

WLIB NEWSLETTER

WOMEN LAWYERS IN BERGEN

Volume 13

Spring 2026

In the Fall of 2016 this article appeared in the WLIB Newsletter.

We reprint it with love, in memory of our Past President, Victoria Pekerman, who passed on March 26, 2026.

VICTORIA PEKERMAN, ESQ. WLIB'S NEW TREASURER

Tamra Katcher, Esq.

On a hot and muggy Friday afternoon in July, I met Victoria Pekerman, the incoming WLIB Treasurer for a casual lunch interview. I arrived early and armed myself with her biography found on her law firm's website and a long list of questions. As a new WLIB member, I had not had the pleasure of speaking with Victoria before so, needless to say, I was well prepared! However, after two hours of chatting about work and family, we barely ate our lunch and suddenly realized how quickly the time flew by.

So, please allow me to introduce the new WLIB Treasurer for the 2016-2017 term.

Victoria was born in Kiev, Ukraine and immigrated to the United States – specifically Brooklyn - with her parents and sister at a young age in 1979. Although her family was the first to move to the United States, many years later her grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins joined them. As a young girl growing up in Brooklyn, Victoria remembers that her parents encouraged her and her sister to learn English, get a good education, pursue a noble profession and be independent. Her parent's decision to move to the United States to give their family a better life, a life free from religious and political persecution, was not lost upon Victoria, and ultimately led her to pursue the practice of law.

After graduating from high school, Victoria attended Binghamton University in New York, where she studied English



and Comparative Literature and graduated Cum Laude in 1993. While at Binghamton, Victoria also met her husband, Paul. After graduation, she worked as a paralegal in NYC. In 1995, she and Paul were married and moved to Philadelphia. Victoria attended law school at Temple University, James E. Beasley School of Law. She enjoyed classes in constitutional law, property law and family/business law.

Following law school, Victoria had the honor of clerking for the Honorable M. Faith Angell, U.S. Magistrate Judge, for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. As a law clerk/intern to the Magistrate Judge during her third year at Temple Law, Victoria worked with Judge Angell on all types of matters, civil and criminal. She drafted legal research memos, observed trials and hearings, wrote habeas corpus recommendations and participated in many settlement conferences and mediations with the Magistrate. Victoria was offered a permanent position in chambers upon graduation from law school in 1998. She has very fond memories of Judge Angell's approach to

litigants, analysis of cases and the law, her kindness and understanding towards her law clerks, telling Victoria that "she could stay forever" in her chambers. Judge Angell, as a mother of two sons herself, had a playpen in her chambers for her staff's children and her grandchildren. Judge Angell understood the challenges that professional mothers face and did not hesitate to offer work conditions that would allow her staff to achieve the delicate balance between work and family life. Following her three year clerkship, Victoria and Paul and their 2-year old son moved to Northern New Jersey where she started practicing law and raising a family.

She has been at Shapiro Croland Reiser Apfel & Di Iorio for eleven (11) years and is a partner at the firm. She is fluent in Russian and feels that her ability to communicate with some of her Russian-speaking clients in their native language makes them feel more comfortable – even if they also speak English. Victoria concentrates her practice on complex business and commercial litigation, including such areas as partnership disputes, business divorces, estate litigation, guardianship actions, employment matters and contract disputes. She primarily practices in Chancery and Federal courts in New Jersey. She has also developed a niche specialty in insurance coverage and insurance litigation, often bringing her back to federal court. As a former federal law clerk, Victoria calls the federal court system her home and feels comfortable handling litigation in that familiar forum.

Victoria is also active outside of the courtroom and volunteers in several professional and community organizations including the Bergen County Ethics Committee (member and former Chair), NJSBA Equity Jurisprudence Committee, NJSBA Women in the Profession (Trustee), District of NJ Mediation Program, BCBA Chancery Practice Committee, Court Appointed Attorney in Guardianship

continued on page 19

WLIB suffered a great loss with the passing of our past President and Friend, Victoria Pekerman. Victoria's bright smile will remain in the memory of all WLIB members forever. Our collective hearts are broken, and we will miss her dearly. We know how important her family was to her and we send our heartfelt condolences to them. We hope their memories of Victoria will comfort them during this time of grief.

President's Message

By: *Tamra Katcher, Esq.*

This year we celebrate WLIB's 50th Anniversary! The planning for our festivities has encouraged me to reflect not only on our organization but the practice of law for the women in our profession. The founding members of WLIB came together at a time when women were in the minority in our profession. They banded together as a support network in the face of scrutiny by their peers. There are many stories I have heard over the years about how women were treated. I have heard that women were not *allowed* to wear pants to court. I have heard many women say that when they walked into the courtroom they were asked, "Are you the court reporter?" I know there are many, many more but these two stand out in my mind.

I am asked on a regular basis if there is a place for WLIB in our current legal system. The impression that many have is that "those things" don't happen anymore so why do we need a women lawyers group separate and apart from the bar association. My answer to this inquiry is the following:

Women Lawyers in Bergen supports *women* who are *lawyers*. We do more than offer CLEs and host dinners/events. Our



organization supports women – we are concerned with supporting women in the profession of law – we focus on networking with like-minded women, we focus on the mental health of women who practice law, we focus on women as mothers and caregivers, we focus on women and their financial futures, we focus on women in the political arena, we focus on women's issues and women's needs – both in their personal and their professional lives. WLIB offers camaraderie and a support network that is separate and apart from what other organizations may offer. It is for this reason that there will always be a need for WLIB in our community.

Now, let's go back to the stories from the women who have paved the way for us to be where we are today. I can tell you candidly that those stories and those experiences still exist today. That may be surprising to hear – but it does, which makes WLIB's involvement in the legal community that much more important. Even in today's "enlightened" age, women are still treated differently in our profession. Allow me to provide you with some examples.

Many women wear suits to court while others wear dresses or slacks. They look professional, they carry themselves in a professional manner. Some women, like their male counterparts, no longer carry briefcases. I personally no longer carry a bulky file to court but merely carry a folio that contains a legal pad, a few papers, and a pen. I cannot tell you how many times I have been stopped entering a courthouse and asked if I am an attorney while my male counterparts walk right through without question. Similarly, I have had a court officer tell me that since I did not have a briefcase he did not realize I was an attorney! I have been called "sweetie" and "honey" and when I politely ask to be referred to in a respectable manner I receive looks of disdain and stares. I have been told that my voice was sexy while speaking on the record, sick as a dog with a sore throat. I have had an officer put a handheld magnetometer between my legs from my ankles to my knees in an attempt to scan me on my way into court. There are times when I have had to bring my son (he was 10) to court with me because he was off from school and a court officer told him to wait in the hallway – alone!

continued on page 8

INSIDE:

- Victoria Pekerman - 1
- President's Message - 2
- Custody in Transition - 3
- Holiday Party Photos - 4
- The Right to Counsel - 5
- Book Review -
"The Girl Who Takes an Eye for an Eye" - 7
- Restaurant Review -
The River Palm Terrace- 7
- New NJ Rules Expand Protections - 8
- Employee Political Participation - 9
- Landlord/Tenant, App. Div. Ruling - 11
- Announcements - 12
- Next Gen Uniform Bar Examination - 14
- Expanding Your Law Practice - 15
- FINCEN - 17
- Jean Robertson Update - 18
- Young Lawyers Corner - 18

WLIB Membership

To renew or begin your membership with WLIB

please go to www.womenlawyersinbergen.org.

If you have any questions regarding membership,

please contact Kohar Boyadjan, Esq., Membership Chair

at 201-968-5800 x 213 or kohar@damelegal.com.

Custody in Transition: A Discussion of New Jersey's New Statutory Framework

By: Ellen L. Koblitz, P.J.A.D. (Ret.), Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, P.C. and Lynn Norcia, Esq.

The family law bar has been reeling since January 20, 2026, when Governor Murphy signed into law a bill which made major changes to the existing statute governing custody determinations: N.J.S.A. 9:2-4. If you are a family law practitioner, you would need to have been living under a rock since January to not have heard about these major changes. For those of you who are not entrenched in family law, we are including this brief summary of the origin of this statutory initiative, as well as highlighting the changes to the existing statute. Following this summary, the authors discuss how they see these amendments impacting custody litigation and custody decisions.

The amendments stem from the grassroots efforts of advocacy groups in response to the tragic murder, by her biological father, of 7-year-old Kayden Mancuso, during a court-ordered unsupervised visit in Pennsylvania in 2018. The federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was amended by the Keeping Children Safe from Family Violence Act in March 2022 to address the judicial decision making which led to this tragedy, by providing financial incentives to states that adopted similar child safety reforms to their custody laws. 34 U.S.C. 10446(k).

New Jersey's version of Kayden's Law was introduced in the State Senate in May 2025 with the stated intent to "Clarify procedures in certain contested child custody cases." S. 4510/A. 5761. To say that it "clarifies" procedures in contested child custody cases is wishful thinking. The impact will likely be to increase litigation in custody matters where judges formerly were able to exercise wide discretion when making decisions in the best interests of children. Some of the major changes to the previously existing custody statute are as follows:

1. The public policy preamble to the statute has been amended to explicitly ensure that the "expressed preferences of the child are considered" and that "the safety of the children is of paramount importance and is an integral element of the child's best interests." Additionally, it elevates the safety of children "as a threshold issue," whereas it was previously one of several factors which a court would consider. N.J.S.A. 9:2-4. Courts have always had the opportunity to interview children in custody matters if they are of "sufficient age and capacity to reason so as to form an intelligent decision." N.J.S.A. 9:2-4c. The new statute now requires the court to "specifically place on the record the factors which justify the [custody] arrangement and which justify the court's decision to disregard the child's expressed preferences." Children who request to speak to the court are to

be interviewed "off the record and in private chambers." Yet "[t]he record of such conversation shall be sealed." N.J.S.A. 9:2-4g(1)(a).

