



Supreme Court of Illinois

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SUPREME COURT NAMES ILLINOIS ATTORNEYS JOAN EAGLE AND JAMES MENDILLO TO HEAD THE ARDC

The Illinois Supreme Court has announced the appointment of Chicago attorney Joan M. Eagle and Belleville attorney James R. Mendillo to serve as chair and vice-chair of the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (ARDC).

The two lawyers combine to make an experienced team in heading the agency charged with mitigating and prosecuting lawyer misconduct.

"Ms. Eagle and Mr. Mendillo have both served the ARDC with distinction for many years," Justice Lloyd A. Karmeier, Supreme Court liaison to the ARDC, said. "Their experiences as Commissioners and as members of the Inquiry and Hearing Boards, tied with their passion for upholding the highest standards of conduct for Illinois attorneys, shall serve them well as chair and vice-chair of the ARDC."

The appointments are effective January 1, 2013.

Ms. Eagle currently serves as the Commission's vice-chair. She has served for nearly a decade on various ARDC panels, including the agency's Hearing and Inquiry Boards.

The Hearing Board functions much like a trial court in a civil case and is composed of three panel members, two lawyers and one non-lawyer appointed by the ARDC to serve as judges in lawyer disciplinary cases. Members of the Inquiry Board determine whether formal disciplinary charges should be filed against allegedly errant lawyers. She has served as an ARDC Commissioner since 2008.

For more than 30 years, Ms. Eagle has practiced in the areas of labor and employment law, most recently at the Chicago firm of Klein Dub & Holleb, Ltd. She provides counsel to employers on general employment relations matters, and defends employment discrimination claims, wage and hour actions, civil rights claims, unfair labor practice charges and unemployment compensation claims.

Ms. Eagle obtained her juris doctor degree with high honors from the IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law.

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While there, she was a member of the Chicago-Kent Law Review. She graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree (with distinction) and a Master of Music degree (with great distinction) from the University of Michigan.

The Supreme Court also appointed Belleville attorney James R. Mendillo to serve as the ARDC's vice-chair, effective January 1, 2013. Mr. Mendillo is partner with the firm of Freeark, Harvey & Mendillo, P.C.

For three years, Mr. Mendillo also served as a member of the Hearing Board. He has served as an ARDC Commissioner since 2010.

A trial attorney, Mr. Mendillo has substantial experience in the general practice of law, including employment discrimination, construction accidents, insurance and bad faith, products liability, Fair Credit Reporting Act, medical and legal malpractice, federal tort claims and domestic relations.

Mr. Mendillo earned his undergraduate degree from the University of New Haven (Conn.) in 1969 and obtained his juris doctor degree from the Washington University Law School in 1972. While there, he was a note editor of the Washington University Law Quarterly.

After being admitted to the bar, he was a staff law clerk under Chief Judges Marion Mathis and William Webster in the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals before joining his current law firm in 1974.

The ARDC operates under the authority of the Illinois Supreme Court, which regulates the admission and discipline of lawyers in Illinois. The Commissioners establish ARDC policies; appoint members of the ARDC Hearing and Inquiry Boards and the Commission's administrator, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court.

There are seven Commissioners, three of whom are non-lawyers. All are appointed by the Supreme Court. The Commissioners serve without compensation for three-year terms. All funds expended by the agency are from annual fees paid by Illinois attorneys with no tax dollars used to support the disciplinary system.

The other five Commissioners are: lawyers Robert Michael Henderson of Peoria, who currently serves as the Commission's chair and David F. Rolewick of Wheaton; and non-lawyers Derrick K. Baker of Evergreen Park, Karen Hasara of Springfield and Bernard Judge of Chicago.

Jerome Larkin serves as the ARDC administrator.