

ARDC



ATTORNEY
REGISTRATION
& DISCIPLINARY
COMMISSION



2019 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS



The Full 2019
ARDC Annual Report

WHO WE ARE



ARDC MISSION STATEMENT

As an administrative agency of the Supreme Court of Illinois, the ARDC assists the Court in regulating the legal profession through attorney registration, education, investigation, prosecution and remedial action.

Through our annual registration process, we compile a list of lawyers authorized to practice law. We provide ready access to that list so that the public, the profession and courts may access lawyers' credentials and contact information.

We educate lawyers through seminars and publications to help them serve their clients effectively and professionally within the bounds of the rules of conduct adopted by the Court. We provide guidance to lawyers and to the public on ethics issues through our confidential Ethics Inquiry telephone service.

The ARDC handles discipline matters fairly and promptly, balancing the rights of the lawyers involved and the protection of the public, the courts and the legal profession. Grievances are investigated confidentially. Disciplinary prosecutions are adjudicated publicly and result in recommendations to the Court for disposition. Our boards consist of independent, diverse groups of volunteer lawyers and non-lawyers who make recommendations in disciplinary matters.

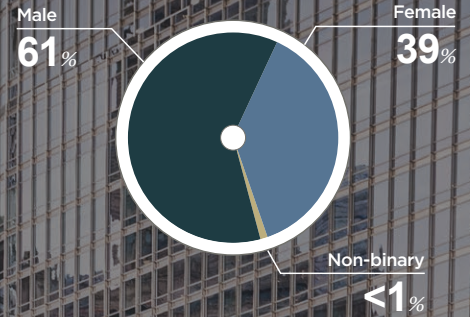
We advocate for restitution and other remedial action in disciplinary matters. We seek to provide reimbursements through our Client Protection Program to those whose funds have been taken dishonestly by Illinois lawyers who have been disciplined.

ILLINOIS LAWYERS

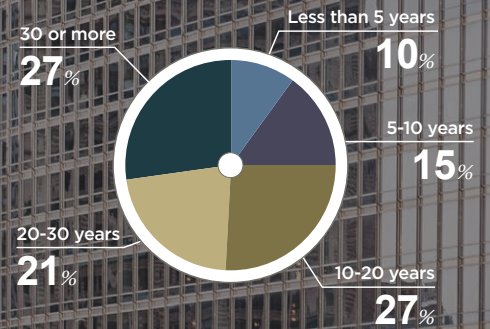
94,662 registered lawyers

• 69% located in Illinois • 49% located in Cook County

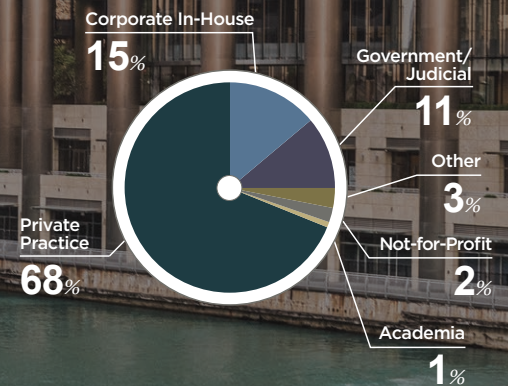
GENDER



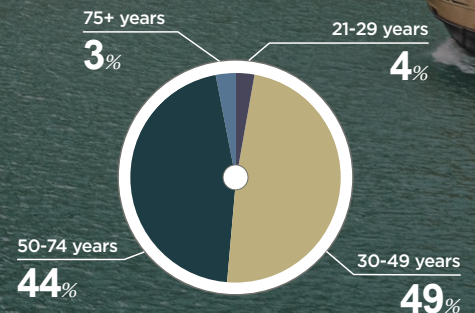
YEARS IN PRACTICE



PRACTICE SETTING



AGE



LAWYERS

IN ILLINOIS



- 85% of lawyers located in Illinois have an Active status license
- 70% of Active status lawyers in Illinois are in private practice
- 87% of Active status lawyers in private practice in Illinois are located in metropolitan Chicago (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties)
- 13% of Active status lawyers in private practice in Illinois are located in the 96 counties outside metropolitan Chicago
- 52 counties have 25 or fewer lawyers

LAWYERS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE

Solo:	27%	• 87% carry malpractice insurance
2-10 lawyers:	26%	• 36% have a succession plan
11-25 lawyers:	10%	• 51% have a trust account
26-100 lawyers:	11%	• 50% engaged in <i>pro bono</i> service
100+ lawyers:	26%	

PRO BONO SERVICE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- **31,954** lawyers performed over **1.9 million** hours in pro bono legal service.
- **18,206** lawyers donated **\$16.9 million** to *pro bono* legal service organizations, an average of **\$930** per lawyer.





