, PA 18353.

3. Respondent's license is currently active.

4. Pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 201(a)(1), Respondent is subject to the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

SPECIFIC FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS ADMITTED

5. In July 2021, there was a vacancy in the position of Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) for District Court 43-4-04 (Tobyhanna and Tunkhannock Townships, Monroe County).

6. At that time, Respondent resided at 1595 Spruce Street in Stroudsburg, PA, and had resided there since September 7, 2016.

7. Stroudsburg is not within the district served by District Court 43-4-04.

8. Residency in the district served by the Magisterial District Court for a period of one year preceding election or appointment is generally required for candidacy for the position. See 42 Pa.C.S.A. §3101(a). MDJ appointees also must live within the district in which they serve during their term in office. *Id.*

9. In December of 2021, Respondent rented a room from an acquaintance at 123 Stillwater Drive, Pocono Summit, PA.

10. If this matter were to proceed to hearing, Respondent would testify that he incorrectly believed that this satisfied the residency requirement.

11. On April 20, 2022, Respondent completed a Questionnaire for Local Judicial Nominees listing his residential address as 123 Stillwater Drive in Pocono Summit, and listing the Spruce Street address in Stroudsburg as his business address.

12. Respondent affixed to his completed Questionnaire a signed Affidavit attesting “that the information provided in this statement is, to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate”.

13. If this matter were to proceed to hearing, Respondent would testify that at the time he signed the Affidavit and had it notarized, Respondent believed the information contained therein was accurate and

sufficient, though it was later deemed false and insufficient.

14. On June 13, 2022, Respondent registered to vote at 123 Stillwater Drive in Pocono Summit; however, Respondent's listed mailing address on the voter registration form remained the Stroudsburg address.

15. If this matter were to proceed to hearing Respondent would testify that he kept his mailing address on the voter registration form at the Stroudsburg address because there was no mail receptacle at 123 Stillwater Drive.

16. On June 13, 2022, Respondent submitted a Statement of Financial Interests Form to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, listing his home address as 123 Stillwater Drive in Pocono Summit.

17. Respondent signed the Statement of Financial Interests Form, affirming the "foregoing information is true and correct to the best of said person's knowledge information and belief...", subject to the penalties prescribed by 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4904 (Unsworn Falsification of Authorities) and the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, 65 Pa.C.S. §1109(b).

18. An MDJ appointment requires the consent of the Senate of Pennsylvania.

19. On June 13, 2022, Respondent completed and signed a Senate Nomination Questionnaire listing his voting address (home) as 123 Stillwater

Drive, Pocono Summit, and his business address as 1595 Spruce Street in Stroudsburg.

20. If this matter were to proceed to hearing, Respondent would testify that at the time he signed the Questionnaire and had it notarized, Respondent believed the information to be accurate; he now recognizes that it could be misleading.

21. On June 13, 2022, Governor Tom Wolf nominated Respondent to the position of MDJ for District Court 43-4-04.

22. The nomination was approved by the Senate of Pennsylvania.

23. On July 8, 2022, Respondent was formally appointed to the position of Magisterial District Justice for District Court 43-4-04.

24. On July 24, 2022, after Respondent's appointment to serve as MDJ, Respondent submitted to the U.S. Postal Service a mail forwarding form, from 123 Stillwater Drive in Pocono Summit to 1595 Spruce Street in Stroudsburg, PA.

25. If this matter were to proceed to hearing, Respondent would testify that he submitted the mail forwarding form in order to secure his PA Driver's license renewal.

