



PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Advocacy Institute Is Pleased to Present

Ethically Dealing with the Media Guidelines for Prosecutors

November 28, 2022
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

WEBINAR

Program Summary

In the age of social media, there is immediate access to the news from anywhere in the world. While instant access has its benefits, it also causes a number of ethical complications for those who work in the legal profession, including the potential effects of immediate dissemination of pretrial statements. Pretrial statements, whether verbal or by formal press release, are a necessary part of prosecutors' jobs. Law enforcement is legally required to provide basic information to the public, both in routine cases and in cases with substantial public importance. In some instances, providing public information can lead to citizens assisting detectives in solving cases. However, failure to work properly with the media can result in an inaccurate and unnecessarily negative narrative.

This course will cover the Rules of Professional Conduct as they relate to press releases, social media, and press conferences. The presenters will examine the ethical considerations that attach to all pretrial statements made to or through the media by prosecutors and police officers and provide a framework for analyzing which statements can be released based upon the stage of the case. The presenters will also discuss applicable rules, directives and executive orders, present real-life examples of ethics mishaps, and provide tools to assist prosecutors in avoiding future mistakes.

Eligibility

This program is only open to Deputy and Assistant Attorneys General in the Division of Criminal Justice, the Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor and the Office of Public Integrity and Accountability, county prosecutors and assistant county prosecutors, and those in the Office of the Attorney General invited to attend. Registrants will receive the course materials prior to the program date.

Faculty

AAG Erik Daab is a Deputy Director in the Department of Law & Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, where he oversees complex criminal litigation and the Specialized Crimes Bureau. He previously served as Chief of the Specialized Crimes Bureau, which prosecutes multi-jurisdictional criminal cases, as well as cases referred by State agencies including the Division of Gaming Enforcement. Prior to that, he served as Deputy Chief of the Gangs and Organized Crime Bureau, prosecuting large-scale narcotics and weapons trafficking cases. He also served as Chief of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, and in the Appellate and Corruption Bureaus. AAG Daab started his career prosecuting death penalty cases for the Tennessee Office of the Attorney General and was the State Witness for the execution of the first inmate executed in Tennessee in forty years. He is a graduate of Seton Hall School Law School.

DAG Samantha Hamilton is a member of the Prosecutors Supervision and Training Bureau in the Department of Law & Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice. DAG Hamilton coordinates and implements DCJ training programs, including the statewide training on juvenile justice reform. She is the Bureau's Juvenile Justice Liaison and Veteran's Diversion Program Liaison, conducting meetings for prosecutors throughout the State. DAG Hamilton serves as the DCJ Divisional Ethics Liaison Officer, handling all of the Division's ethics matters. DAG Hamilton also serves as the Division's CLE Coordinator, managing the continuing legal education credits for the Division's trainings. She serves as the Administrative Practice Officer, reviewing, maintaining, and submitting regulations under the Administrative Code. Moreover, she is a coordinator of DCJ's Internship Program, responsible for recruiting, interviewing, hiring, and managing the Division's law school interns. DAG Hamilton clerked for the Honorable Jeanne T. Covert in Burlington County, where she worked at all three levels of the Superior Court. She is a graduate of Mercer County Community College, The College of New Jersey, and Rutgers Law School, Newark.

CLE Credit

NJ CLE Credit: This program has been approved by the Board on Continuing Legal Education of the Supreme Court of New Jersey for 2.0 hours of Alternative Verifiable Learning Format (AVF) total CLE credit. Of these, 2.0 qualify as hours of credit for ethics/professionalism.

Registration

Those who are eligible to apply should use the Zoom Webinar registration link in the Program Announcement email. Students who are registered will receive a confirmation email with a link to access the program.

Students must download Zoom before the webinar in order for the AGAI to record polling responses that are required for attendance verification and CLE credit.

The AGAI will be unable to verify attendance or grant CLE credit to students who have not downloaded Zoom before the webinar.