2. The original statute included a list of factors for the court to consider in making a custody determination. N.J.S.A. 9:2-4(c). For the most part, these custody factors remain the same except for an added reference to "input and supporting documentation of a State licensed mental health professional, if any, providing private therapy or other services to the child to the extent allowed under the professional's State licensure." Id. This addition is somewhat puzzling since many of the amendments make it much more difficult for a court to order therapeutic intervention for the family.
3. The most significant changes to the law are found in the paragraphs that are added to the end of the original statute. Those paragraphs greatly limit the court's ability to order any kind of therapy for the family or the children. The new statute requires "generally accepted and scientifically valid proof of the safety, effectiveness, and therapeutic value of the therapy," as well as "a showing of good cause that therapy is appropriate" before it can be ordered. N.J.S.A. 9:2-4g(1). Reunification therapy may no longer be ordered absent the joint approval of the parents. If the court determines that therapy is appropriate, the amendments require the therapist "to report to the court, on a periodic basis ... regarding the progress of therapy, ... [and] the parties' and child's willingness to participate in therapy." N.J.S.A. 9:2-4g(2). The amendments further give the court the discretion to "make modifications to ongoing therapy as appropriate, including, but not limited to, ceasing or suspending the therapy..." Id.
4. The new amendments establish additional parameters which limit the court's discretion. The court is directed to not "presume that a child's reluctance to interact with a party was caused by the other party when there is evidence of a history of domestic violence or child abuse." N.J.S.A. 9:2-4g(2)(c). The statute further limits the remedies available to the court when addressing cases involving parent-child contact problems, by prohibiting the court from "grant[ing] increased custody for the purpose of improving the relationship between the child and

continued on page 20

Holiday Party

December 19, 2025



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The Right to Counsel, Presidential Orders & Law Firms

Kim D. Ringler, The Ringler Law Firm

Kim Ringler is a Past President of the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers and a longstanding member of the NYSBA. www.ringlerlawfirm.com. Her firm was among 884 successful amici curiae in the Susman Godfrey LLP lawsuit challenging an Executive Order restricting its law practice.

Every lawyer, most citizens and laypeople in all walks of life understand the importance and value of having the assistance of counsel and counsel of their choosing. Even grossly unpopular folks, quixotic litigants and despicable entities have an unfettered right to hire a lawyer to represent them. Preserved in the Sixth Amendment of the Bill of Rights in 1791, the right to representation in criminal cases has expanded to the broader recognition that lawyers and the ability to retain a lawyer of one's choice are embedded in the bedrock of the American legal system. The opportunity to rely on a trained advocate of one's choosing is foundational.

However, recent presidential executive orders ("EOs") targeting certain prominent large law firms have implicated the right to retain a lawyer, free from political and governmental interference. The EOs created the risk that the ability of select law firms to serve their current and future clients without regard to the political alliances of the clients will be impaired, potentially thwarting law firm independence and client access to and choice of counsel. The EOs apply constraints on the private practice of law imposed by an activist executive branch. This article broadly addresses the risks presented by the EOs aimed at prominent law firms, and by the efforts of some of those targeted firms to avoid the impact of the orders by negotiating a sidestep away from the punitive consequences of the orders. The focus will be the potential undermining of the right to counsel, not the legality or illegality of the executive orders or the apparent political purposes they sought to advance.

In a lawsuit against the administration, the American Bar Association, representing its hundreds of thousands of members, alleged that the EOs and the efforts to pre-emptively achieve compliance on the part of law firms, whether or not the specific subject of an EO, are unconstitutional. The constitutional arguments advanced include the deleterious impact on the firms' current and future potential clients who may face impenetrable obstacles in obtaining legal representation in relation to certain causes and claims that the administration identifies as off-limits. The ABA asserted that the terms of the EOs are at odds with clients' right to representation of their choice and with law firms' ability to represent clients without regard to personality, popularity or politics.

Those law firms that did not capitulate brought largely successful lawsuits to enjoin implementation of the EOs. The

importance of the opposition to the EOs rests on the corollary to the principle embracing the right to counsel of one's choosing: preserving the ability of lawyers to promote justice in matters small and large through a well-established adversarial system. As the long-ago observer of our young democracy, Alexis De Tocqueville, himself a French lawyer, noted in the 1830's, "the authority [Americans] have entrusted to members of the legal profession, and the influence which these individuals exercise in the Government, is the most powerful existing security against the excesses of democracy." De Tocqueville, Alexis, Democracy In America, Chapter XVI, "Causes Which Mitigate the Tyranny of the Majority in the United States," p. 253-54 (Henry Reeve trans., Legal Classics Library 1998) (1835). A client's right to rely on counsel of choice goes hand in hand with the pivotal role lawyers play in American democracy.

The amicus brief submitted in support of Susman Godfrey LLP's challenge to an EO directed at it cited Martinez v. Ryan, 566 U.S. 1, 12 (2012) for the principle that the right to counsel and lawyers' obligation to provide representation is the foundation for our adversary system:

The principle is so deeply ingrained that lawyers—going back to John Adams' defense of eight British soldiers who perpetrated the Boston Massacre of 1770—consider it a core part of their professional obligation to take on representation of clients with whom they disagree, even vehemently. Indeed, the "courage" of attorneys who take on unpopular clients has long "made lawyerdom proud." Sacher v. United States, 343 U.S. 1, 4 (1952).

The ABA stated in its Complaint that the EOs issued by the administration against targeted law firms such as Susman Godfrey impose hugely consequential punishments upon law firms that do not agree to comply with certain requirements advanced by the executive. Those requirements reportedly include consenting to limit clients by ceasing to represent certain viewpoints or people associated with certain viewpoints, declining to represent new clients based on political considerations, and committing to represent pro bono causes approved by and at the direction of the administration.

The sanctions for refusing to agree have included termination of security clearances and provision of "all government goods, property material and services;" disclosure by government contractors of any business done with the law firm and possible termination of any government contract in relation to which the law firm has been retained to provide legal services; limiting the law firms' employees' access to federal government buildings and

continued on page 8

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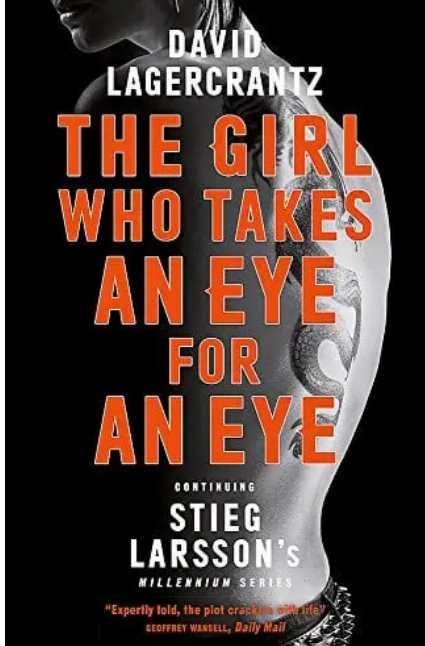
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Barbara B. Comerford is a Lawline Faculty member who presents national seminars on ERISA LTD and Disability insurance claims. She has also conducted seminars throughout the country on Social Security Disability law.



Book Review

The Girl Who Takes an Eye for an Eye

By David Lagercrantz

This book is the 5th book in the Millennium series of books which started with The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo. The

stories are set in and originally written in Swedish. The original author of the first three books, Stieg Larsson, passed away and Lagercrantz continued the series. There is a 6th book written by Lagercrantz that I intend to read, and I also understand that another author has taken the helm of the series and published at least 2 more books. I have read all the books thus far and

was happy to see this book at the Visiting Nurse's Rummage Sale in October so that I could return to the world of Lisbeth Salander, the main character.

Lisbeth Salander, the punk hacker, is in prison for protecting an autistic child after witnessing his father's death. In jail she befriends Faria Kazi, a young Muslim woman who was convicted of killing her brother – an Islamic extremist who intended to kill her for dishonoring her family because she fell in love with a man who did not follow the family's extremist views. Faria is abused by the bully of the prison unit and Lisbeth steps in to protect her. Lisbeth learns that Faria's lover was killed and no one had been charged.

While she is in prison, Holgren Palmgren, her lawyer and guardian from when she was under the thumb of child protective services, comes to visit her. He has details about her early childhood. He gives her information that details a "scientific experiment" done by the Registry for The Study of Genetics and Social Environment which was part of the State Institute for Human Genetics, previously known as the State

continued on page 23

Restaurant Review

By: Kathleen A. Hart, Esq.



The River Palm Terrace has been an institution in Bergen County for 40 years. We had not been there in many years. It was a place my mother loved, especially the personal attention of the manager and servers. As a toast to her, my sister, husband and I, dined there on a Saturday in early March.

The River Palm Terrace is located on River Road, with a view of the Hudson. There is a small parking lot with a valet. As you enter the restaurant, you are greeted by the hostess and notice the dark, country club feel of the dining room to your left. The walls are dark wood, and the tables are adorned with crisp white linens. The bar area is located to the right. The bar itself is not large

and there are televisions showing sports. Along the wall of the dimly light bar area, are about ten tables.

I made an early reservation and to my shock, at 5:45 pm, the dining room and bar area were filled. We had to wait a short time for our six o'clock reservation. During that time, the manager walked by and recognized my sister, even after many years. After inquiring about our mom, who died six years ago, he sat us at what our server stated was the best table in the house. These are the personal touches my mom loved so much. Our table was in the corner of the bar area with a view across the entire restaurant, an "owner's table" prospect.