REGULATORY ACTION

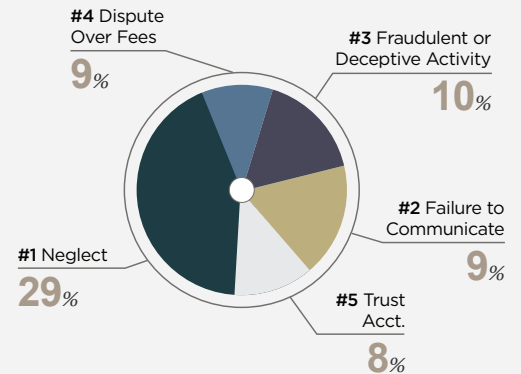
INVESTIGATIONS, PROSECUTIONS AND SANCTIONS

The Illinois Supreme Court established the ARDC to assist it in its inherent and exclusive authority over the regulation of lawyers. The ARDC investigates claims of attorney misconduct and, if warranted, brings formal disciplinary charges. Proceedings before the ARDC are governed by Supreme Court Rules 751-780 and the Rules of the ARDC. Assisted by a diverse staff and volunteer board members, the ARDC's mission is to protect the public and promote the integrity of the legal profession.

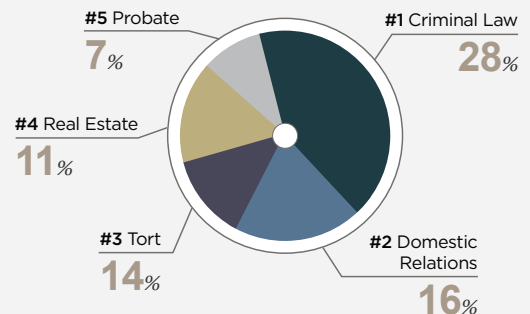
INVESTIGATIONS

4,937 grievances, a **1.8%** decrease over the prior year and the seventh consecutive year of decline.

64% of grievances arises out of a breakdown in attorney-client relations:



Top five practice areas are:

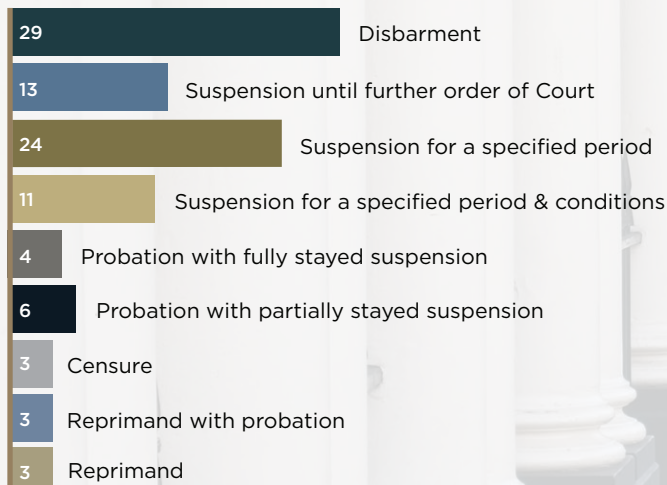


PROSECUTIONS

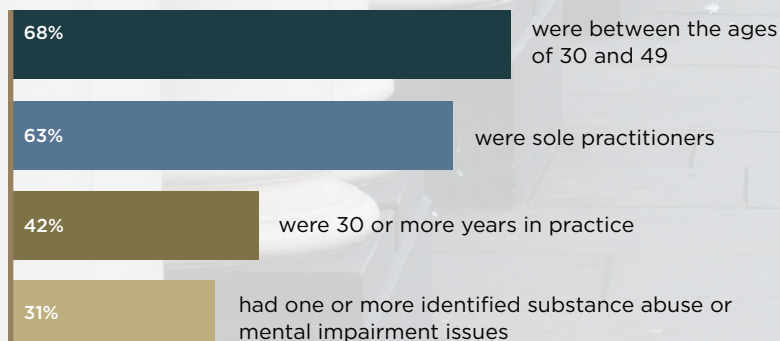
- **44** formal disciplinary complaints filed before the Hearing Board.
- **39** disciplinary and regulatory proceedings filed directly with the Illinois Supreme Court.
- **73%** of formal disciplinary complaints alleged fraudulent or deceptive activity.
- **45%** of cases before the Hearing Board concluded by the filing of discipline on consent.

