

## NOTICE TO THE BAR

### SUPREME COURT DETERMINATION ON STAFFING NEEDS FOR THE OFFICE OF ATTORNEY ETHICS

On December 7, 2022, the Supreme Court issued a [Notice to the Bar](#) adopting the 2023 Attorney Discipline Budget and noting its ongoing examination of the staffing needs for the attorney disciplinary system, in particular the Office of Attorney Ethics.

After a period of study, the Court has determined to increase staffing at the Office of Attorney Ethics in measured ways to better protect the public, preserve the integrity of the bar, and support the work of its invaluable, 900-member volunteer corps.

In conducting its review, the Court carefully weighed constructive feedback from the bar regarding the length of time the ethics process takes and the associated burden on attorneys when matters are delayed. To that end, the Court has authorized the addition of staff to the Office of Attorney Ethics, to enable more timely disposition of grievances, investigations, hearings, and subsequent proceedings. The Court made clear that the addition of staff is a measure to alleviate unnecessary delays; it is not intended as a mechanism to increase the number of investigations or random audits. In fact, no new auditors or investigators were added as a result of the staffing review. Rather, the staff additions include attorneys and administrative support to handle the existing volume of cases more expeditiously.

Consistent with R. 1:20-8(f), the Court has directed the Office of Attorney Ethics to highlight relevant statistics in its Annual Report to enable the Court and the public to assess the anticipated gains in efficiency. A standard of excellence and atmosphere of

constant self-assessment will continue to be the hallmarks of the New Jersey attorney regulatory system as it carries out its fundamental purposes of protecting both the public and the reputation of the bar.

The Court anticipates that the 2024 Attorney Discipline Budget, and by extension the annual attorney assessment, will include an increase attributable to the additional staffing. The attorney disciplinary system budget, including any fee increase, will be published for comment in the usual course.



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Glenn A. Grant  
Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: August 3, 2023