



Judiciary News Release

For more information:
Winnie Comfort
Tammy Kendig
609-292-9580

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Volunteers Appointed to Fee Arbitration Committees

David E. Johnson, director of the New Jersey Office of Attorney Ethics (OAE), has announced that 99 new members of the OAE's Fee Arbitration Committees have completed training and are ready to begin their terms. Members of these committees resolve fee disputes between consumers and their attorneys.

"We are grateful to both our new and current members, whose work makes it possible for attorneys and their clients to ask an informed and impartial panel to determine what is fair," said Mr. Johnson.

The New Jersey Supreme Court created the current fee arbitration system in 1978 as a way to resolve fee disputes between clients and attorneys in a timely and inexpensive manner. Only a few other states offer a mandatory, statewide, attorney fee arbitration program similar to New Jersey's.

Fee arbitration is initiated when a client files an arbitration request form with the secretary of the committee in a district where the lawyer maintains an office for the practice of law. Clients can obtain contact information for the appropriate district committee by calling the automated Fee Arbitration Hotline at 800-406-8594 and entering the attorney's office zip code. The client and the attorney each must pay a \$50 administrative filing fee for utilizing the fee arbitration system.

In fee matters, the attorney must prove that the fee charged was reasonable based on a number of factors, including the time and labor required; the novelty and difficulty of the questions involved and the legal skills required; the likelihood that serving the client will preclude other employment by the lawyer; the customary fees for similar legal services; the amount involved and the results obtained; the time limits imposed by the client or by the circumstances; the nature and length of the professional relationship with the client; the experience, reputation and ability of the lawyer or lawyers performing the services; and whether the fee is fixed or contingent. Matters involving fees of \$3,000 or more are heard before panels of three members (one public member and two attorneys) of the district fee arbitration committee. Matters involving lesser amounts are heard by a single attorney from the committee. A written arbitration determination is prepared for the parties, who may choose to settle at any time before or during a hearing.

Attorneys and members of the public are appointed to four-year terms. Currently there are approximately 300 volunteers serving on the state's 17 committees. Please see the attached list for the names and hometowns of the new members.

In 2005, there were 981 fee disputes filed statewide. The committees resolved 927 disputes involving more than \$12 million in total billings. Most fee dispute cases were either arbitrated by district fee

committees (59 percent) or settled by the parties after fee arbitration was initiated (29 percent). The committees conducted 543 hearings involving \$8,022,234 in total attorney's fees. In 37 percent of cases, they upheld the attorney's fees in full. In the remaining 63 percent of cases, the fees were reduced.

The OAE maintains a comprehensive Web site, which can be accessed through the Judiciary Web site at njcourtsonline.com.

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Incoming Fee Arbitration Committee Members – 2006-2007 Term

District I Fee Arbitration Committee

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland & Salem Counties)

None at this time

District IIA Fee Arbitration Committee

(North Bergen County)

Christian L. Beane, Esq. of River Edge

Cynthia P. Low, Esq. of Hackensack

Steven W. Tarta, Esq. of Ridgewood

Robert Yu, Esq. of Hackensack

District IIB Fee Arbitration Committee

(South Bergen County)

Deanne Catherine DeFuscio, Esq. of Hackensack

David T. Robertson, Esq. of Hackensack

Bryan S. Hekemian of Hackensack

District IIIA Fee Arbitration Committee

(Ocean County)

Natalie Pouch, Esq. of Toms River

Eli L. Eytan, Esq. of Toms River

Charles Hutchinson, Esq. of Waretown

James W. Palmer, Jr., Esq. of Jackson

Christopher Healy, Esq. of Lakewood

Eric Corbet of Toms River

James M. Waters of Lakewood

District IIIB Fee Arbitration Committee

(Burlington County)

Nancy T. Abbott, Esq. of Burlington

Henry Oh, Esq. of Westmont

Ellen Salmon of Moorestown

District IV Fee Arbitration Committee

(Camden and Gloucester Counties)

Shereen C. Chen, Esq. of Voorhees

Winston Extavour, Esq. of Haddonfield

Joseph A. Lowe, Esq. of Cherry Hill

Michael A. Weinberg, Esq. of Haddonfield

Lisa M. Daly of Franklinville

Michael A. Gilletti of Swell

Kathryn M. Gomeau of Audubon

Joyce Alexander May of Barrington

District VA Fee Arbitration Committee

(Essex County – Newark)