SANCTIONS

96 sanctions entered by the Illinois Supreme Court against **95** lawyers in **2019**



DISCIPLINED LAWYERS IN 2019



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Through seminars, publications and outreach, the ARDC helps lawyers serve their clients effectively and professionally, protects clients and the public from harm, and assists the public in understanding the legal system and the duties of lawyers.

ARDC ON-DEMAND CLE WEBCASTS

As one of the leading MCLE providers in Illinois, the ARDC produces high quality, remote learning opportunities through its recorded MCLE-accredited webcasts. Available 24/7 and free of charge on the ARDC website, these interactive webcasts present a variety of ethics topics thereby allowing Illinois lawyers to fulfill the six-hour MCLE professional responsibility requirement.

- **22 free, on-demand MCLE-accredited webcast seminars** including satisfying the one hour diversity and inclusion and mental health training requirements.
- **Over 7,000 lawyers completing the Proactive Management Based Regulation (PMBR) Series** an interactive, law office management self-assessment course divided into eight modules required of lawyers in private practice with no malpractice insurance.
- **Over 29,000 CLE certificates issued in 2019**, earning Illinois lawyers over 21,000 hours in Illinois MCLE professional responsibility credit.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

269 presentations made by ARDC lawyers in 2019 to bar associations, government agencies, law firms, law schools, public interest groups and other organizations, at no charge, throughout the state and country.

ARDC DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE



Established by the ARDC in July 2015, the Initiative provides leadership and direction for diversity and inclusion at all levels the ARDC and increases diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and in the community in general by:

- Strengthening relationships with affinity bar associations
- Creating diversity and inclusion MCLE programming on the ARDC website.
- Promoting a more diverse ARDC staff and volunteer board members.
- Providing education and training for ARDC leadership and staff.

ARDC ETHICS INQUIRY HOTLINE

Over 3,800 calls received to the Hotline from attorneys seeking assistance in resolving hypothetical, ethical queries. Additional information about the Program can be obtained at: www.iardc.org/ethics.html.