26. On or about November 29, 2022, a criminal information was filed against Respondent in the matter captioned *Commonwealth of*

Pennsylvania v. John R. Caffese, docketed at CP-45-CR-0002905-2022, Court of Common Pleas of Monroe County, charging Respondent with the following crimes:

- a. (4) counts of Theft by Deception-False Impression, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §3922 (a)(1), graded as Felonies of the 3rd degree;
- b. (4) counts of Receiving Stolen Property, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §3925(a), graded as Felonies of the 3rd degree;
- c. (1) count of Unsworn Falsification to Authorities, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4904 (a)(1), a Misdemeanor of the 2nd degree;
- d. (1) count of False Swearing-Official Proceeding, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4903 (a)(1), a Misdemeanor of the 2nd degree;
- e. (1) count of False Swearing, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4903 (b), a Misdemeanor of the 3rd degree;
- f. (1) count of Criminal Attempt Obstruction of the Administration of Law, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §901(a), a Misdemeanor of the 2nd degree; and
- g. (1) count of Statement under Penalty of Law, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4904 (b), a Misdemeanor of the 3rd degree.

27. On November 30, 2022, the Judicial Conduct Board filed a petition in the Court of Judicial Discipline seeking an interim order directing Respondent be suspended without pay, pending final disposition of the criminal charges.

28. On December 14, 2022, the Court of Judicial Discipline issued an Order suspending Respondent without pay, effective immediately.

29. On April 18, 2024, ODC sent Respondent a DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position letter ("DB-7 Letter") concerning the above-stated facts.

30. On June 12, 2024, Respondent submitted a response to ODC's DB-7 Letter denying any attempt to mislead or falsify information regarding his eligibility for the position.

31. On July 15, 2025, Respondent entered a *nolo contendere* plea to one count of Obstructing Administration of Law or Other Governmental Function, 18 Pa.C.S.A. §5101, a Misdemeanor of the Second Degree.

32. Respondent did not report his conviction to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel until August 18, 2025.

33. On January 23, 2026, Office of Disciplinary Counsel reported Respondent's criminal conviction to the Court pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 214.

34. In pleading *nolo contendere*, Respondent acknowledged and admitted that the Commonwealth had sufficient evidence to prove Respondent's actions met the elements of the offense charged in the plea documents.

35. Respondent acknowledges that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate Respondent obstructed an investigation.

36. The remaining charges were dismissed.

37. On July 15, 2025, the Honorable Stephen M. Higgins sentenced Respondent to six months of probation and payment of the costs of prosecution.

38. Respondent complied with the terms of probation and the criminal case is closed.

39. By his conduct alleged in paragraphs 5 through 38 above, Respondent violated the following Rule of Professional Conduct and Pennsylvania Rule of Disciplinary Enforcement:

a. RPC 8.4(b), which states that it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to commit a criminal act that reflects adversely on the lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness or fitness as a lawyer in other respects; and

b. Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(1), which states that conviction of a crime shall be grounds for discipline.

SPECIFIC JOINT RECOMMENDATION FOR DISCIPLINE

40. ODC and Respondent jointly recommend that the appropriate discipline for Respondent's admitted misconduct is a public reprimand.

41. Respondent hereby consents to the discipline being imposed upon him by the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

42. Attached to this Petition as "Exhibit A" is Respondent's

executed Affidavit required by Pa.R.D.E. 215(d), stating that he consents to the recommended discipline and including the mandatory acknowledgements contained in Pa.R.D.E. 215(d)(1) through (4).

43. In support of the Joint Petition, ODC and Respondent respectfully submit the following mitigating factors are present:

- a. Respondent is 40 years old, has been practicing over 11 years, and has no prior record of misconduct;
- b. Respondent is a member of the Pennsylvania National Guard and served as Judge Advocate General (“JAG”) Officer since 2017;
- c. Respondent showed acceptance of responsibility by entering a plea of *nolo contendere* to a charge of Obstruction of Justice;
- d. Respondent is sincerely remorseful for his actions;
- e. Respondent has no prior criminal history; and
- f. Respondent has expressed his willingness to accept a public reprimand.

44. As with all disciplinary matters predicated on a criminal conviction, the sole issue to be resolved is the extent of the discipline to be imposed on Respondent. ***Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Joshua Eilberg***, 441 A.2d 1193 (Pa. 1982). The parties jointly submit that a public reprimand is appropriate in light of the specific facts of this case and

consistent with case precedent.