Lesley Renee Adams, Esq. of Newark

Russell Scott Burnside, Esq. of Newark

Thomas F. Quinn, Esq. of Newark

David M. Stein, Esq. of Newark

District VB Fee Arbitration Committee

(Suburban Essex County)

William L. Gold, Esq. of West Orange

Vivian Sanks Kings, Esq. of Orange

David Goldsmith of Livingston

District VC Fee Arbitration Committee

(Essex County – West Essex)

Ben Becker, Esq. of Livingston

Cathleen McDonough, Esq. of Roseland

Robert Singer, Esq. of Roseland

Calvin O. Trevenen, Esq. of Upper Montclair

Craig K. Brandon of Verona

Scott R. Krieger of Livingston

District VI Fee Arbitration Committee

(Hudson County)

Marlene Caride, Esq. of Union City

Eloisa V. Castillo, Esq. of Union City

Constance Holliday of Jersey City

District VII Fee Arbitration Committee

(Mercer County)

Matthew Vincent Del Duca, Esq. of Princeton

Samuel M. Gaylord, Esq. of Trenton

Arun Deshbandhu Lavine, Esq. of Lawrenceville

Carol Oswald, Esq. of Lawrenceville

Stuart Tucker, Esq. of Lawrenceville

Steven D. Wallach, Esq. of Princeton

Eleanor K. O'Brien Calcagno of Robbinsville

Kimberly Kowalski of Princeton

George Rose of Trenton

District VIII Fee Arbitration Committee

(Middlesex County)

John M. Falzone, Jr., Esq. of Colonia

Joseph J. Peters, Esq. of Metuchen

Robert Hassett of Middlesex

Gary Robertson of Woodbridge

District IX Fee Arbitration Committee

(Monmouth County)

Francis P. Accisano, Esq. of Freehold

Joan M. Burke, Esq. of Cherry Hill

James E. Collins, Esq. of Freehold Twp.

Stacey Maiden, Esq. of Loch Arbour

Julie A. Murray, Esq. Lake Como

David A. Roth, Esq. of Red Bank

Sylvia A. Brown of Tinton Falls

Jan Kalafat of Manalapan

Lee Peter of Red Bank

District X Fee Arbitration Committee

(Morris and Sussex Counties)

Tiena Michelle Cofoni, Esq. of Montville
Nelson Gonzalez, Esq. of Dover
Ann Marie Pompelio, Esq. of Sparta
Diane S. Gallets of Long Valley
Burton B. Gillette of Morristown
Stanley Zaborowski of Morristown

District XI Fee Arbitration Committee

(Passaic County)

Anita Rae Manns, Esq. of Totowa
David J. Tencza, Esq. of Passaic
Scott J. Bocker, Esq. of Clifton
Sohail Mohammed, Esq. of Clifton
Charles Rabolli, Jr., Esq. of Clifton
Theresa Richardson-Campbell, Esq. of Paterson
Mary Tom, Esq. of Wayne
Steven M. Veltri, Esq. of Totowa
James A.M. Dykes, II of Wyckoff
Philip Gianino of Paterson
Peter Ramos of Little Falls

William C. Smalls, Jr. of Farmington
Susan H. Sweetman of Freehold

District XII Fee Arbitration Committee

(Union County)

A. John Blake, Esq. of Westfield
Martine Cohen, Esq. of Elizabeth
Mark P. Dugan, Esq. of Union
Susan Fellman, Esq. of Scotch Plains
Richard Geiger, Esq. of Scotch Plains
Josephine Gonzalez, Esq. of Elizabeth
Linda E. Mallozzi, Esq. of Union
Stephen H. Schechner, Esq. of Millburn
Scott Schmedel of Mountainside

District XIII Fee Arbitration Committee

(Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren Counties)

Bonita Bourke, Esq. of Hackettstown
Anthony J. Del Piano, Esq. of Pittstown
Katherine Esposito-Howes, Esq. of Raritan
Rahim A. Munir, Esq. of Washington
James T. Cusack of Watchung
Catherine M. Foulk of Bloomsbury
Amy E. Glaser of Flemington
Thomas J. Rafferty of Somerville