After taking our drink order, our server provided menus and noted the specials for the evening. The River Palm is known as a steakhouse and that is reflected in the menu. However, there is a surprisingly extensive sushi menu as well. To start with, my husband ordered the spicy tuna roll (\$15.00), while my sister and I split a Caesar salad (\$16.00). The tuna roll was large and served with a tangy dipping sauce. My husband loved it. The Caesar salad was more than enough for two people and not overly dressed. Other appetizers include calamari (\$21.00), French onion soup, (\$15.00) a wedge salad (\$17.00) and shrimp cocktail (\$25.00).

continued on page 21

NEW NJ RULES EXPAND PROTECTIONS AGAINST DISPARATE IMPACT DISCRIMINATION

BY: WALTER M. LUERS, ESQ.

On December 17, 2025, New Jersey adopted sweeping new civil rights rules that, according to the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (“DCR”) are designed to codify “disparate impact” discrimination. According to DCR, the changes are a response to Executive Order 14281, which ordered the federal government to stop using disparate impact liability. The new regulations are located N.J.A.C. 13:16-1.3 through 13:16-6.2. The new regulations may be found [here](#).

Disparate impact discrimination occurs when a policy or practice that appears neutral on its face disproportionately harms members of a protected class, even without discriminatory intent. Under the LAD (Law Against Discrimination), protected characteristics include, among others, national origin, religion, gender identity or expression, disability, and sexual orientation.

A key feature of the new regulations is their explicit application to artificial intelligence and advanced technologies used in areas such as employment screening, housing applications, and credit evaluations, which the new rules define as “automated employment decision tools.”

Regarding pre-employment practices, the rules emphasize that certain practices could be considered a prohibited recruitment practice because it could negatively and disproportionately affect potential applicants who are members of a protected class. The regulations contain the following examples:

- An employer who relies on word-of-mouth to recruit new employees and has a mostly Hispanic work force may be unlawful if the practice limits the recruitment to mostly individuals who identify as Hispanic;
- An employer who interviews new applicants only on Saturdays and Sundays could result in a disparate impact on people whose religions prevent them from working on those days of the week;

- An automated employment decision tool that relies on a current workforce that consists mostly of white, cis-gender men may score women or Black applicants lower because their resumes may contain activities less aligned with white, cisgender men, such as “women’s field hockey” instead of “football” or “Black Student Alliance” when it is less likely that current employees would be involved in such an activity.

To the extent that “automated employment decision tools” are utilized, employers bear the burden of demonstrating that such practices serve a “substantial, legitimate, nondiscriminatory interest” and there is no less discriminatory alternative available.

Regarding housing, blanket policies denying housing based solely on low credit scores may be unlawful if alternative methods—such as evaluating steady income or rental payment history—could achieve the same objective with less discriminatory effect.

These rules significantly increase compliance obligations for employers, landlords, lenders, and other regulated entities operating in New Jersey. Organizations using automated tools or standardized screening criteria should review their policies, assess potential disparate impacts, and document legitimate business justifications. Regular audits of AI-driven systems and decision-making practices will be essential.

These rules expand the potential liability of covered entities under New Jersey Civil Rights Law. Covered entities should review all of their current policies and practices to ensure they are in compliance. For practitioners who represent individuals, the new regulations provide new theories of liability for cases filed with the DCR or in Superior Court. 🙌

President's Message

continued from page 2

If these are just my experiences – and some of them are extremely recent occurrences – then I cannot imagine what others have experienced. Are these experiences much different from what the founding members of WLIB experienced 50 years ago? Maybe different while similar.

On June 22, 2026, at 5:30pm at Seasons in Washington Township, WLIB will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. We will take the time to honor those women who paved the way for the integration of women into our legal community. Our founding members fought for each other and fought for us, and we will celebrate them and their accomplishments. We will celebrate this wonderful organization – the work it has done and the work that still needs to be done to continue to support women lawyers in Bergen County. 🙌

The Right to Counsel

continued from page 5

limiting government employees from interaction with the law firms’ employees; and barring the hiring of law firm employees to perform jobs in the federal government without satisfaction of prerequisites.

The EOs also provided for investigations into the targeted firms by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. These consequences for refusing to agree to modify firm practices and compromise firm independence are not theoretical. The executive branch sought to implement them against law firms to discipline them for declining to agree to terms restricting

continued on page 19

Navigating Employee Political Participation Rights: The Implications of New Jersey Bill No. A4429

*Sabrina Santamaria, Esq., Trenk Isabel Siddiqi & Shahdanian PC and
Ellen O’Connell, Esq., Price Meese Shulman & D’Arminio, PC*

Introduction

Employment law continues to evolve in response to changing social expectations and legal standards. One of the most significant developments is the enactment on December 2, 2025, of New Jersey Assembly Bill A4429, referred to as the “Captive Audience” ban. This amends the “Worker Freedom from Employer Intimidation Act,” N.J.S.A. 34:19-9, et seq., and addresses the intersection of workplace obligations and political participation. The law expands protections for employees while clarifying employer rights and exemptions.

For legal practitioners advising clients on employment law compliance, the amended law is a noteworthy expansion of employee protections, particularly in the realm of political communications and employer-sponsored meetings. Understanding the employee rights, employer exemptions, and potential enforcement implications is essential for employers, HR professionals, and labor law attorneys operating within New Jersey.

Background

Before the adoption of A4429, employers were prohibited from requiring employees to attend meetings or participate in communications that convey the employer’s opinion on religious or political matters. However, the scope was limited. Employees could opt out of attending such meetings, but the law’s definition of political matters was narrower, and exemptions were less explicitly defined.

A4429 broadened this protection and now includes matters concerning electioneering and the employee’s decision to join a political party or a labor union. Employers can no longer require their employees to attend meetings or get communications with an anti-union or religious message. Crucially, the new law defines political matters as:

- **Electioneering communications**, and
- Matters related to an employee’s **decision to join or support political parties or political, civic, community, fraternal, or labor organizations**.

This definition ensures that a wide spectrum of political engagement falls under employee protections.

There is a question whether the amended law will survive a challenge brought under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). The NLRA is a federal law that, in part, governs communications concerning union membership. In the NLRB’s decision in the case, *Babcock & Wilcox Co.*, 77 N.L.R.B. 577 (1948), the Board held that captive audience meetings are lawful as an exercise of the employer’s First Amendment free speech rights to speak about unionization. There is a likelihood that the New Jersey law will be challenged based on preemption by the federal law.

Core Provisions of A4429

1. Prohibition of Mandatory Political Participation

At its core, A4429 prevents employers from requiring employees to engage in political discussions, meetings, or communications. Employees may **refuse participation without penalty**, reinforcing the principle of voluntary political engagement in the workplace. This aligns with broader federal and state policies safeguarding freedom of political association, while specifically addressing the employer-employee relationship.

The language is comprehensive, covering not only traditional political meetings but also communications that may involve indirect political pressure or participation in advocacy tied to employer interests.

2. Employer Exemptions

While the new law restricts compulsory employer meetings, it also delineates **situations where participation may still be required**, such as:

1. **Legally Required Communications:** Employers must still communicate information mandated by law, such as regulatory compliance notices.
2. **Job-Related Communications:** Employers may require employees to participate in meetings necessary for fulfilling job duties.
3. **Workplace Training:** Mandatory anti-harassment or anti-discrimination training is explicitly exempted.
4. **Academic Institutions:** Colleges and universities may mandate meetings related to coursework, symposia,

continued on page 24



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Did the Appellate Division really help a Tenant?

By Barry J. Cohen, Esq.

The longstanding practice in the Landlord Tenant Division of the Superior Court Special Civil Part was to require the tenant to pay “all rent” due and owing at the time of the eviction and any other charges designated in the lease as additional rent. The usual deadline was, until the recent legislation known as the Stack Amendment, the time of the lockout. The Stack Amendment extended the deadline to three business days after the lockout. After this time period, but within certain deadlines, a Tenant may make an application for a seven-day period to move out, which application is known as an Order for Orderly Removal. Alternatively, the Tenant could appeal the Landlord Tenant Decision or could file for a hardship application to extend the eviction for up to six months provided that the Tenant paid all monies then due and owing.

In a departure from the longstanding practice in Landlord Tenant Court if not the law, the Appellate Division in the case of Fairkings Partners, LLC t/a the Kingsley v. Essence C. Daniels, 2025 N.J. Super. LEXIS 76 (App, Div, Dec 8, 2025) ruled that the amount of rent that a tenant must pay within three business days after the posting of the warrant of removal or the lockout is the rent that was set forth in the Judgment of Possession.

The Anti Eviction Act provides that a Landlord must have a specific reason to evict a Tenant from non-owner-occupied rental property. Many of the reasons require one or two notices (respectively a Notice to Quit and its predecessor notice, a Notice to Cease). The one reason not requiring any advance notice before the Landlord may file the eviction action (also known as the Summary Dispossess Action) is for non-payment of rent.

A Landlord, Fairkings Partners, LLC trading as The Kingsley, filed an action for non-payment of rent against a tenant named Essence L. Daniels. When Daniels failed to appear at the time of the landlord tenant trial, a default was entered in favor of the Landlord and against the Tenant which then permitted the Landlord to obtain a Judgment of Possession which the Landlord requested on March 18, 2024, noting in its certification that the Tenant owed \$5,842.31 in unpaid rent.

Legislation known as the Stack Amendment (named for the Union City Mayor who is also a State Senator), provided an additional three day period after the eviction to permit the Tenant to post all rent due and owing. As is often the case with legislation containing ambiguities, nobody

bothered to define what the term “all rent due and owing” meant for purposes of the requirement that the Tenant pay the amount required to reinstate the tenancy. Prior to this recent decision, the Courts typically interpreted all rent due and owing to mean the amount of rent and other permitted charges due and owing at the time of the actual eviction (the lockout).

