



Judicial Conduct Board
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
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Press Release

Thursday, March 14, 2024

FROM: Melissa L. Norton
Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Judicial Conduct Board Elects Officers

HARRISBURG, PA – At its February 5, 2024 meeting, the Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania (“Board”) elected its officers for the coming year effective March 14, 2024. The Board unanimously elected Scott B. Cooper, Esquire as Chair, Sudhir Patel, Esquire as Vice Chair, the Honorable Risa Vetri Ferman as Secretary, President Judge Emeritus (ret) Susan Peikes Gantman as Chair of the Board’s Budget Committee, and Marie Conley as Chair of the Board’s Personnel Committee.

The twelve-member Board is an independent Board within the Judicial Branch of the Commonwealth’s government comprised of twelve Pennsylvania citizens: three judges, three lawyers and six non-lawyer electors. The Governor and the Supreme Court each appoint six of the Board’s members. The Board’s members serve four-year terms, without pay, and no more than one-half of its members may be from the same political party.

Created by constitutional amendment in 1993, the Board reviews, investigates, and, where warranted, prosecutes 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 also decides the sanction to be imposed upon the judge for any proven misconduct.

About Scott B. Cooper, Esquire

Governor Tom Wolf appointed Mr. Cooper to serve as a lawyer member on the Board effective July 30, 2021. His term of service will conclude on July 29, 2025.

Mr. Cooper is a partner at Schmidt Kramer P.C., a Harrisburg-based personal injury law firm where he specializes in personal injury law with an emphasis on motor vehicle accident and insurance cases.

About Sudhir R. Patel, Esquire

Governor Tom Wolf appointed Mr. Patel to serve as a lawyer member of the Board effective February 8, 2022. His term of service will conclude on February 7, 2026.

Mr. Patel is a partner in the Pottsville, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania law firm of Fanelli, Evans & Patel, P.C. He is a trial lawyer who has handled and tried cases in various state and federal courts throughout Pennsylvania. His areas of practice include personal injury, medical malpractice, construction litigation and criminal defense.

About Judge Risa Vetri Ferman

Governor Josh Shapiro appointed Judge Ferman to serve as a judge member of the Board effective March 20, 2023 and she will serve the balance of an unexpired four-year term with eligibility for re-appointment. Her term of service will conclude on January 25, 2026.

Judge Ferman is a trial court judge in the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas. She was elected in 2015 and took the bench in January 2016. She currently serves in the Criminal Division.

About President Judge Emeritus (ret) Susan Peikes Gantman

The Supreme Court appointed Judge Gantman to serve as a lawyer member of the Board effective August 16, 2022. Her term of service will conclude on August 15, 2026.

Judge Gantman was elected to a ten-year term on the Superior Court in 2003 and retained in 2013. She was elected by as President Judge of the Superior Court for a five-year term on January 7, 2014 to January 6, 2019. On April 1, 2020, Judge Gantman took senior status on the Superior Court. She retired in December 2021.

She is a 1974 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, *cum laude*, and a Masters of Arts degree. She went on to earn her Juris Doctor from Villanova University School of Law in 1977.

About Marie Conley

The Supreme Court reappointed Ms. Conley to serve as a lay member of the Board effective January 20, 2024. Her term of service will conclude on June 13, 2027.

Ms. Conley, of Dauphin County, is a consultant focusing on stakeholder and team development, event and project orchestration, and engagement and strategic communications for a variety of clients through her company, Conley Consulting, LLC.

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