45. Precedent exists to support the imposition of a public reprimand for an attorney who engaged in a non-violent criminal offense. ***See Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Michael B. Howard***, No. 48 DB 2021 (D.Bd. Order 4/27/21) (Public reprimand with 2 years' probation administered to respondent convicted of his third and fourth DUI offenses, graded as misdemeanors of the second degree; respondent had a prior Informal Admonition for his two prior DUI convictions); ***Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Paul Christopher Dougherty***, No. 37 DB 2019 (D.Bd. Order 2/19/21) (Public reprimand on consent approved by the Board based on respondent's (a township commissioner) New Jersey conviction for third degree conspiracy to confer an unlawful benefit upon himself while acting in his capacity as an elected public official); ***Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Susan P. Halpern***, No. 144 DB 2019 (D.Bd. Order 8/21/19) (Board approved public reprimand on consent for a lawyer convicted of multiple federal crimes involving tax evasion); and ***Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Carol Ann Forti***, No. 186 DB 2016 (D.Bd. Order 12/12/16) (Board imposed public reprimand where respondent forged a letter misrepresenting her employment status with a federal agency, and presented the letter to a leasing consultant for an apartment complex where she was attempting to

lease an apartment).

46. A public reprimand is also supported by cases involving a public official charged with misconduct. ***Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Richard E. Bower***, No. 115 DB 2022 (D.Bd. Order 9/16/2022) (Public reprimand imposed based on respondent's conflict of interest involving prosecution of respondent's adult son while respondent was serving as District Attorney of Fayette County); ***see also Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Charles Aliano***, No. 25 DB 2003 (D.Bd. Rpt. 8/31/2005)(S. Ct. Order 12/1/2005) (Public censure for misconduct that occurred while respondent was serving as a part-time district attorney; respondent used his position to have pending DUI charges withdrawn against a defendant while having a personal interest in the outcome based on his representation of the defendant's wife); and in contrast, in ***Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Michael James Donohue***, No. 1921 Disciplinary Docket No.3; No. 136 DB 2013 (S.Ct. Order 3/21/2014) more serious discipline in the nature of a one year suspension (with eight months stayed and four months served) was warranted where respondent, a Delaware County district attorney, was convicted of a Misdemeanor of the First degree after striking a 14-year old pedestrian while driving intoxicated and fleeing the scene of the accident. Respondent Donohue's behavior was considerably more serious than that of Respondent in this case.

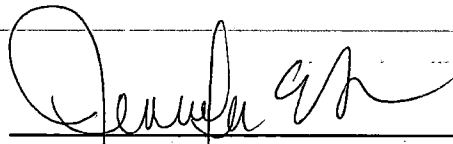
47. Based on Respondent's *nolo contendere* plea, mitigating factors, lack of aggravating factors, and precedent established by discipline imposed in comparable cases, the parties recommend the appropriate discipline to be imposed in this matter is a public reprimand.

WHEREFORE, Petitioner and Respondent respectfully request that, pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 215(e), 215(g) and 215(i), a three-member panel of the Disciplinary Board review and approve the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent, and order that Respondent receive a Public Reprimand and pay the necessary expenses incurred in the investigation and prosecution of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

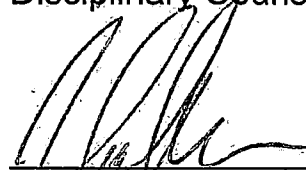
OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL
Thomas J. Farrell, Esquire
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

8/31/26
Date



Jennifer E. Tobias, Esquire
Disciplinary Counsel

8/23/26
Date



John Robert Caffese, Esquire
Respondent

8/28/24

Date

Brett J. Riegel

Brett J. Riegel, Esquire
Respondent's Counsel

EXHIBIT A

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, : No. DB 2026

Petitioner

v.

JOHN ROBERT CAFFESE,
Respondent

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:
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: Atty. Registration No. 318336
: (Monroe County)

AFFIDAVIT UNDER RULE 215(d) OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA RULES OF DISCIPLINARY ENFORCEMENT

John Robert Caffese, Respondent in the above-captioned matter, hereby submits this affidavit consenting to the imposition of a public reprimand and further states as follows:

1. He is an attorney actively licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, having been admitted to the bar on October 31, 2014.

