



Judicial Conduct Board
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Richard W. Long, Chief Counsel
717-234-7911

Press Release

Friday, February 4, 2022

**FROM: Hon. Renée Cohn Jubelirer
Chair**

**SUBJECT: Appointment of New Chief Counsel and Deputy Chief Counsel to the
Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board**

HARRISBURG, PA – The Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania has named Francis J. Puskas, II, Esquire, of Lebanon, to the position of Chief Counsel, and Melissa L. Norton, Esquire, of Lancaster, to the position of Deputy Chief Counsel effective upon the departure of Richard W. Long, Esquire, the current Chief Counsel. Mr. Puskas will succeed Mr. Long who will resign from the Judicial Conduct Board at the close of business today to join a statewide professional association as General Counsel. Mr. Puskas currently serves as the Deputy Chief Counsel to the Board. As Chief Counsel to the Board, Mr. Puskas will lead the independent judicial agency, which includes a talented team of attorneys, investigators, and support staff based in the Pennsylvania Judicial Center in Harrisburg. Ms. Norton currently serves as Deputy Counsel to the Board and will fill the vacancy of Deputy Chief Counsel created upon the appointment of Mr. Puskas to Chief Counsel.

The Judicial Conduct Board is an independent body of Pennsylvania citizens that comprises three judges, three attorneys, and six non-lawyer electors. Half of the Board members are appointed by the Governor and half by the Supreme Court. The Board's members serve four-year terms, without pay, and no more than half of its appointed members may be from the same political party.

Mr. Puskas has served as counsel to the Judicial Conduct Board since 2002 and as its Deputy Chief Counsel since 2005. Prior to working for the Board, Mr. Puskas served as an Assistant District Attorney in Warren County, Pennsylvania, and as Deputy Attorney General in the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. He also served as an associate attorney with the law firm Fox and Fox in Norristown, Pennsylvania.

As Deputy Chief Counsel, Mr. Puskas has for many years served as a judicial ethics instructor for the Pennsylvania Minor Judiciary Education Board's continuing legal education program for magisterial district judges, Philadelphia arraignment court magistrates, and judges of the former Philadelphia Traffic Court. He has also lectured on judicial ethics before Pennsylvania Bar Association and county bar association conferences.

He graduated *summa cum laude* with honors from Lafayette College (B.A.) and received his Juris Doctor from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

Said Puskas, “I have dedicated many years to the Board’s important mission of upholding the independence and integrity of our judiciary. I look forward to continuing that commitment and ensuring the highest public confidence in our judicial system. I am both humbled and honored by the confidence and support of the Board.”

Ms. Norton began her service with the Judicial Conduct Board in 2016 as Assistant Counsel and was promoted to Deputy Counsel in 2018. Prior to joining the Board, she served as an Assistant District Attorney in Northumberland County for 25 years followed by several years as an Assistant Public Defender in Northumberland and Lancaster Counties. Ms. Norton graduated from Shippensburg University (B.S.) and Duquesne University School of Law (J.D.).

Created by constitutional amendment in 1993, the Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania is an independent board within the judicial branch of the Commonwealth’s government responsible for reviewing, investigating, and, where warranted, prosecuting complaints of judicial misconduct. If the Board, by majority vote, decides that there is probable cause to believe that a judge engaged in misconduct, the Board may file a complaint in the Court of Judicial Discipline where the Board must prove the charges against the judge by clear and convincing evidence. The Court of Judicial Discipline decides if the Board has sustained its burden of proof and decides the sanction to be imposed for any proven misconduct.

For further information about the Judicial Conduct Board, visit the Board’s Website at www.jcbpa.org.###