

**Highlights**  
**2005 Annual Report of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary**  
**Commission**  
**filed with the Supreme Court on April 28, 2006**

**Registration**

- 80,041 lawyers were registered as of October 31, 2005, reflecting a 2.5% increase over 2004, returning to a ratio of growth not seen since 1998.

**Investigations**

- ARDC docketed 6,082 investigations involving 4,163 Illinois lawyers (about 5% of registered lawyers) and concluded 6,185 investigations, nearly 6% of which were made part of formal charges.

**Hearing Board Activity**

- The Administrator filed formal complaints against 128 attorneys and the Hearing Board terminated proceedings on the same number of complaints.

**Review Board Activity**

- The Review Board decided 47 appeals, cutting its docket of pending cases in half, from 38 to 19.

**Disciplinary Sanctions**

- The Supreme Court imposed a record number 167 sanctions (74 by consent) against 165 attorneys, surpassing the record 149 set in 2004.

**New Rules**

- The Supreme Court established the Commission on Professionalism and appointed members to the Commission and its executive director.
- The Supreme Court added Minimum Continuing Legal Education requirements for active status lawyers and appointed a MCLE board and approved the board's appointment of its executive director.
- ARDC adopted policies on board member recusal and on restrictions on the involvement of a board member as counsel or a witness in a disciplinary proceeding; and amended discovery rules to clarify the applicability of the work product privilege and to require additional witness disclosures.

## **ARDC Web Site**

- Beginning with 2006 registration, attorneys were able to register and make registration changes online. ARDC website also offers searchable databases of Illinois lawyers and disciplinary decisions, attracting up to 60,000 visitors per month.

## **Client Protection Program**

- The Client Protection Program paid a record \$951,173 in 179 awards to those who lost money due to the dishonest conduct of disciplined attorneys, but funding restraints precluded reimbursement of actual losses totaling \$2,878,082. Since the ARDC was given responsibility for the program in 1994, payments have totaled \$4,844,825 on 1,181 approvals and losses of \$22,253,574 could not be reimbursed.
- Increases in awards track a spike in discipline in the years 2001 through 2005, particularly involving conversion charges. Disciplined attorneys with addictions and other mental health illnesses, particularly gambling, account for a disproportionate share of program awards, according to an eight-year study. Gambling-related claims accounted for \$780,282, 28%, of \$2,702,014 paid over that time period.
- ARDC is working toward a program funding model that will better meet the needs of the program and the disciplinary system.

## **Financial Report**

- Revenues grew at historic rate during 2005; nonetheless ARDC experienced a \$3.0 million shortfall in projected revenues since 2000 (due to slower growth in registration fee revenues and lower interest rates), but maintained spending within projections notwithstanding financial pressures of a record disciplinary and Client Protection Program caseload.
- ARDC projects that the present fee structure will support operations through 2006 and has submitted its assessment and a proposal for a future funding plan to the Supreme Court.