After the Judgment of Possession was entered in favor of the Landlord, Ms. Daniels filed a request for relief from the Judgment noting that she had some of the money due and was applying for assistance for the rest. Undertaking some creative lawyering with assistance from a group from Seton Hall, the attorney for the Tenant argued that anything other than the amount set forth in the Judgment of Possession would be disadvantageous to the Tenant as there was no way for the Tenant to know the amount required to keep him or her in occupancy of the rental premises. This Argument was seemingly accepted hook line and sinker by the Appellate Division justifying its decision by noting that neither the Anti Eviction Act nor the Stack Amendment defined “rent due and owing”. The Court then suggested that in order for the Tenant to know how much money he or she must pay to avoid or void the eviction the amount in the Judgment of Possession would control even though at the time of the actual eviction additional base rent and other charges and fees might be due. (Depending on the County, the time between the entry of the Judgment of Possession and the scheduled eviction, could be a month or more). The Court justified this decision as being consistent with the Anti Eviction Act’s purpose of limiting the reasons why a Tenant may be evicted in non-owner-occupied premises. The Court then noted that the Anti Eviction Act is “remedial legislation” and should be “liberally construed to protect the rights of tenants with all doubts resolved in favor of the tenant.” Citation omitted. The Court then went on to suggest that any determination other than the amount set forth in the Warrant of Possession would cause uncertainty and might cause the Tenant to pay costs and fees beyond that which is allowed in the lease.

Based upon these theories, the Court held that the amount set forth in the Judgment of Possession was all that the Tenant had to pay to void or avoid the eviction despite other rents and fees and costs which might then be due and owing.

continued on page 18

Announcements

Condolences to our member and past **President, Eileen Mulroy** on the passing of her mother, **Eileen T. Mulroy**, on April 7, 2026.

Eileen's mother was born in Brooklyn, New York to Patrick and Madeline Faulkner. She graduated from St. John's University and went on to obtain advanced degrees from Hunter College and Fairleigh Dickinson University. She was a dedicated teacher in the Dumont Public Schools and St. Mary's School in Dumont. She retired from Teaneck Public Schools after many dedicated years of teaching.

Eileen loved to travel, particularly in England and Ireland. She also traveled extensively in the U.S. having visited all 50 states. Another favorite hobby was gardening. She looked forward to going to the Philadelphia Flower Show every year. She was fond of animals, especially cats. She often rescued feral cats and fed one particular outside cat for many years. He came daily to be fed at 4 o'clock, when she returned from school. Another neighbor's cat decided he wanted to live with her and not his busy household. He was always on her patio. Eventually she took him in and the neighbor gave her his medical records, so it was official.

As an expression of sympathy, please consider a donation in Eileen's mother's memory to the Ramapo-Bergen Animal Refuge, Inc., 2 Shelter Lane, Oakland, NJ 07436; <https://www.rbari.org/> or St. Joseph Friary, 523 West 142nd Street, New York, NY 10031; <https://www.franciscanfriars.com/>

Our condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of **Victoria Pekerman, Esq.**, a past President of WLIB, who passed on March 26, 2026. Please read Tamra's interview with Victoria from the Fall of 2016 when Victoria became an officer of WLIB, which appears on the front page of the Newsletter, to learn about her background and career. Her son Joshua is now an attorney, and her son Jeffrey is at NYU. Her nephew who clerked for Judge Foti is now an Assistant Prosecutor in Essex County. Beautiful words and memories were shared by Victoria's husband, both her sons, her sister and her nephew at her funeral as well as from her law firm partner, Stuart Reiser, Esq. We will all miss Victoria, and we will remember her smile, her warmth and her caring. The family asks that donations in her memory be made to **RCCS (Rofeh Cholim Cancer Society)** [Home - RCCS](#).

We offer both condolences and congratulations to **Linda F. Spiegel**.

Our condolences to Linda on the death of her mother, WLIB member, **Edna Z. Spiegel, Esq.** Edna was born on October 27, 1927, and died on January 23, 2026, at the age of 98. A native of New York City, Edna attended the High School of Music & Art. She wanted to be a lawyer but was advised that women don't become lawyers, they become teachers. She earned both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Music Education at New York University in the mid-late 1940's. She then served as a music and choral educator for the Board of Education of the City of New York for thirty years.

At the age of 53, Edna took the first step towards fulfilling her lifelong dream of becoming an attorney and enrolled as a full-time student at the Seton Hall University School of Law. She was a member of the Bar of the State of New Jersey, admitted to both its State and Federal Courts as well as the Supreme Court of the United States and was active in both WLIB and the BCBA. She was a volunteer with Northeast NJ Legal Services, and her practice focused on Elder Law and Wills and Trusts. She retired in her early 80's. Donations in memory of Edna may be sent to the Jewish Home Family, <https://jewishhomefamily.org/foundation/donate/>

Congratulations to Linda on her induction into the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals (NADN). She joins former WLIB President the **Hon. Marguerite Simon, ret'd**, the **Hon. Ellen Koblitz (J.A.D.) ret'd** and WLIB member Felicia Farber, Esq. as a member of NADN.

The National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals is a professional association whose membership consists of ADR professionals distinguished by their hands-on experience in the field of civil and commercial conflict resolution. Membership is by invitation only and all Academy members have been thoroughly reviewed and found to meet stringent practice criteria. Members are amongst the most in-demand neutrals in their respective states, as selected by their peers and approved by local litigators.

"We're delighted to welcome **Linda F. Spiegel** to the Academy's New Jersey Chapter in recognition of Excellence in her ADR practice," commented Darren Lee, Executive Director of NADN.

continued on page 25

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NEXT GEN UNIFORM BAR EXAMINATION – COMING TO A TESTING SITE NEAR YOU

By Marcia Werner, Esq.

On November 17, 2025, the New Jersey Supreme Court joined forty-seven jurisdictions across the U.S. in adopting the NEXT GEN UBE (UBE). The new bar exam was developed by the National Conference Of Bar Examiners (NCBE) after a multi-year analysis to focus on “real world” legal skills rather than “memorization” and to better assess the most important knowledge and skills for lawyers within their first three years of practice.

The analysis began with “listening sessions” with more than 400 stakeholders from bar admission agencies, Supreme Courts, legal academics and practitioners across the country, followed by a nationwide practice analysis which collected responses from nearly 15,000 attorneys concerning the work performed by newly licensed attorneys with the goal of identifying current practices and identifying future trends in the profession. Finally, the data was evaluated by two committees to provide input on what content should be tested and how the exam should be designed.

The Task Force issued its final report in April 2021 recommending integrating the exam structure to assess legal knowledge and skills reflecting the actual practice of law by a newly licensed attorney. The recommendations were approved and committees were formed to develop the NEXT GEN UBE. This involved a five- year timeline including publication of content scope outlines, public comments, pilot testing and publication of standard setting recommendations to assist participating jurisdictions in setting passing scores.

The NEXT GEN UBE test areas are:

1. Legal Doctrine-- including Civil Procedure, Contract Law, Evidence, Torts, Business Associations, Constitutional Law, Real Property and Family Law and select ABA model rules of Professional Conduct. Interestingly, family law was added effective with the July 2028 exam, after a hue and cry was raised by commentators on the proposed Bar Exam revisions. Similarly, Estate and Trust Law was advanced as an area that should be included and the NCBE has agreed to include that area in other facets of the exam and to include it in the Legal Doctrine area in a future iteration of the exam.
2. Foundational Lawyering-- including legal research and writing, issue spotting and analysis, investigation and evaluation, client counseling and advising, negotiation and dispute resolution and client relationship and management.

While the exam will be available beginning in July 2026,

most states and territories are implementing it between then and July 2028 when the current UBE will be retired. New Jersey will begin using the NEXT GEN UBE in July 2028 to sync with New York State’s adoption and to maximize the time for the National Conference of Bar Examiners to adjust the exam after its 2026 launch. This will also give time for law schools to modify their curricula to best prepare students to take the new exam.

The NEXT GEN UBE will take place over two days of testing; six hours on day one and three on day two. The exam consists of three parts. The first contains multiple choice questions with 4-6 answer options and one or more correct answers (about 40% of the exam). Integrated question sets form the second part of the exam and each set is based on a common fact scenario and may include some legal resources and/or supplemental documents (eg. Police report or deposition transcript) and include a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions. Some will be focused on drafting or editing a legal document, counseling and/or dispute resolution. The third portion of the exam is performance tasks that simulate real lawyer assignments such as research memos and client letters.

The NEXT GEN exam is scored on a 500-750 point scale in such a manner as to ensure consistency across administrations and jurisdictions. The NCBE has or is developing grading and scoring protocols with the help of psychometric studies. The written portions of the exam will be graded by the individual jurisdictions (here, the NJ Board of Bar Examiners) using rubrics provided by the NCBE.

While each jurisdiction sets its own passing score, the NCBE has recommended a passing score in the 610-620 range (Note: currently the UBE total scores are reported based on a 400 point scale and New Jersey’s minimum passing score is 266). This becomes important because of the portability of scores between jurisdictions. For example, Pennsylvania currently requires a higher score than New Jersey in order to pass the bar exam. A candidate who failed the exam in Pennsylvania, but with a score high enough to pass in New Jersey, can seek admission in New Jersey based upon their score in Pennsylvania (if they do so within 36 months of taking the exam).

To determine whether or not to adopt the NEXT GEN UBE, the New Jersey Supreme Court appointed a special committee headed by Retired Supreme Court Justice Jaynee LaVecchia and composed of representatives of the N.J. law schools, practitioners and volunteers with expertise in bar admissions. The Committee issued a 61-page report in May 2025 supporting the adoption of the NEXT GEN UBE. Based upon its report, the Committee should now consider a recommendation for a passing score and seek further information from the NCBE as to how the individual jurisdiction grading will work in practice. In its

continued on page 26

Expanding Your Law Practice Beyond New Jersey: A Guide to Reciprocity Requirements

By: Kimberly Paton, Esq.

If you are a lawyer licensed in New Jersey and are considering expanding your practice into neighboring or warmer jurisdictions, understanding reciprocity — also known as admission on motion — is essential. Each state has its own rules governing whether an experienced attorney can be admitted without sitting for another bar exam. Below is a comprehensive overview of what you can expect in New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and North Carolina.