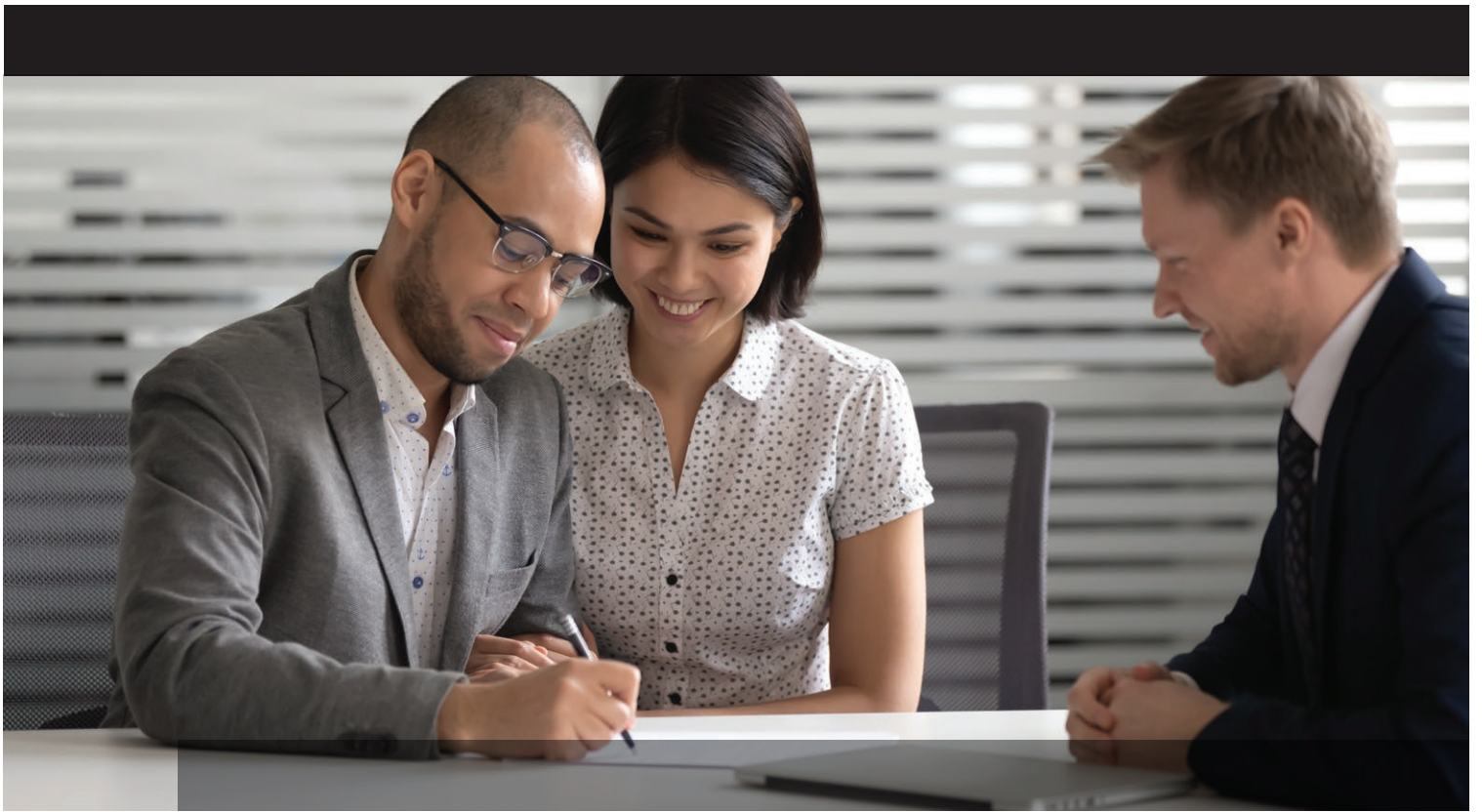
ARDC WEBSITE

1.25 million visitors in 2019 to the ARDC website, a leading on-line resource for public information concerning all aspects of lawyer regulation in Illinois including the Lawyer Search function which enables users to search the Master Roll for certain basic public registration information about lawyers.

ARDC STAFF SERVICE IN LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS

Our lawyers are actively involved in the legal community, serving as liaisons to and members of national, state, local and affinity bar associations. Our lawyers often serve in key leadership positions.





REMEDIAL ACTION

The ARDC advocates for restitution, seeks reimbursements through our Client Protection Program and utilizes other remedial actions in disciplinary matters as a way to meaningfully address some of the causes of lawyer misconduct. The ARDC continues to find practical and innovative ways to prevent future harm and restore the public's trust in the administration of justice and rule of law.

CLIENT PROTECTION PROGRAM

- \$1,392,321 on 56 claims approved against 26 lawyers
- Four approvals for the \$100,000 maximum and 15 approvals for \$2,500 or less
- 70% of approved claims involved conversion

PROBATION

- 137 disciplined lawyers monitored by the ARDC Probation Section for substance or mental illness impairments, law office management issues and/or restitution conditions.

DIVERSION PROGRAM

- The ARDC Diversion Program, created under Com. Rule 54, allows for closure of an investigation by the ARDC in certain matters if the lawyer agrees to complete one or more activities, services or programs that address the issues that may be causing grievances. Seven lawyers entered into the diversion program in 2019.

INTERMEDIARY PROGRAM

- In June 2019, the ARDC Intermediary Program was established, on a pilot basis, to enhance ARDC efforts to locate, engage, assist and seek cooperation from lawyer-respondents who are non-responsive in the disciplinary investigation and who might otherwise default at a disciplinary hearing.

REFERRALS TO LAP

- 57 referrals were made by the ARDC to the Lawyers Assistance Program (LAP) in 2019. Supreme Court Rule 766 permits the ARDC to make referrals to LAP during an otherwise confidential investigation where there is reason to believe the lawyer may be impaired by substance abuse or a mental health.

REMEDIAL EDUCATION

- Trust account compliance education is required for lawyers with a trust account overdraft investigation.
- ARDC Professionalism Seminar attendance required as a part of discipline, covering the basics of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct.

PERMANENT RETIREMENT/DISABILITY INACTIVE STATUS

- Permanent Retirement and Disability Inactive status allows for a reasonable and dignified way for lawyers facing minor misconduct charges to retire from the practice of law with no possibility of reinstatement.

RECEIVERSHIPS

- 17 receivership investigations were initiated in 2019. In four instances the ARDC was appointed as receiver of a lawyer's law practice where the lawyer's disability, disappearance or death rendered it necessary to protect the interests of clients

RESTITUTION

- Restitution can be ordered by the Illinois Supreme Court as part of a lawyer's discipline, the payment of which is a condition for readmission. In 2019, there were 41 lawyers on suspension pending restitution being monitored to ensure their ordered restitution is paid before being allowed to resume the practice of law.





One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive
Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219
312.565.2600

3161 West White Oaks Drive
Suite 301
Springfield, Illinois 62704
217.546.3523

www.iardc.org



The Full 2019
ARDC Annual Report