



Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge

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Bryon M. Large
Presiding Disciplinary Judge

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE

2024 Report on Operations¹

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OVERVIEW

The Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge (“OPDJ” or “Office”) is authorized under C.R.C.P. 242.6(c)(1). In addition to the Presiding Disciplinary Judge (“PDJ”), OPDJ is staffed by a full-time administrator, a full-time administrative assistant, and two full-time staff attorneys. OPDJ is located in the Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center, 1300 Broadway, Suite 250, in Denver, Colorado.

Generally, the PDJ sits with hearing boards to decide lawyer discipline cases as well as related reinstatement and readmission cases following a lawyer’s suspension or disbarment. The PDJ also sits with hearing boards to hear bar applicants’ challenges to adverse character and fitness determinations. In addition to these licensure-related matters, the PDJ alone hears lawyer disability cases and matters referred by the Colorado Supreme Court on the unauthorized practice of law and license revocation proceedings.

OPERATIONS

The data included herein shows that OPDJ had a busy 2024. The professionals and volunteers at OPDJ conducted 17 trials (a 7-year high), initiated 97 new cases (at least a 7-year high), and resolved and terminated 100 cases.² The Office accomplished such a feat despite its administrator being out on extended leave and the Office’s temporary relocation for over nine months.

On January 2, 2024, the Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center closed due to a break-in and damage. The building’s tower side remained closed until October 2024. OPDJ held hearings either remotely or offsite at various locations, including the Colorado Bar Association (“CBA”), the Colorado Court of Appeals, the Colorado Supreme Court, and the Denver City & County Building. In April 2024, the State Court Administrator’s Office assisted OPDJ to find a more stable and consistent temporary home at the Denver Juvenile Court in the Lindsey-Flanigan Building. Fortunately, with

¹ The Presiding Disciplinary Judge submits this report to the Colorado Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the Practice of Law, the Colorado Supreme Court, and the public, consistent with the PDJ’s obligations under C.R.C.P. 242.6(c)(5) and in furtherance of the Advisory Committee’s obligations under C.R.C.P. 242.3(c)(2).

² Though the Office lacks some historical calculations, this number is also likely a multi-year high, if not a record, for the Office.

such great partners in the Judicial Branch and at the CBA, OPDJ's operations continued seamlessly despite the disruption. Judge Large is grateful to the judges, justices, Judicial Department staff, and the CBA, which welcomed OPDJ staff with open arms and a sense of welcome.

Lawyer discipline cases continue to attract increasing media attention with each passing year. 2024 was notable due to the media's interest in two higher-profile cases. Judge Large has also received direct and indirect feedback from the media as to the ease of accessing information about cases, and he has used that information to improve internal systems to make information more accessible, though being mindful of the limitations in the Colorado Judicial Code.

OPDJ continues to seek ways to make its processes more transparent, with the primary goal of enhancing confidence in the work that it does. In 2024, OPDJ prepared to launch a new online searchable database, which went live in January 2025. The database is accessible at <https://research.coloradopdj.com>. The court's docket is also accessible on the OPDJ website.

BENCH/BAR MEETINGS

In 2022, OPDJ began regular meetings with the lawyers who practice before the PDJ. Meetings in 2024 took place on April 19, 2024, and November 15, 2024. The bar has requested maintaining a twice per year schedule, which Judge Large is happy to do. To promote attendance, OPDJ has transitioned these meetings from a winter/summer schedule to a spring/fall schedule, taking into account potential inclement weather and typical vacation time. The meetings are intended to provide updated information about OPDJ, its procedures, and its staff as well as to facilitate interaction between lawyers and OPDJ staff in a more relaxed setting.

THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE

Bryon M. Large, Colorado's third PDJ, was appointed by the Colorado Supreme Court on June 1, 2022. Judge Large brings to the position experience from his work as an immigration lawyer in solo and small firm private practice settings, as a trial attorney at the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel ("OARC"), and as a magistrate in the 17th Judicial District.