For many attorneys, the ability to practice in multiple states creates personal and professional flexibility, access to broader client bases, expanded business opportunities and contact with family. While some states offer streamlined admission for experienced attorneys, others still require sitting for the bar examination regardless of prior licensure.

Here's how the process works in the most commonly considered states for New Jersey attorneys.

Practicing in New York

New York offers admission on motion to attorneys from reciprocal jurisdictions, including New Jersey.

To qualify without taking the New York bar exam, an applicant must:

- Hold a Juris Doctor degree from an ABA-accredited law school
- Be admitted and in good standing in at least one reciprocal U.S. jurisdiction
- Have practiced law for five of the seven years immediately preceding the application
- Complete a character and fitness review

If these requirements are satisfied, a New Jersey attorney can generally be admitted without examination.

Practicing in Connecticut

Connecticut allows admission on motion for attorneys licensed in reciprocal states, including New Jersey.

Key requirements typically include:

- Active licensure in a reciprocal jurisdiction
- At least five years of active legal practice
- Good standing and successful completion of character and fitness review

Qualified attorneys may be admitted without taking the Connecticut bar exam.

Practicing in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania also permits admission on motion for attorneys from reciprocal states, including New Jersey.

General requirements include:

- Licensure in a reciprocal jurisdiction
- Approximately five years of active legal practice
- Proof of good standing
- Character and fitness approval

This makes Pennsylvania one of the more accessible neighboring states for experienced New Jersey attorneys.

Practicing in Massachusetts

Massachusetts permits admission on motion for experienced attorneys, including New Jersey.

Typical requirements include:

- At least five years of active legal practice
- Graduation from an ABA-accredited law school
- Good standing in all jurisdictions of admission
- Character and fitness approval

New Jersey attorneys who meet these criteria may apply for admission without sitting for the Massachusetts bar exam.

Practicing in Florida

Florida does not offer general reciprocity or admission on motion.

Regardless of experience or years in practice, attorneys seeking full admission in Florida must generally:

- Apply for and pass the Florida Bar Examination
- Meet character and fitness requirements

Florida does offer limited exceptions (such as in-house counsel registration), but for traditional practice, the bar exam is required.

continued on page 26

Find yourself saying, "Not one more thing!?"



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FINCEN

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network

By: **Linda H. Schwager, Esq.**

On Thursday, March 19th, 2026, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division, issued a ruling in *Flowers Title Companies v. Bessent* ordering “vacatur and remand” of the Residential Real Estate Reporting Rule (RRE) adopted by FinCEN and effective March 1, 2026. The court determined that FinCEN lacked the authority to require reports covered by the RRE.

FinCEN acknowledgement:

FinCEN has acknowledged the federal court decision, and has discontinued any RRE enforcement actions, including the filing of a real estate report. The following post appears on the FinCEN RRE website:

“In light of a federal decision, reporting persons are not currently required to file real estate reports with FinCEN and are not subject to liability if they fail to do so while the order remains in force”.

Below is the article written prior to the 3/19/2026 decision. It is being included in the Newsletter in case the regulation is reinstated on appeal and for the general education of our readers.

The latest regulation for residential real estate reporting effective March 1, 2026

What is FinCEN? FinCEN is a Bureau of the U.S. Treasury Department dedicated to protecting the financial system from illicit use/money laundering. FinCEN exercises regulatory functions primarily under the Currency and Financial Transactions Reporting Act of 1970, as amended by Title III of the USA Patriot Act of 2001. Such legislation falls within the Bank Secrecy Act (“BSA”), the country’s anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing statute. To summarize its power, the BSA authorizes the Secretary of Treasury to issue regulations requiring banks and other financial institutions to take precautions against financial crimes. The new FinCEN Anti-Money Laundering (“AML”) regulation will bring new requirements and responsibilities to residential real estate closings to detect and prevent money laundering, terrorism financing and other illicit financial activities in real estate transactions.

Beginning March 1, 2026, certain real estate professionals involved in real estate closings and settlements nationwide are required to report information to FinCEN about non-financed transfers of residential real estate. It shall be important to know if the real estate transaction is a Reportable Transaction under the New FinCEN Guidelines.

Transactions must meet all 3 of the following criteria in order to be reportable unless there is an applicable exemption:

1. **Is it a non-financed transaction?**

Non-financial Transfer — A non-financial transfer of residential real property is a transfer that does not involve a traditional

lender, that is, a lender or mortgage which does not have an anti-money laundering obligation to maintain AML program requirements, or an all cash transaction, or private financing.

2. **Is the transferee/purchaser an entity (corporation, partnership, limited liability company, etc. or trust)?**

Transferee entity—is defined as any person other than a transferee trust or an individual and may be a corporation, partnership, estate, association, or limited liability company.

Transferee trust—is any legal arrangement created when a grantor or settlor places assets under the control of a trustee for the benefit of one or more beneficiaries or for a specified purpose, whether formed under the United States or a foreign jurisdiction.

3. **Is the real property 1-4 family residential?**

Residential Real Property is if it is located in the United States and containing a structure designed for occupancy by one to four families or shares in a cooperative housing corporation or vacant land intended for a 1 to 4 family structure.

Is there an exemption to filing the Real Estate Report?

The transferee entity is not a reportable entity.

The transfer is the result of a divorce or dissolution.

The transfer is pursuant to a court order issued in the United States.

The transfer is the result of a probate transfer involving a third-party financed transaction.

The transfer is subsequent to a reportable transfer that transferred property from an individual into their trust for estate planning purposes.

continued on page 18

The Young Lawyers Committee of Women Lawyers in Bergen meets on the 1st Wednesday of every month. Each meeting is hosted by one of the members. If anyone would like additional information including the location of the next meeting or are interested in joining the Committee, please contact Alexandra L. Quirke, Esq. at aquirke@mfmlaw.com.

Jean Robertson Update

By: Kathleen A. Hart, Esq.

Every year, the Jean Robertson Women Lawyers Scholarship provides a scholarship of \$2,500.00 to a woman attending law school in New Jersey who best exemplifies the goals and ideals of the late Jean Robertson, a past President of WLIB and deputy public defender in Bergen County.

In Jean's memory, the Jean Robertson Women Lawyers Scholarship was instituted to raise money to assist female students attending New Jersey law schools. The scholarship is awarded to students who

embody the ideals and values that Jean held and taught by example. The funds for the scholarship are composed entirely of voluntary contributions by members of the bar and others committed to honoring the work of Jean Robertson.

The next scholarship winner will be announced at WLIB's annual dinner on June 22, 2026 at Seasons in Washington Township.

If you would like to join the Jean Robertson Scholarship committee, please contact Tamara Katcher, Esq. 🐦

Notice to Readers

When you are considering changing a vendor or are seeking a specialist, please consider those who advertise in our newsletter.

Thank you.

FINCIN

continued from page 17

The transfer is a bankruptcy estate.

The person responsible for filing a Real Estate Report is known as the "Reporting Person." Only one person in a given transaction is deemed to be the reporting person (check with the title company) .

The Real Estate Report must be filed by the later date of:

- The last day of the month following the month that closing occurred, or
- 30 calendar days after the date of closing.

Information and resources used for this article:

www.fincen.gov/rre

Van Natta Tile Agency, Inc., 1069 Ringwood Avenue, Haskell, New Jersey

Westcor Land Title Insurance Company

First American Title Insurance Company 🐦

Appellate Division

continued from page 11

The unintended consequences of the decision will be detrimental to both the Landlord and the Tenant. To avoid the uncertainty, the Court can amend the Rules to provide that with a request for a Warrant of Possession (the order needed to permit a Court Officer to handle an eviction as the Landlord cannot use self-help) the Landlord can provide a new Certification filed with the Court and served on the Tenant which Certification can attach the relevant portions of the Lease and set forth the amount(s) that the Landlord contends is due and owing to void or avoid the lockout. The Landlord is already required to provide such a Certification with the Complaint that starts the eviction for non-payment. This would provide the Tenant with knowledge of the amounts due which the Court can approve or disapprove prior to the issuance of the Warrant of Possession. If the current decision stands, and as the Court itself recognizes, the Landlord will have to institute another Summary Dispossess Proceeding to obtain the remaining balance due under the lease, causing additional expenses to both the Landlord and the Tenant. It likely was not practical for this Landlord but perhaps in the future the issue will make its way to the New Jersey Supreme Court for further guidance. 🐦

Victoria Pekerman

continued from page 1

Proceedings and Contested Probate Matters and as Counsel to the River Edge Zoning Board of Adjustment. Victoria is also a member of the ABA, NJSBA, BCBA, and is extremely proud of her recently elected position as Treasurer of Women Lawyers in Bergen.

During my brief lunch meeting with Victoria, it was clear that she has an impressive resume but what is also quite clear is that her family comes first. She appreciates that her firm and her home are only a few minutes away. This allows her to travel home for school and athletic events to support her two boys, Joshua and Jeffrey, even as a partner in a busy firm. We spoke about finding the difficult balance between family life and the demands of the profession and commitment to clients.

When I mentioned to Victoria that one speaker at the WLIB Meet and Mingle event discussed how important it is for female attorneys to have a balance between work and home, Victoria said she could not agree more. Women attorneys are under so much pressure to do it all 100% both family and work – and it feels nearly impossible. We have to choose what works for us and what is important for us and our families. It seems that Victoria has struck that balance in her life.

Victoria is extremely dedicated to her family. Her parents still live in Brooklyn and she travels home often to visit with them. She also has a very close relationship with her sister who lives with her family in Oradell, New Jersey. Victoria's nephew, James Sukharev, a former law clerk to Judge Foti and Judge

Higbee will soon be working as an Assistant Prosecutor with the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office! The pursuit of law appears to run in the family!

