

## WHY WAS THIS PANEL FORMED?

Since 1996, the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit has been a respected leader on issues of professionalism and the elevation of the practice of law.

In 2013, the Florida Supreme Court issued an opinion that each judicial circuit in the state would establish a local committee specifically to address issues of professional conduct.

We are pleased to announce that the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit (Hillsborough County) "Local Professionalism Panel" has now been activated and is here to help!

This is a non-punitive, confidential program intended to mentor and advise attorneys who may need further direction on the professionalism and courtesy expected of an attorney in accordance with the Oath of Admission to the Florida Bar.

As noted, the Supreme Court in 2013 – following the recommendation of the Commission on Professionalism – ordered that local committees be set up in each Circuit, as part of an effort to improve professionalism.

Complaints about lawyer's conduct may be made to the local panel or to The Florida Bar's Attorney Consumer Assistance Program (ACAP). Most issues are expected to be resolved informally, but the court reiterated that – as has been done in previous Bar grievance cases – **egregious** unprofessional conduct would be subject to discipline.

Complaints that do not result in Bar action will be referred to local committees such as this Local Professionalism Panel for review. Likewise, cases fielded by the local committees that involve more serious violations are expected to be referred to the Bar.

## IS A LAWYER ACTING UNPROFESSIONALLY AND CAUSING YOU CONCERN BECAUSE HE OR SHE SEEMS:

- Disorganized?
- Unprepared?
- Gives an appearance of impropriety?
- Demonstrates badgering or bullying behavior?
- Rude?
- Abusive?
- To have an offensive personality?
- To belittle your concerns?

## LET US HELP

We can be reached at:

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Local Professionalism Panel Committee  
Chairman