



## LOCAL PROFESSIONALISM PANEL REPORT FORM

<b>Chief Judge of Circuit:</b>	Francis J. Allman
<b>Name of Submitter:</b>	Melissa VanSickle, Chair of the Local Professionalism Panel
<b>Date:</b>	December 9, 2024

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

### SC 2023-884- 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).

## LOCAL PROFESSIONALISM PANEL QUESTIONS

June Reports should include information from January 1 to June 15.

December Reports should include information from June 16 to December 15.

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.

Per the Second Judicial Circuit AO 2023-02, "Upon receiving the complaint, the Chairperson of the Panel at the initial review of the Complaint, may determine that the conduct is too severe to be handled by the Panel and may refer the Complaint to ACAP at The Florida Bar. If the Chairperson does not refer the Complaint to ACAP, the Chairperson shall create a "Complaint Resolution Sub-Panel" to receive and review the complaint to determine if any action should be taken. The "Complaint Resolution Sub Panel" shall be comprised of members of the Panel designated by the Chair on a per complaint rotating basis."

Link to Complaint Form:

[https://2ndcircuit.leoncountyfl.gov/resources/Professionalism\\_Panel\\_Complaint\\_Form.pdf](https://2ndcircuit.leoncountyfl.gov/resources/Professionalism_Panel_Complaint_Form.pdf)

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

The Second Judicial Circuit receives very few complaints. The few that we do receive tend to be related to unprofessional conduct or being disorganized or unprepared.

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

The causes of professionalism issues we see in the Second Judicial Circuit are generally lack of experience or frustration with clients and the process; being disorganized or unprepared.

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

The panel meets annually.

In addition, the Second Judicial Circuit Professionalism Panel held our quarterly Side Bar Series on October 11, 2024, which included other members of the local bar associations. Chief Judge Frank Allman hosted the event. The Side Bar Series is a smaller group setting of approximately 15 attorneys gathering for an hour to discuss a range of professionalism topics for CLE credit. The idea is to provide a comfortable environment to discuss professionalism issues. It was successful and another event is planned for February 2025.

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

On February 22, 2024, the Chief Judge in coordination with the Chair of the panel convened a meeting with the panel members. At that meeting, the panel was given an updated overview of the process for the handling of professionalism complaints in the Second Judicial Circuit and a reminder of the importance of the panel and its role in professionalism for the Circuit. The panel was also notified of the important, newly required CLE course on professionalism and the professionalism panel, which offers a great overview of the panel and its important role in the circuit, as well as the difference between ethics matters and professionalism matters. The Circuit is currently awaiting the specific professionalism panel training that we understand will come out from the Florida Bar.

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

Panel members typically promote the Panel through the local voluntary bar associations. For instance, the Panel has been invited to speak at local bar association meetings and was featured at an Inn of Court presentation. The Panel has also partnered with the Tallahassee Bar Association to host quarterly lunch events with local judges to promote professionalism and educate circuit members about the Panel, called the "Side Bar Series" which is addressed in #4 above. In addition, the Chief Judge works to promote the panel within the Circuit throughout the year at various events and meetings and with the other Circuit and County Judges.

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> to June 15<sup>th</sup>. If filing in December, the information should be from June 16<sup>th</sup> to December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Referral #1**

<b>Date of Referral:</b> 8/14/2024	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b> 2nd
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral.</b> Allegation of inappropriate relationship between attorney and client.	
<b>The relationship of the respondent to the person submitting the referral.</b> Unclear	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b> At this time, the respondent has not.	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral.</b> The referral remains unresolved.	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent?</b> No.	

**Referral #2**

<b>Date of Referral:</b> 8/14/2024	<b>Circuit in which issue arose:</b> 2nd
<b>Short Summary detailing the substance of the referral.</b> Allegation of inappropriate behavior with client.	
<b>The relationship of the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b> Unclear.	
<b>Whether or not the respondent voluntarily participated in the process.</b> At this time, the respondent has not.	
<b>The resolution, if any, of the referral.</b> The referral remains unresolved.	
<b>Whether there were previous referrals against the respondent.</b> No.	

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.

Second Judicial Circuit Professionalism Panel				
Revised December 2024				
Name	Title/Firm	Email	Address	Phone Number
Melissa VanSickle	Board Chair/Nelson Mullins	<a href="mailto:Melissa.VanSickle@nelsonmullins.com">Melissa.VanSickle@nelsonmullins.com</a>	215 S. Monroe Street Ste 400 Tallahassee, FL 32301	850-907-2517
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