Victoria and I also talked about our dreams for the future. While a long way off, when the time comes to retire from practicing law, Victoria would like to open an antique jewelry shop on the beach in Cape May! I would happily open my yoga studio next door!

I truly enjoyed the time I spent with Victoria. She is smart, tough, kind, honest, good natured, and caring. If you haven't had the pleasure of talking to Victoria, I would strongly encourage you to introduce yourself at the next WLIB event...and congratulate her as our new Treasurer! 🐦

The Right to Counsel

continued from page 8

their clientele and practice and to demonstrate to other firms the cost of such resistance.

Some of the targeted large law firms escaped these dire actions against their firms by making agreements to satisfy the executive branch. Those agreements are not publicly available and may or may not be enforceable. According to reports from knowledgeable sources, the agreements to avoid the sanctions require the acquiescing firms to refrain from certain representations and undertake other representations, in addition to modifying their own internal policies. The reported terms

continued on page 23

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Custody in Transition

continued from page 3

such party or in an attempt to address the child's reluctance to interact with such party." Id.

5. Rutgers School of Social Work in conjunction with the Administrative Office of the Courts must submit a report within three years describing the impact of the amendments and evaluating their effectiveness. N.J.S.A. 9:2-4h.

Discussion:

Lynn Norcia: As a former family court judge, do you think that the increased focus on the child's preference will result in better decisions in the best interests of the child?

Judge Koblitz: Giving such weight to the child's preference, as expressed directly to the court or via an expert or therapist, is a dramatic change which does not acknowledge the influence a parent may have over that child. Which parent brings the child to see the judge may well influence what the child tells the judge. A young child is likely to repeat the views of the parent who spends more time with the child. A teenager may want to go to the home with fewer obligations or rules. The idea that the child's preferences are paramount presumes that a child, with no parental experience or learned knowledge, knows better than the adults what the parenting plan should be. It also presumes that a child will be asked their preference, in the face of strong evidence that forcing a child to choose between parents is harmful to the child. As a Family judge, I would read the language about a child's preference in the context of the emphasis on safety to protect the child from the emotional harm of empowering the child to choose one parent over the other. Rather, I would frame the questions in a subtle way to deduce the child's preferred parenting schedule and custody arrangement. And I would take with a grain of salt any preference volunteered by the child.

Lynn Norcia: How would you handle the contradictory language in the statute which directs that if a child expresses a desire to speak to the court, the interview should be "off the record" and "the record of the conversation shall be sealed."? N.J.S.A. 9:2-4g(1)a. It's not clear to me what the legislature is expecting from the court.

Judge Koblitz: I would read this to mean that the conversation is recorded and sealed—reading "off the record" to mean it is a conversation held in chambers and not viewed by the parties or attorneys unless special permission is granted. See Rule 5:8-6.

Lynn Norcia: In my experience with cases involving parent child contact problems, the child is often so aligned with the

"favored" parent, it requires more than one interview by the judge to determine what the dynamics in the family relationship are at play. The child can be aligned simply because it is easier for them to "choose a side," rather than attempt to navigate a relationship with the rejected parent while residing with the favored parent. I have seen cases where the estrangement begins with a relatively short period of no contact with the estranged parent, for reasons unrelated to the child's relationship with that parent, and sometimes regardless of how the relationship had been when the family was intact, the mere passage of time creates a pattern of avoidance on the part of the child, and fear of the absent parent's reaction to contact. If the problem exists between the child and the estranged parent, by definition the child is going to be resistant to engaging in therapy with the absent parent. The problem is so complex that it can only be understood by an objective assessment of the family dynamics.

Judge Koblitz: The new statute also has a problem with the obligations it places on treating therapists. The idea of a court-ordered therapist reporting to the court periodically makes no sense to me. Custody cases, like all court cases, should be concluded in a limited time period. Divorces have a presumed average time to resolution of one year, non-dissolution cases have a presumed average of ninety days. The judge does not have the capacity to manage family dynamics until the child becomes emancipated. I would interpret this report-back requirement as narrowly as possible, so that if the judge orders therapy pending the resolution of the case, the therapist reports back (however that works within the confidentiality confines of therapy) only while the case is open in court.

Lynn Norcia: A treating therapist's role is to align with their client and support their client's needs. They are prohibited from making custody recommendations, yet I have seen both judges and attorneys ask them to opine on these questions many times. Those questions can only be answered by forensic evaluators who don't have a therapeutic relationship with the child or family member. It also concerns me that the amendments place so much weight on the treating therapists' report about the progress in therapy. Unfortunately, sometimes children's therapists only further reinforce the reasons for the child's resistance because the therapist is basing their work with the child on the family history and dynamics as described by the favored parent, without ever speaking to the estranged parent for a different perspective.

Judge, what do you think about the legislature's mandates that a court cannot "presume that a child's reluctance to interact with a party was caused by the other party," and also that, if "there is evidence of a history of domestic violence or child abuse, the offending party shall not be granted increased custody for the purpose of improving the relationship between the child and such party..."? N.J.S.A. 9:2-4g(2)(c).

continued on page 21

Custody in Transition

continued from page 3

Judge Koblitz: Not making presumptions is a good thing. But how do we assess whether the resistance is for valid reasons or is the result of the favored parent's influence on the child, especially if there is no proven evidence of domestic violence or child abuse.

Lynn Norcia: I think this is one of the areas where a good Guardian ad Litem (GAL) can be helpful to the court. A GAL is sometimes able to ascertain what factors are influencing the child's resistance. The statute references whether the child's reluctance is because of evidence of domestic violence or child abuse, which can be interpreted as including unsubstantiated allegations made by one parent against the other. Unfortunately, those in family practice have all seen false allegations being made in divorce and custody matters for a variety of reasons. As a result, courts are often quick to assume that the allegations are false and are just an attempt to prevent one parent from having parenting time with the child, when in fact they may be valid allegations that have simply not been "proven." This is one of the problems that Kayden's Law is meant to address. Conversely, I've seen cases where an FRO has been granted, but there is no evidence of direct harm to the children apart from the exposure to the parental conflicts while the parents were living together. Once the parents are no longer living together, the question must be asked as to whether the child is at risk of harm by that parent. These are complicated issues. To me the statute's prohibition of the court granting an offending party increased custody for the purpose of improving the relationship between the child and that party is taking away the court's ability to exercise its discretion in these cases.

Lynn Norcia: Judge, there has been a lot of discussion about whether these amendments are retroactive. Even if one is to assume that the statute is not intended to be retroactively applied, does this mean that it should not be applied in a case which was pending at the time that the statute was enacted, but where a decision has yet to be issued due to trial dates or outstanding motions? What if the court had already ordered reunification therapy which has been in progress, and one of the parties now objects to continuing in therapy? Would that be a retroactive application of the statute if the court requires continued compliance with the pre-statute order?

Judge Koblitz: With regard to application of the new child custody statute, I think it would apply only to cases where the motion is heard, or perhaps even is filed after the statutory change. The chaos that would result from the court being open to applications on prior determinations based solely on the changed statute could be extremely destructive to the resolution of pending cases. The statute does not explicitly state an intent to apply it retroactively, and in Family matters ordinarily statutes are not applied retroactively.

Lynn Norcia: The legislature appropriated \$500,000 to the Institute for Families at the Rutgers School of Social Work, in consultation with the Administrative Office of the Courts, to prepare a report concerning the impact of the statutory amendments and to evaluate the amendments' effectiveness. What are your thoughts about whether the proposed study will result in any changes to the statute?

Judge Koblitz: I think the study should review and suggest improvements to the resources available in the vicinages to provide the judge with an expert report in a timely manner. Bergen Family Center provides custody reports on a sliding scale. A few other vicinages have devised a way of providing evaluations. Creating a system that calls for the judge to determine family dynamics and speak to children emphasizes the need for expert evaluations.

Lynn Norcia: One of my ongoing concerns, which the two of us have spoken about over the years, is that the family court system already puts families with limited financial means, who may often appear pro se, at a severe disadvantage to those who have the financial means to hire attorneys, custody evaluators and other professionals. Some of the requirements in the new law will tend to further the disadvantage that families with limited financial means already experience and reinforce the two-tier family court system that already exists. Establishing county-based programs, such as what exists in Bergen County, throughout the state would help to reduce this disparity.

Judge Koblitz: As a former appellate judge, I will predict that this new statute will provide plenty of business for the appellate courts.

Lynn B. Norcia, Esq. has been a New Jersey attorney for over 40 years and currently limits her practice to family law litigation with a particular focus on work as a Guardian ad Litem, parenting coordinator and custody mediator.

Restaurant Review

continued from page 7

For our main course, we all went with a steak. I ordered the petite filet mignon (\$60.00). This was 8 ounces of perfectly seared, tender beef. It was delicious and I wound up taking a third of it home for lunch the next day. My sister opted for the

sliced filet mignon (\$49.00). This is a smaller amount of beef sliced and served with sauteed peppers and onions. There were no leftovers. My husband ordered the NY shell steak (\$68.00). This was a huge piece of meat (16 ounces) and cooked perfectly. It could be split between two people. Our

continued on page 23

“GOTCHA”



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The Right to Counsel

continued from page 19

consist of unprecedented government involvement in the private practice of law predicated on opinions and policies of the current president and his administration. The intended result is shrinking the number of lawyers willing and able to provide representation for identified causes or clients. The ABA lawsuit provides real life examples of the impact of the specter of EOs's harsh consequences.

The issuance of the EOs and the decisions of several giants of the legal industry largely for reasons of financial self-interest to comply with demands to avoid the serious sanctions work to erode the independence of the profession. Ironically, this effort to protect financial self-interest may have backfired. The law firms that refused to negotiate may have seen some business advantages. Their willingness to push back and fight for an independent bar are qualities attractive to clients looking for assertive confident representation. More to the point, the role that De Tocqueville and many others recognize that lawyers play in American society may diminish and wither when lawyers agree to limit whom they represent and what causes of action they take on.