JUDGE LARGE'S COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH

Judge Large is actively involved in Colorado's legal community. Locally, Judge Large is a member of the CBA and the Adams/Broomfield Bar Association. He is also a member of a number of Colorado's diversity bar associations. On the national level, Judge Large is a member of the American Bar Association ("ABA") and serves on the governing boards of the National Council of Lawyer Disciplinary Boards ("NCLDB") and the International Association of LGBTQ+ Judges. He is also a formal mentor to law students at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law and the University of Colorado Law School.

In 2024, Judge Large regularly attended continuing legal education (“CLE”) programming throughout the year locally, but also attended the NCLDB annual conference, the ABA National Conference on Professional Responsibility, the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers annual conference, and the International Association of LGBTQ+ Judges annual meeting and conference.

Judge Large is committed to furthering public confidence in the legal system. As part of that commitment, Judge Large gave 8 presentations at CLE and public outreach programming in 2024. These presentations included the Our Courts program, a presentation at the Colorado District Attorney’s Council annual meeting, a trial skills program at the National Organization for Bar Counsel, along with CLE programming for the Adams/Broomfield Bar Association, the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar Association, and the CBA Law Club Ethics Review.

OPDJ STAFF

ADMINISTRATION TEAM (2.0 FTE) – Isidro Luna has served as OPDJ’s administrator since 2022. Mr. Luna and Judge Large are assisted by Jody Penney, OPDJ’s Administrative Assistant. She has been with the Office since 2012.

LEGAL TEAM (2.0 FTE) – OPDJ’s Chief Staff Attorney is Cori Peterson, who has served at OPDJ for fifteen years. Chris Gray has been with OPDJ since August 2020 as a Staff Attorney. During the 2024 summer semester, OPDJ hosted an intern from the University of Colorado College of Law. During the 2024 fall semester, OPDJ hosted an intern who was a participant in the Judge Mix Diversity Internship Program. As OPDJ’s workload continues to increase, OPDJ looks ahead to hiring a law clerk for one-to-two-year terms.

OPDJ HEARING BOARDS

Under C.R.C.P. 242.7, the Colorado Supreme Court appoints a hearing board pool. Pool members, who serve six-year terms, are Colorado lawyers and laypeople. Two available members are chosen from the pool at random to hear discipline, reinstatement, and readmission cases alongside the PDJ.³ At the end of 2024, the hearing board pool comprised 133 members: 109 lawyers and 24 laypeople.

In 2024, the PDJ recommended the appointment of 18 new members to the hearing board pool. Of those 18, 7 are women, 10 are men, and 1 is nonbinary; 14 are lawyers and 4 are laypeople. Also in 2024, 5 members resigned from the pool.

Judge Large actively seeks new hearing board members, focusing on traditional notions of diversity as well as practice-area and geographic diversity. Further, Judge Large hopes to promote the public’s confidence in the lawyer disciplinary system by expanding the number of laypeople

³ At least one Colorado lawyer member must serve on each hearing board. Admissions cases are heard by the PDJ and members of the Character and Fitness Committee.

in the hearing board pool, with an eventual goal of seating one layperson on each hearing board. There is no limit to the hearing board pool size.

OPDJ Hearing Board Pool Composition by Year													
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Lawyers	124	120	115	109	108	107	104	100	96	86	85	100	109
Laypeople	13	13	12	12	29	27	25	24	24	23	16	20	24
Total:	137	133	127	121	137	134	129	124	120	109	101	120	133

Each year, volunteer hearing board members put in countless hours of work, dedicating their time to promoting the public interest and serving the legal profession. In 2024, 26 volunteer hearing board members served on panels in 13 matters. Of those volunteers, 22 were lawyers and 4 were laypeople. Laypeople served on panels in 4 matters. Thus, laypeople served on over 30% of the trials heard in 2024.

Volunteer Hearing Board Service Data by Year			
	2022	2023	2024
Hearing Board Hearings:	10	8	12
Hearing Board Opinions:	11 ⁴	7 ⁵	13 ⁶
Lawyer Volunteers:	18	17	22
Lay Volunteers:	4	0	4
Discipline Hearings:	4	5	5
Contested Sanctions Hearings:	1	2	1
Reinstatement Hearings:	4	0	4
Readmission Hearings:	0	0	1
Character & Fitness Hearings:	1	1	1

⁴ One panel issued an opinion on remand following appellate proceedings before the Colorado Supreme Court.

