



## LOCAL PROFESSIONALISM PANEL REPORT FORM

<b>Chief Judge of Circuit:</b>	Christopher N. Patterson
<b>Name of Submitter:</b>	Christopher Butler
<b>Date:</b>	12/16/2024

**\*Reports must be filed by June 15 and December 15 each year.**

### SC 2023-0884 - Appendix A Code for Resolving Professionalism Referrals 3.7 Reporting

- a) Each LPP must file a written report with the chief judge of its circuit, the Florida Supreme Court, and The Florida Bar identifying all professionalism referrals received against a member of The Florida Bar in June and December of each calendar year.
- b) The biannual reports must include the following information for each referral for the six (6) calendar months preceding the month in which the report is due:
  1. The date of the referral;
  2. The circuit in which the issue arose;
  3. A short summary detailing the substance of the referral;
  4. The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process;
  5. Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process;
  6. The resolution, if any, of the referral; and
  7. Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent.
- c) The reports must not include identifying information for the respondent or the party who submitted the referral.

## INFORMATION FOR SUBMITTERS

1. **Purpose and Use:** This form collects information about your Circuit's Local Professionalism Panel and its activity for the last six (6) months. This form also asks for updates to the contact information for your Local Professionalism Panel. The information about your Circuit's Local Professionalism Panel will be used to update the Center's Local Professionalism Panel contact list, as well as to gauge how each Circuit is carrying out panel activities.
  
2. **Reporting Period:** Reports must be filed by June 15th and December 15th and include information for the six (6) calendar months preceding the month in which the report is due.
  
3. **Where to Submit:** Submit this form and any attachments by email to [cfp@floridabar.org](mailto:cfp@floridabar.org) or by regular mail to:

The Florida Bar  
Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism  
651 E. Jefferson Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

4. **Questions:** Direct all questions about this form to [cfp@floridabar.org](mailto:cfp@floridabar.org).

**June Reports should include information from January 1 to June 15.**  
**December Reports should include information from June 16 to December 15.**

## **LOCAL PROFESSIONALISM PANEL QUESTIONS**

Please complete the information below regarding any activity within your Local Professionalism Panel. Additional pages may be attached as needed.

- 1. Please describe the process by which complaints are addressed.** You may attach a link to the complaint form or link to where information is located on your website that advises the consumers, attorneys, and judges how to file a complaint.

Complaints are to be submitted to the Panel's Chairperson. The Chairperson then notifies the respondent of the complaint and requests that the respondent meet with the members of the Panel. At any point in the process, the Panel may decide that additional information is needed and may discuss the complaint with the referring party or other witnesses. If the Panel determines that action is necessary, the Panel provides recommendations and referrals to the respondent attorney designed to help remedy any unprofessional conduct and to assist with any other underlying issues. The Panel may also decide that the matter needs to be elevated higher than the local level, at which point the Chairperson will refer the matter to the Florida Bar for investigation.

The Administrative Order setting out this procedure can be found here:  
<https://www.jud14.flcourts.org/professionalism>

- 2. Please describe what types of professionalism issues are seen most often in this Circuit?**

Historically, complaints in our Circuit have primarily dealt with scheduling/attendance issues, delays in communication, and unprofessional electronic communications.

**3. What are believed to be the causes of professionalism issues within your Circuit?**

The most common causes of professionalism issues in our Circuit have been:

- 1) being overworked as a result of taking on more cases than an attorney can manage and/or poor time management,
- 2) personal stressors, and
- 3) adjusting to the technological changes in the legal system.

**4. How often does your Circuit's Local Professionalism Panel meet?**

We typically meet as part of the Circuit's quarterly Bench/Bar meetings and as needed to discuss referrals. We also have at least one stand alone meeting per year.

**5. Please describe any training provided to committee members.**

Aside from the mandatory training required by the Supreme Court, there is no other training provided at this time. There has been consideration of offering supplemental training or mentoring to new members of the Panel.

**6. How is your Circuit's Local Professionalism Panel promoted?**

A list of the members of the Panel can be found in an administrative order on the Circuit's website. Once the bar association completes their new website, information about the LPP will be included there for use by both attorneys and the public.

7. Please provide information regarding all complaint intake for the appropriate dates. If filing in June, the information should be from January 1<sup>st</sup> – June 15<sup>th</sup>. If filing in December, the information should be from June 16<sup>th</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup>.

1.

<b>Date of Referral:</b> March 22, 2024	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b> 14
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral</b>	
<p>Note - While the referral date fell within the prior reporting cycle, the matter was addressed during the current cycle.</p> <p>The referral concerns an attorney not filing appropriate pleadings, arriving to court late, and sometimes failing to appear at all.</p>	
<b>The relationship of the respondent to the person submitting the referral.</b>	
<p>The respondent is a local attorney who practices in front of the person submitting the referral.</p>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<p>The respondent did voluntarily participate and was open with the panel.</p>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<p>The respondent came across as contrite and offered to apologize to the complainant. The complainant was willing to accept the apology.</p>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	
<p>The current panel is unaware of any formal referrals against the respondent.</p>	

2.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral</b>	
<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

3.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral</b>	
<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

4.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral</b>	
<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

5.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral</b>	
<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

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<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
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<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
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<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
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<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

8.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral</b>	
<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

9.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
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<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

10.

<b>Date of Referral:</b>	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b>
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<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process</b>	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b>	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral;*</b>	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent</b>	

8. **Please provide the contact information for all current panel members.** Please include: name(s), email(s), address(es), and phone number(s), and title if applicable.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title/Firm</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Chris Butler	Chair	butlerlawpa@gmail.com	456 E. 11th Street Panama City, FL 32401	850-747-5180
Douglas Smith	Vice Chair	dsmith@burkeblue.com	P.O. Box 70 Panama City, FL 32402	850-769-1414
Judge Russell Roberts	Member	baggettm@jud14.flcourts.org	201 N. Oklahoma Street Bonifay, FL 32425	850-547-1106
Nichole Pieper	Member	nichole.pieper@pd14.fl.gov	P.O. Box 580 Panama City, FL 32402	850-784-6155
Todd Brister	Member	tbrister@knology.net	P.O. Box 1759 Panama City, FL 32402	850-215-7885
Matthew Fuqua	Member	mfuqua@fmc.legal	P.O. Box 1508 Marianna, FL 32446	850-526-2263

**The Florida Bar will publish on its website the LPP biannual reports. The Chief Judge, or the Chief Judge’s designee, will publish on the judicial Circuit’s website the LPP biannual reports from that Circuit.**