2. He desires to submit a Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent Pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 215(d);

3. His consent is freely and voluntarily rendered; he is not being subjected to coercion or duress; he is fully aware of the implications of submitting this affidavit;

4. He is aware that there is presently pending a proceeding regarding allegations
that he has been guilty of misconduct as set forth in the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent Pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 215(d) to which this affidavit is attached;

5. He acknowledges that the material facts set forth in the Joint Petition are true;

6. He submits this affidavit because he knows that if charges predicated upon the matter continued to be prosecuted in the pending proceeding, he could not successfully

defend against them;

7. He acknowledges that he is fully aware of his right to consult and employ counsel to represent him in the instant proceeding and has retained, consulted, and acted upon the advice of Brett Riegel, Esquire, in his decision to execute the within Joint Petition.

It is understood that the statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. §4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

Date:

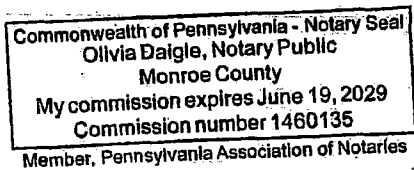
8/28/26

By:

[Signature]
John Robert Caffese
Respondent

Subscribed and sworn
before me on this 28th
day of August, 2026.

[Signature]
Notary Public



BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, : No. DB 2026

Petitioner

v.

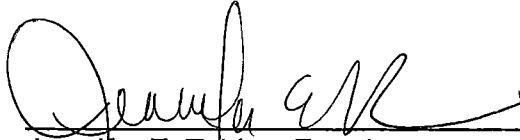
JOHN ROBERT CAFFESE,
Respondent

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:
:
: Atty. Registration No. 318336
: (Monroe County)

VERIFICATION

The statements contained in the foregoing *Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent Under Pa.R.D.E. 215(d)* are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or information and belief and are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. §4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

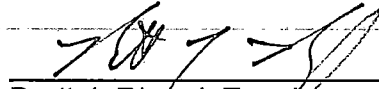
8/31/26
Date


Jennifer E. Tobias, Esquire
Disciplinary Counsel

8/28/26
Date


John Robert Caffese, Esquire
Respondent

7/27/26
Date


Brett J. Riegel, Esquire
Respondent's Counsel

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, No. DB

Petitioner :

v. :

: ODC File No. C3-22-956

JOHN ROBERT CAFFESE,

Respondent :

: Attorney Registration No. 318336

: (Monroe County)

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I am this day serving a copy of the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent and all accompanying documents upon the person and in the manner indicated below, which service satisfies the requirements of Pa.R.A.P. 121.

First Class Mail and Email:

John Robert Caffese, Esquire

c/o Brett Riegel, Esquire

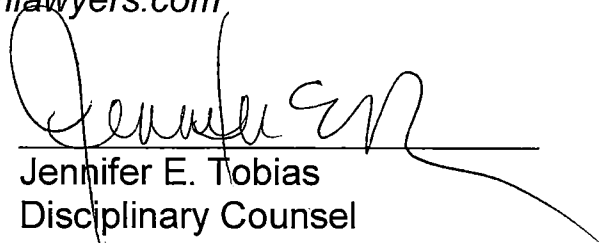
ARM Lawyers

18 N. 8th Street

Stroudsburg, PA 18360-1718

Email: brett@armlawyers.com

Date: August 31, 2026



Jennifer E. Tobias

Disciplinary Counsel

Attorney Registration No. 82816

Office of Disciplinary Counsel

District III Office

601 Commonwealth Ave.

Suite 5800

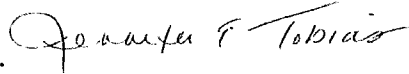
Harrisburg, PA 17106

(717) 772-8572

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: Office of Disciplinary Counsel

Signature: 

Name: Jennifer Tobias

Attorney No. (if applicable): 82816