⁵ One panel did not issue an opinion after the panel learned that the respondent was found deceased during the hearing.

⁶ One panel issued an opinion on remand following proceedings before the Colorado Supreme Court.

OPDJ OPERATIONS BY THE NUMBERS

Case Initiations

Calendar year 2024 saw 97 cases initiated with OPDJ:

- 61 – Lawyer Discipline
- 10 – Reciprocal Discipline
- 10 – Lawyer Disability
- 7 – Reinstatement from Discipline or Disability
- 4 – Protective Order
- 2 – Character and Fitness
- 2 – Interim Suspension
- 1 – Readmission
- 0 – Unauthorized Practice of Law

Total Case Initiations Filed by Year⁷							
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022⁸	2023	2024
101	90	89	81	94	75	83	97

Disability Petitions Filed by Year							
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
8	14	11	9	11	7	3	10

Character and Fitness Cases Filed by Year							
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
2	0	0	4	0	0	2	2

Unauthorized Practice of Law Cases Filed by Year							
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
6	7	4	2	2	4	1	0

⁷ Numbers include all types of cases filed, including disability, character and fitness, and unauthorized practice of law cases.

⁸ OPDJ generally changed how it initiates a new case on June 1, 2022. Previous procedures generally registered pre-complaint filings as separate cases.

Case Resolutions

OPDJ resolved 100 cases in 2024:

- 14 Disbarments
- 42 Suspensions
- 13 Public Censures
- 1 Private Admonition
- 0 Diversion
- 7 Reinstatements approved
- 1 Reinstatement denied
- 1 Readmission denied
- 0 Probation Revocation
- 0 Unauthorized Practice of Law
- 10 Transfers to Disability Inactive Status
- 2 Character and Fitness
- 3 Dismissals⁹
- 1 Abeyance
- 5 Consolidations

Cases Resolved by Year		
2022	2023	2024
62	71	100

Case Dispositions by Year¹⁰			
	2022	2023	2024
Disbarment	5	13	14
Suspension	30	33	44
Public Censure	6	15	13
Private Admonition	0	1	1
Diversion	0	1	0
Reinstatement Approved	2	4	7
Reinstatement Denied	3	0	1
Probation Revocation	1	2	1
UPL Reports	4	1	0
Transfer to DIS	7	2	10
Character and Fitness	0	1	2
Dismissal	3	1	3
Placed in Abeyance	0	0	1

⁹ One matter was dismissed due to the respondent’s death. A second matter was dismissed on OARC’s motion following the respondent’s disbarment in a separate case. A third matter was dismissed on the parties’ agreement.

¹⁰ OPDJ data may vary from OARC data due to differences in each office’s procedures.

Hearings Held

OPDJ held 17 hearings on the merits in 2024:

- 5 Disciplinary Hearings
- 4 Reinstatement Hearings
- 3 Disability Hearings
- 2 Contested Sanctions Hearings
- 1 Readmission Hearing
- 1 In Absentia Sanctions Hearing
- 1 Character & Fitness Hearing
- 0 Unauthorized Practice of Law Hearings

Hearings Held by Case Type¹¹				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Discipline:	2	4	5	5
Contested Sanctions:	2	1	1	2
In Absentia Sanctions:	1	2	4	1
Interim Suspension:	0	1	1	0
Probation Revocation:	1	0	0	0
Reinstatement:	0	4	0	4
Character & Fitness:	2	1	1	1
Disability:	0	1	0	3
UPL:	1	1	0	0
Total Merits Hearings:	9	15	12	17

Historical Trial Data¹²							
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Trials:	11	16	7	9	15	12	17
Total Trial Days:	13	20	10	14	23	24	37
Total Contested Trials:¹³	6	9	5	8	13	8	16
Total Contested Trial Days:	8	13	8	13	21	20	35
Average Contested Trial Length:	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.5	2.2
Average Days to Decision:	45.6	37.0	49.0	37.1	35.7	44.2	44.1

¹¹ Due to a change in OPDJ tracking procedures, data on case types for 2021 may be less reliable than for later years, but the total hearings for 2021 is believed to be correct.

