



ARDC



ATTORNEY
REGISTRATION
& DISCIPLINARY
COMMISSION

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS



The Full 2021
ARDC Annual Report



WHO WE ARE

ARDC MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the ARDC is to promote and protect the integrity of the legal profession, at the direction of the Supreme Court, through attorney registration, education, investigation, prosecution and remedial action.

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.

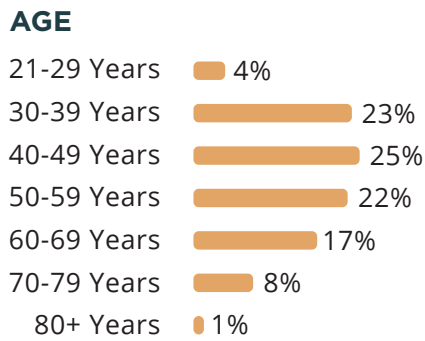
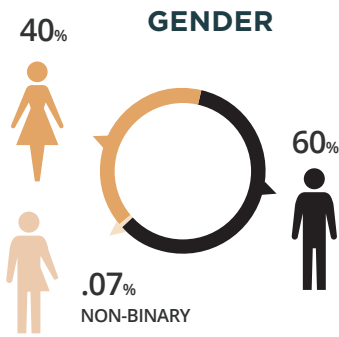
We advocate for restitution and other remedial action in disciplinary matters. We seek to provide reimbursements through our Client Protection Program to those whose funds have been taken dishonestly by Illinois lawyers who have been disciplined.

2021 ILLINOIS LAWYERS

95,480 registered lawyers

66,516 located in Illinois

28,964 located outside Illinois



87% of lawyers in Illinois practice in six counties

66% of lawyers are in private practice

87% carry malpractice insurance

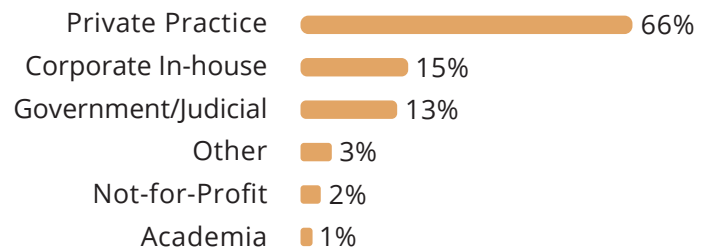
86% maintain a trust account

37% have a succession plan

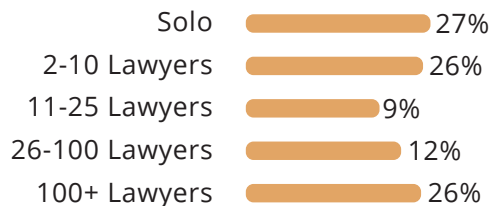


Cook: 47,210
DuPage: 4,507
Kane: 1,157
Lake: 3,186
McHenry: 572
Will: 1,074

PRACTICE SETTING



LAWYERS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE



2021 REGULATORY ACTION

INVESTIGATIONS

3,881 grievances against **2,979** lawyers representing **3.1%** of all registered lawyers.

64% of grievances stem from a breakdown in attorney-client relations.

Top 5 allegations

- Neglect (26%)
- Failure to communicate (12%)
- Billing and fee issues (8%)
- Incompetent representation (8%)

Top 5 practice areas

- Criminal law (33%)
- Domestic relations (21%)
- Tort (10%)
- Real estate (9%)
- Probate (9%)

PROSECUTIONS

48 formal disciplinary complaints filed before the Hearing Board

41 disciplinary and regulatory proceedings filed directly with the Illinois Supreme Court

79% of formal disciplinary complaints charged fraudulent or deceptive activity in connection with alleged misrepresentation to clients, a tribunal or others, or the conversion of trust funds

67% of disciplinary proceedings before the Hearing Board were uncontested

49% of disciplinary complaints were concluded by the filing of discipline on consent



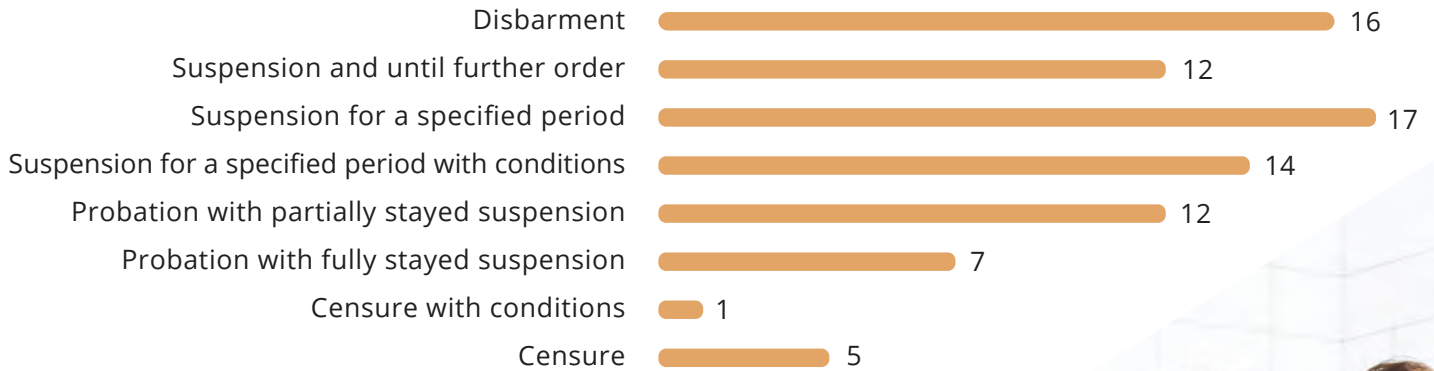
DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

