

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee

May 01, 2020

Originally published in the [Hillsborough County Bar Association Lawyer Magazine](#).

*"Professionalism is the pursuit and practice of the highest ideals and tenets of the legal profession. It embraces far more than simply complying with the minimal standards of professional conduct. The essential ingredients of professionalism are character, competence, civility, and commitment."*¹

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit is and always has been a model of professionalism. In furtherance of its commitment to professionalism, the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit maintains the comprehensive Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee ("Professionalism Committee").

The Professionalism Committee initiates and coordinates professional activities in Hillsborough County and is also responsible for overseeing and training a subcommittee designated as the Local Professionalism Panel. The composition and structure of the Professionalism Committee is set forth in Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Administrative Order S-2020-010.

The Chief Judge serves as the Chair of the Committee. The Chief Judge appoints an Executive Chair and, in consultation with the Executive Chair and the President of the Hillsborough County Bar Association (HCBA), appoints various subcommittee chairs, including the following:

Professionalism and CLE Events Subcommittee Chair – Responsible for ensuring the Thirteenth Circuit provides sufficient professionalism training opportunities and recognition events for lawyers and judges;

Professionalism Promotion Subcommittee Chair – Responsible for ensuring that activities of the Professionalism Committee are made known to the local bar and attorneys practicing within the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit through local legal publications and other marketing and media outlets;

Professionalism Awards Subcommittee Chair – Responsible for accepting nominations for the Professionalism Award established to annually recognize both a public and private sector attorney

for consistently demonstrating honesty, integrity, fairness, courtesy, and an abiding sense of responsibility to comply with the standards and rules of professionalism in the practice of law;

Medical-Legal Professionalism Code Subcommittee Chair – Responsible for coordinating updates to the established guidelines for responsible, respectful and ethical interaction between lawyer and physicians and their patients in cases pending before the court; and

Local Professionalism Panel Subcommittee Co-Chairs – Responsible for oversight and management of the Local Professionalism Panel.

In addition to the Chief Judge, the Professionalism Committee is composed of at least 15 other circuit or county judges or quasi-judicial officers from the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, the President of the HCBA, a representative from sections and divisions of the HCBA, a representative from virtually every voluntary bar association and Inn of Court within the circuit, a representative from the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Hillsborough County Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, a representative from Stetson University College of Law and Western Michigan University Cooley Law School, and a representative from the Attorney General's Office, City Attorney's Office, County Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Regional Counsel's Office, and the State Attorney's Office.

The Professionalism Committee is just one example of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit's commitment to professionalism, and it is in every sense consistent with the definition of professionalism set forth by the Florida Bar Standing Committee on Professionalism and the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism.

¹ See "Professionalism Handbook," Florida Bar Standing Committee on Professionalism and Florida Bar Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism.

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