¹² Due to a change in OPDJ tracking procedures, data for 2021 and earlier may not include confidential hearings, cases ending with confidential resolutions, and unauthorized practice of law cases.

¹³ Contested trials also include those trials where the respondent lawyer appeared at a sanctions hearing after the PDJ entered default in the lawyer’s case.

Appeals Filed

Appeals from OPDJ decisions are direct appeals to the Colorado Supreme Court. OPDJ’s administrator is responsible for maintaining court records and filings. When a party appeals a decision, the administrator is responsible for certifying the records and transmitting them to the Colorado Supreme Court for appellate proceedings. OPDJ must transmit the record within 63 days of the notice of appeal being filed. Complete records are also filed in Character & Fitness cases when a party files exceptions to a hearing board’s report.

In 2024, parties appealed 3 matters to the Colorado Supreme Court:

Case Number	Case Name	Notice Filed	Record Filed
24SA216	Matter of Raykin	7/24/2024	9/20/2024
24SA263	Matter of Stanley	9/30/2024	12/2/2024
24SA270	Matter of Nottingham	10/14/2024	12/12/2024

Registers of Actions and Supplements Filed by Year										
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
4	5	4	6	4	9	5	3	5	7	4

In 2024, the Colorado Supreme Court decided 7 OPDJ matters:¹⁴

Case Number	Case Name	Decision Date	CSC Decision
23SA124	Matter of Layton	1/4/2024	Affirmed
23SA160	Matter of Cornejo	1/25/2024	Affirmed
23SA101	Matter of Egbune	2/22/2024	Affirmed
23SA137	Matter of Kennedy	4/22/2024	Affirmed
23SA207	Matter of Romero	5/2/2024	Affirmed
23SA295	<i>Admissions Matter</i>	4/18/2024	Limited Remand
23SA295	<i>Admissions Matter</i>	9/12/2024	Report Rejected

¹⁴ The Colorado Supreme Court published a written opinion in *Matter of Kennedy*. The other listed matters were affirmed without opinion.

Recusals

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge refrains from taking part in proceedings in which he is required to disqualify.¹⁵ When the PDJ is disqualified, the administrator selects a presiding officer from among the available Colorado lawyers in the hearing board pool. When a presiding officer is selected to serve in a proceeding, the officer is empowered in that proceeding to take all actions normally entrusted to the PDJ.

In 2024, Judge Large denied motions to disqualify in two matters and recused from one matter.¹⁶

Historical Motions to Disqualify and Results			
	2022	2023	2024
Motions Filed: ¹⁷	1	5	3
Motions Granted:	1	3	1
Motions Denied:	0	2	2

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025 AND BEYOND

Cases filed with OPDJ continue to increase in complexity. Motions practice, particularly motions for summary judgment, are becoming increasingly frequent. Judge Large continues to pursue more efficient means of addressing OPDJ business but expects that an additional staff member may be necessary in the coming years.

Judge Large continues to advocate for electronic filing consistent with the district courts in the Judicial Branch. The State Court Administrator's Office advised that OPDJ would be part of the rollout of the Judicial Branch's move to a new system, though the rollout remains years away.

As part of Judge Large's commitment to transparency, OPDJ expects to put more effort into its website, making information more accessible to the public and providing more tools and information for pro se litigants, including a section for frequently asked questions to clarify OPDJ's operations and procedures.

2025 is also expected to see the first ever evaluation of the PDJ in OPDJ's 26-year history. The Advisory Committee adopted a procedure akin to the review process for district court judges, to occur every six years following the initial review after a new PDJ's second year.

¹⁵ See C.R.C.P. 97; C.J.C. 2.11.

¹⁶ Hearing board member David P. Ayraud served as the presiding officer in that matter.

¹⁷ Includes sua sponte motions.