Lawyers are key players in any challenge to actions arguably in violation of the law and warranting recompense or redress. Without lawyers, people treated wrongfully have no meaningful recourse. Lawyers level the playing field since all attorneys are equipped to

assert claims on behalf of actually or arguably wronged people. The numerous legal cases taking aim at the actions by the administration with respect to a host of varied issues and settings are practical examples of lawyers leading efforts to address perceived wrongdoing. The use of the National Guard without gubernatorial involvement; curtailment of valid visas for university students; the level of force utilized by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers; the numerous election law suits including re-districting; the due process concerns over instant deportation without proceedings and the use of foreign incarceration facilities; and other cases alleging the disregard of longstanding rules of law are all areas in which lawsuits provide a means of curbing conduct and pursuing justice.

Lawyers enable judicial scrutiny of the proofs and resolution of controversies, claims and disputes. Without lawyers ready, willing and able to draft pleadings, articulate claims or defenses, engage in discovery and put disputes before courts, the legal and judicial systems grind to a halt. The right to counsel is hand in hand with the availability of competent counsel. Efforts to diminish the availability of law firms to provide representation and guidance aim to land a serious blow on the pillars of the American justice. The potential impact on longstanding norms cannot be overstated.

Originally written for the NYSBA Women in the Profession publication. 🐾

Restaurant Review

continued from page 21

server gave us some special sea salt to try with the beef, which added a much deeper flavor to the dish. Side dishes are a la carte. We all shared the hashed browns (\$13.00) and the creamed spinach (\$15.00). There was more than enough for three people. All of our meals were delicious and cooked perfectly. Nothing was over salted and the creamed spinach was not too runny.

Other entrees include a larger filet mignon (\$68.00), porterhouse for two (\$150.00), rib eye steak (\$78.00), a lobster tail (\$75.00) and shrimp with linguini (\$40.00). For the side dishes, you can also order a baked potato (\$10.00), cottage fries (\$11.00), steamed broccoli (\$15.00) and fresh asparagus with hollandaise (\$15.00).

After our meal was complete, we were offered dessert. I would like to say we passed but it was the perfect ending to our meal. My sister and I split the mixed berries and fresh whipped cream (\$12.00), and my husband opted for the crême brulee (\$11.00). Both were delicious, with no leftovers. Also available on the dessert menu are lava cake (\$18.00), cheesecake (\$12.00), apple walnut crisp ala mode (\$12.00) and gelato (\$9.00).

The River Palm is not inexpensive and is perfect for a special occasion. On this night, we toasted my mom. Our meal was excellent. The other patrons in the restaurant clearly enjoyed their meals as much as we did. Our server was attentive but did not rush us, even as the 8:00 reservations were arriving. Reservations are a must and make sure to use the valet parking, as parking can be difficult in Edgewater. As we were leaving, the manager stopped by to say goodbye. Next time we won't wait seven years to come back. I give The River Palm Terrace three forks. 🐾

Book Review

continued from page 7

Institute for Racial Biology. The experiment turns out to be a study of twins which required twins to be separated either at birth or soon thereafter for the purpose of studying nature vs. nurture. Salander and her sadistic sister Camilla were part of the study, along with hundreds of other children. Most twins did not even realize that they had a twin until later in life, if at all. Palmgren's providing this information to Salander, who eventually gave it to the writer Mikael Blomkvist, put everyone's life at risk. Those involved with the studies would stop at nothing to keep their secret from getting out.

Faria's and Holgren's storylines intertwine while Lisbeth and Mikael work together toward insuring those responsible for these atrocities are brought to justice.

This book was a perfect continuation of the Millennium Series. All the usual characters from the earlier books were present, and new characters were introduced and well developed throughout the story. As is typical of these books, there were two parallel storylines that were well written and gripping throughout. The storylines eventually came together at the end with Lisbeth as the atypical heroine. I highly recommend not only this book but the others in the Millennium Series. I suggest that an interested reader start from the beginning of the series so that you can get to know the cast of characters and the development of their relationships over time. This background makes the stories that much more enjoyable.

Happy reading...until next time. 🐾

Employee Political Participation

continued from page 9

research, or academic programs.

5. **Political and Nonprofit Organizations:** Certain political entities and 501(c) organizations may require participation for electioneering matters.
6. **Government Employers:** State agencies and political subdivisions may require meetings to communicate proposals to change legislation, regulations, or public policy.
7. **Religious Organizations:** Participation in meetings conveying religious beliefs, practices, or tenets remains permissible.

By including these exemptions, the law balances employee rights with the practical needs of employers and public institutions.

3. Anti-Retaliation Protections

A key feature of this is the **prohibition against retaliation**. Employers cannot penalize employees who decline participation in political communications or meetings. This safeguard is an important enforcement tool. Retaliation can take many forms, including adverse performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, or implicit pressure to participate, all of which are explicitly prohibited.

A key difference now is that the law significantly lowers the employee's burden of proof. The employee does not have to prove that the law was violated. The amended law now states, "No employer...shall discharge, discipline or otherwise penalize any employee because the employee or a person acting on behalf of the employee makes a good faith report...of a violation or suspected violation of this act." The employee need only prove that the meeting was mandatory, and the purpose was to convey opinions about politics, union organization or religion.

4. Notice Requirements

Employers are required to **post notices** in conspicuous locations, such as areas reserved for employment-related postings or spaces commonly frequented by employees. This ensures employees are aware of their rights and helps mitigate disputes over non-compliance.

Committee Amendments

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee made several amendments to the original bill, improving clarity and legal enforceability:

- **Refined definition of political matters:** Explicitly connects the scope to electioneering communications and political or civic affiliations.
- **Clarified exemptions:** Detailed which entities can require participation, and in what context.

- **Anti-retaliation emphasis:** Strengthened employee protections against workplace consequences.
- **Severability clause:** Ensures that if any part of the law is invalidated, the remainder remains effective.
- **Technical adjustments:** Improved readability and legal precision.

These amendments ensured that the law is both robust and operationally clear for employers and legal advisors.

Practical Implications for Employers

Policy Updates

Employers in New Jersey should review and update workplace policies to reflect the new requirements:

- Explicitly state that employees **cannot be compelled** to attend political meetings or participate in political communications.
- Clearly define **permissible exemptions** in employee handbooks to avoid misinterpretation.
- Include an **anti-retaliation clause** reinforcing that refusal to participate will not affect employment status or evaluations.
- Post **mandatory notices** about employee rights under A4429.

Training and Compliance

HR and legal departments should develop training for managers and supervisors:

- Educate management on **what constitutes a political matter** under the law.
- Provide guidance on **voluntary participation and documentation of employee refusals** to ensure compliance.
- Establish a reporting mechanism for employees who feel pressured or retaliated against.

Audit and Risk Management

Employers should conduct audits of past practices:

- Review historical records of political communications in the workplace.
- Assess whether any past employee complaints might be impacted by A4429's broader protections.
- Update compliance protocols for government contractors or academic institutions that may fall under specific exemptions.

continued on page 25

Employee Political Participation

continued from page 24

Implications for Employment Law Practitioners

For attorneys and advisors:

- **Counseling Employers:** Assist clients in revising policies, training programs, and handbooks to comply with A4429. Ensure managers understand exemptions and legal boundaries.
- **Litigation Considerations:** Be prepared for potential disputes around alleged retaliation or improper communication. Understanding the bill's precise definitions and exemptions will be key in defense or prosecution.
- **Union and Labor Relations:** Recognize that labor organizations and unions may leverage A4429 in advocacy or negotiation, particularly regarding electioneering communications.
- **Academic and Nonprofit Compliance:** Provide guidance to higher education institutions and nonprofit organizations to align mandatory meetings with exemptions while avoiding violations.

Comparative Perspective

A4429 aligns New Jersey with broader trends in employment law emphasizing **employee autonomy, freedom of association, and protection from coercion**. While federal law protects certain forms of political activity outside the workplace, this law addresses the **employer-employee dynamic**, creating a framework that attempts to balance organizational needs with individual rights. Other states have varied approaches, with some providing similar protections and others leaving political participation largely unregulated. The U.S. Supreme Court recently decided not to take an appeal of Minnesota's law banning captive audience meetings in the workplace, Minn. Chapter of Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc. v. Ellison, 153 F.4th 695 (8th Cir. 2025), *reh'g en banc denied*, (8th Cir. Nov. 3, 2025), *cert. denied*,

2026 WL 490526 (U.S. 2026). Legal advisors should monitor for federal or interstate implications, particularly for multi-state employers.

Future Considerations

Several issues may emerge:

1. **Definitional Boundaries:** Determining what constitutes electioneering communications or political participation may lead to litigation.
2. **Digital Communications:** Employers increasingly communicate through email, messaging apps, and virtual meetings. How the law applies to these formats may require clarification.
3. **Monitoring Compliance:** Employers must ensure internal monitoring does not inadvertently violate anti-retaliation provisions.

Employment law practitioners should stay alert for guidance from the New Jersey Department of Labor or subsequent court interpretations to refine compliance strategies.

Conclusion

New Jersey Bill No. 4429 represents a significant evolution in New Jersey employment law, providing **strong protection for employees against compelled political participation** while recognizing necessary exemptions for certain communications, training, and organizational requirements. For employment law practitioners, it underscores the importance of **proactive policy development, management training, and risk mitigation**.

The law not only protects employee rights but also clarifies employer responsibilities, limiting workplace political engagement. Attorneys, HR professionals, and compliance officers must carefully interpret and apply A4429 to ensure their organizations are both compliant and respectful of employee freedoms.