84 sanctions entered by the Illinois Supreme Court against **83** lawyers

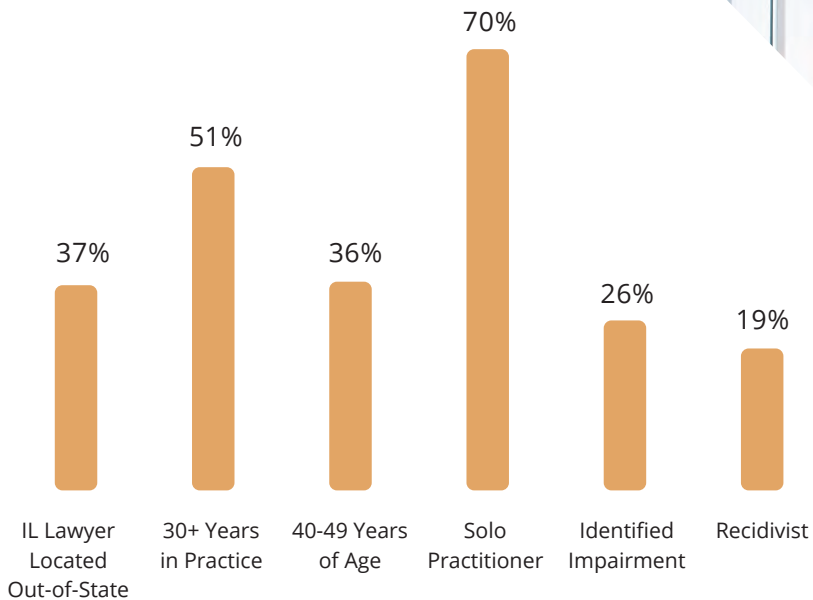
34 sanctions were discipline on consent

35 sanctions were discipline reciprocal to sanctions entered by another jurisdiction

33% of sanctions were either disbarment or suspension until further order of the Court



LAWYERS SANCTIONED IN 2021



2021 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

ARDC CLE ON-LINE LEARNING

29 on-demand CLE learning courses

32,419 CLE certificates issued

4,274 hours earned of free IL MCLE professional responsibility credit

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

117 speeches by ARDC lawyers at CLE seminars for bar associations, government agencies, law firms, law schools, public interest groups and other organizations, at no charge.

ARDC ETHICS INQUIRY HOTLINE

2,817 calls received from lawyers, providing research assistance and guidance regarding ethics issues and the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct, free of charge.

ON-LINE PUBLICATIONS

Alerts, e-blasts, newsletters and articles on a wide range of legal ethics topics and emerging trends including bi-monthly articles published on the ARDC website at www.iardc.org.

ARDC WEBSITE

1.2 million visits to the newly-designed ARDC website, including the Lawyer Search function, which provides ready access to the public, the profession, and the judiciary to lawyers' credentials and contact information on the Master Roll.

ARDC DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE (DEI)

Providing continuing DEI education to staff, volunteer board members, and the profession, and implementing measures to achieve a diverse and equitable representation in board member volunteers and upper levels of employment at the ARDC.



2021 REMEDIAL ACTION

CLIENT PROTECTION PROGRAM

\$715,311 in reimbursements on **58** approved claims involving **31** different lawyers

40% of approved claims paid out \$2,500 or less

71% of approved claims involved unearned or unrefunded legal fees

22% arose out of real estate or loan modification matters

94 claims were denied

PROBATION, DEFERRALS AND DIVERSION PROGRAM

183 lawyers monitored for substance or mental illness impairments, law office management issues or restitution conditions

69 Reciprocal probation

45 Suspension pending restitution

21 Probation

22 Supervision/108

17 Diversion

5 Conditional Admission

4 Conditional Reinstatement

62% monitored with substance abuse or mental conditions

25% monitored with law office management conditions

REFERRALS TO LAWYERS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LAP)

40 lawyers to LAP, accounting for 11% of LAP's referrals.

INTERMEDIARY PROGRAM

12 lawyers contacted successfully by intermediaries

RECEIVERSHIPS

29 investigations for possible receivership of a lawyer's law practice

2 appointments of the ARDC as receiver of a lawyer's law practice

PERMANENT RETIREMENT/DISABILITY INACTIVE STATUS

5 lawyers transferred voluntarily to permanent retirement status



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