As New Jersey continues to expand protections in this arena, legal advisors should remain vigilant, providing clients with **practical, compliant, and forward-looking guidance** to navigate the evolving landscape of employee political rights. 📌

Announcements

continued from page 12

WLIB member, **Evelyn F. Nissirios, Esq.**, is a co-chair of the BCBA Family Law Committee. Please see her announcement below regarding monthly Chats with the Chair.

Family Law Committee – Monthly Office Hours Announcement

The Co-Chairs of the BCBA Family Law Committee are pleased to offer monthly office hours for all committee members.

When: Every first Monday of the month

Time: 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Where: Via Zoom

These sessions provide an opportunity to connect, ask questions, and discuss family law topics in an informal setting. Whether you need a referral, are looking for a specific form, have a comment regarding a recent Court experience, or have suggestions, we value your feedback and welcome your participation.

Host: Evelyn F. Nissirios, Esq.

We encourage all members to attend and participate. We look forward to seeing you there! Please contact Evelyn at ENissirios@mfmclaw.com with any questions or to be

Uniform Bar Examination

continued from page 14

report, the Committee reflected on the history of the UBE in New Jersey. It was first administered in February 2017, ushering in the concept of score portability discussed above. Prior to the use of the UBE, New Jersey utilized a multistate examination component combined with locally developed essay questions.

In concluding that the NEXT GEN UBE “is a satisfactory tool of improved design to be used for measuring entry-level competence to practice law,” the Committee noted that “forty jurisdictions already have announced their adoption of the NEXT GEN UBE. If the exam is not embraced, the considerable benefit of score portability will be lost for New Jersey applicants. In a State where the overwhelming majority of attorneys are dual licensed, the value of score portability cannot be overstated.... Although UBE scores are portable, applicants still must meet all of the admission requirements imposed by each jurisdiction such as minimum passing score, educational requirements, and character and fitness certification.” The Committee emphasized that the new exam will afford examinees the opportunity to showcase their abilities in the areas of investigation and evaluation, client counseling and advising, negotiation and dispute resolution, and client relationship and management in addition to the traditional skills of research, writing and analysis.

Absent adoption of the NEXT GEN UBE, New Jersey would be forced to create its own bar examination which the Committee found to be “impractical to put it mildly.” This was apparently attempted in California and the experience was reported as “disastrous.”

The Committee voiced its agreement that Family Law and Trust and Estate Law are areas that should be included in the bar exam and emphasized that these subjects are among those covered in the first two years of the mandatory CLE requirements for newly admitted attorneys (16 credits in any 6 of 12 enumerated subjects in the first two year compliance period). As a result, the Committee declined to recommend the addition of a component to the NEXT GEN UBE Exam (that would be administered on the second day of the exam) that would test examinees’ knowledge of specific New Jersey Laws.

Pending the July 2028 administration of the NEXT GEN UBE, law schools will be assessing and adapting curricula to ensure coverage of the concepts and skills to be tested and the Board of Bar Examiners will address the administrative issues necessary for a smooth transition. For example, the current exam taken on the user’s own laptop runs offline – no internet access is necessary. However, the NEXT GEN UBE will require a wifi connection. The Board of Bar Examiners will need to revisit its agreements with vendors to ensure that adequate bandwidth is available to accommodate wifi usage on the necessary scale.

The Committee also recommended that the Supreme Court begin to accept NEXT GEN UBE scores for transfer from states who are implementing the NEXT GEN Bar Exam prior to July 2028.

It will be interesting to follow up after the first administration of the exam this summer when it will be taken by examinees in Connecticut, Guam, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming. 🐦

Expanding Your Law Practice

continued from page 26

Practicing in Rhode Island

Rhode Island does not provide traditional admission on motion based solely on reciprocity.

However, options may include:

- UBE score transfer, if the applicant meets Rhode Island’s score and timing requirements
- A modified exam option for attorneys who have practiced full-time for five of the last ten years, which may require only a portion of the exam

Unlike New York or Pennsylvania, Rhode Island does not allow a complete waiver of examination purely based on reciprocity.

Practicing in North Carolina

North Carolina allows admission on motion (referred to as *admission by comity*) for attorneys from reciprocal jurisdictions,

New Jersey qualifies.

To qualify, an applicant generally must:

- Be licensed in a jurisdiction that grants reciprocity to North Carolina attorneys
- Have actively practiced law for four of the last six years immediately preceding application
- Hold a Juris Doctor from an ABA-accredited law school
- Be in good standing in all jurisdictions
- Successfully complete character and fitness review

If these requirements are met, the North Carolina Bar Exam is typically not required.

Key Considerations Before Applying

Regardless of the state, several common elements apply:

- **Good Standing:** You must be in good standing in every jurisdiction where you are admitted.
- **Character & Fitness Review:** Each state conducts its own evaluation.

continued on page 27

Expanding Your Law Practice

continued from page 26

- **Practice Definition:** “Active practice” is defined differently by each state and may include private practice, government service, judicial clerkships, in-house counsel roles, or academia.
- **Reciprocity Policies Change:** Admission rules can be amended, so reviewing the most current rules from the state’s Board of Bar Examiners is critical.

Pathways to Admission into New Jersey from other Jurisdictions

1. UBE Score Transfer to New Jersey

New Jersey is a Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) jurisdiction. This creates an important opportunity for applicants who sat for the UBE in another state.

If an applicant:

- Took the UBE in another jurisdiction
- Did not achieve a passing score in that jurisdiction
- But earned a score that meets New Jersey’s minimum passing score they may be eligible to transfer that UBE score to New Jersey, provided it meets New Jersey’s cutoff and is within the allowable time period.

This means that even if a candidate did not pass in a state with a higher passing threshold, they may still qualify in New Jersey if their scaled score meets New Jersey’s requirement.

Additional requirements typically include:

- Meeting New Jersey’s character and fitness standards
- Satisfying the MPRE requirement
- Completing any required skills or professionalism components

The key takeaway: UBE scores are portable and passing standards vary by state.

2. Admission on Motion (Waiver for Experienced Attorneys)

New Jersey also offers admission on motion, commonly referred to as a “waiver,” for attorneys licensed in other states.

Generally, an applicant must:

- Be admitted and in good standing in another U.S. jurisdiction
- Have engaged in the active practice of law for at least five of the last seven years
- Hold a J.D. from an ABA-accredited law school (or otherwise qualify under court rules)
- Complete character and fitness review.

If these requirements are met, the applicant may be admitted without taking the New Jersey bar exam.

New Jersey *does* extend admission on motion privileges to

attorneys from many other jurisdictions, such as: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

This pathway is especially beneficial for experienced attorneys relocating or expanding their practice into New Jersey.

3. Limited In-House Counsel Admission

New Jersey also provides a limited license option for attorneys serving as in-house counsel.

This allows an attorney who is:

- Admitted and in good standing in another U.S. jurisdiction
- Employed exclusively as in-house counsel for a corporation, business entity, or similar organization in New Jersey to practice law solely for that employer without taking the New Jersey bar exam.

Important limitations include:

- The attorney may not represent clients outside the employer
- The license is restricted to in-house practice
- If employment ends, the limited license will terminate, but can be converted through another admission pathway. This option is often used by corporate counsel relocating to New Jersey. 🐾

Resources:

[New Jersey Board of Bar Examiners - Information for Admission by Motion Applicants](#)

[BOLE- OFFICIAL PAGE NEW YORK STATE BAR EXAMINATION](#)

[Connecticut Bar Examining Committee - Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Reciprocity Information - List of Attorney Resources Reciprocal states](#)

[U.S. Multi-jurisdictional Practice Tracker | Association of Corporate Counsel \(ACC\)](#)

[reciprocal jurisdictions](#)

[North Carolina Board of Law Examiners - States with which North Carolina has Comity](#)



**WOMEN LAWYERS
IN BERGEN**

Women Lawyers in Bergen (WLIB)
50th Anniversary Celebration Invitation
A Legacy of Leadership. A Future of Impact.

You are cordially invited to join Women Lawyers in Bergen for a special evening celebrating 50 years of advancing the leadership and impact of women in the legal profession.

This milestone celebration will honor our founders, recognize current leaders, and inspire the next generation. The evening will also include the swearing-in of the incoming Board and recognition of all past Presidents for their service and lasting contributions.

Keynote Speaker: Honorable Esther Salas, U.S.D.J.

Date: June 22, 2026

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Seasons, Washington Township, New Jersey

Ticket Pricing: WLIB Members: \$150.00 | Non-Members: \$160.00

Please register on the Women Lawyers in Bergen website.

**Kindly review the sponsorship opportunities
available for this special event.**

**For questions, contact Sheila O'Shea-Criscione, Esq.
at Soshea@carcichoshea.com | (201) 988-1308.**

WLIB

WOMEN LAWYERS IN BERGEN

Women Lawyers in Bergen | 79 Main Street | Suite #1 | Hackensack, NJ 07601 | www.womenlawyersinbergen.org

Calendar of Events

Please check the WLIB website,
www.womenlawyersinbergen.org
for all events.

Board Meetings are currently being held via Zoom and are open to all members. If you wish to attend the board meeting go to <https://www.womenlawyersinbergen.org/> login as a member and you will find the Zoom link for the board meeting.

WLIB is proud to announce its new Mentorship Program!

In this unique program, interested students from Seton Hall Law will fill out a detailed questionnaire to pinpoint the types of law they are interested in and whether they have any specific concerns related to their future careers. An email will then be sent to the WLIB membership asking for volunteers who are best suited to assist the student.

Once a match is made, the mentor and mentee will be given each other's contact information. Mentors are encouraged to reach out to their mentees once a month to touch base, and to invite them to WLIB events. Once enough students are matched with a WLIB member, we will set up a date to have an in-person reception for all current (and future!) mentees and mentors. In future years, this reception will also include past mentors and mentees.

I encourage everyone to participate as we are positive that this program will increase the number of younger attorneys who join WLIB, and foster a supportive community for future young lawyers. If you have any questions or suggestions for this program, please reach out to me at any time.

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