Workers' Compensation Law and Practice in New York

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Camille Jobin-Davis was appointed Assistant Director of the New York Department of State Committee on Open Government in 2005. In that capacity, she provides legal advice regarding application of the New York State Freedom of Information, Open Meetings and Personal Privacy Protection Laws. She has addressed numerous organizations and authored many written advisory opinions. She has spoken on open government laws and concepts nationally and before representatives of foreign governments including Ghana, Poland and China, and most recently, to a newspaper editor, activists and provincial government officials from Iraq.

Previously, as an attorney in the private sector, Ms. Jobin-Davis was involved in publication of a newsletter on Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Law issues. Subsequently, she worked as a senior attorney in the Office of General Counsel of the New York State Workers' Compensation Board, where for five years she was the records access officer.

Ms. Jobin-Davis co-chairs the Women in Government Task Force and is a member of the Capital District Women's Bar Association. She received her law degree from Albany Law School of Union University and her B.A. from Mt. Holyoke College.

WILLIAM S. JONES, ESQ.

William Jones is senior partner of Jones Jones O'Connell LLP in Brooklyn. He has more than 20 years of experience representing employers and insurance carriers before New York State administrative boards and courts. He also serves as General Counsel to the New York Claim Association, is secretary of the Department of Insurance No-Fault Committee, and is the legal representative of the New York State Business Counsel before the Department of Insurance LWEB Committee. He also is a past president of the New York State Workers' Compensation Bar Association and former chair of the Workers' Compensation Committee of the New York County Bar Association.

Mr. Jones has lectured extensively at both the local and national levels for entities such as the New York State and Nassau County Bar Associations, New York Trial Lawyers Association, RIMS, New York Claim Association, New York Self-Insured Association, Insurance Women in Claims, and countless other associations, groups and companies throughout the country. He also has authored many articles and contributed to numerous books on workers' compensation law.

In addition to his legal background, Mr. Jones has had the honors of being a member of the White House Advance Presidential Team, being listed in the *National Register for Who's Who* for professionals, and receiving the prestigious *Wall Street Journal* award for his study in economics. A graduate of Southwestern University School of Law, Fuchsburg Law Center, Mr. Jones continues to develop new skills through his studies at New York University School of Continuing Education.

LAWRENCE J. KOMSKY, ESQ.

Lawrence Komsky is a graduate of New York University School of Law and is admitted to practice in New York. He completed a two-year judicial clerkship at the U.S. Department of Labor and received formal recognition for outstanding service. He thereafter served as an assistant corporation counsel with the New York City Law Department, followed by work in a large New York City-based worker's compensation defense firm. In 1999, he founded his own workers' compensation defense law office. His current client base includes more than a dozen major insurance companies, TPAs and self-insureds.

STEVEN M. LICHT, ESQ.

Steven Licht is the attorney and CEO of the Special Funds Conservation Committee. He is a graduate of New York University with a B.A. degree and of Brooklyn Law School with an LL.B. (J.D.) degree. He was admitted to the New York State Bar in 1966. In 1998, after 28 years of service, he retired from the New York State Insurance Fund as Director of Claims and, having previously been the NYSIF's representative on the Executive Committee, joined the Special Funds Conservation Committee as attorney and CEO. He is a member and past chair of the International Association of Industrial Accident Board & Commission's (IAIABC) joint committee on Fraud and Abuse, member of the New York State Bar Association, member and past president of New York Claim Association, and past chairman of the American Association of State Compensation Insurance Funds Claims Committee. He resides in Westchester with his wife and her daughter. His two children and six grandchildren live nearby in New York City.

MARYMICHELLE LOTANO, ESQ.

Marymichelle Lotano is a graduate of Springfield (MA) College and Albany Law School of Union University. After a clerkship with the Schenectady District Attorney's Office, Ms. Lotano worked for Cunningham, Sullivan, Keenan and Mraz as a workers' compensation litigator for

three years. Thereafter, she took a position in the Office of General Counsel for the New York State Workers' Compensation Board and then a position as a senior attorney with the Office of Appeals for the Board. Ms. Lotano is licensed to practice law in New York and California and practiced California workers' compensation law for a short time before leaving the practice of law to have a family. Ms. Lotano is currently a resident of Southern California and is self-employed in the area of special education law advocacy, assisting families of students with disabilities.

MATTHEW R. MEAD, ESQ.

Matthew Mead is a partner of Stockton, Barker & Mead, LLP, in Albany, where he focuses his practice on workers' compensation and labor and employment law. After graduating from Albany Law School of Union University, he was an associate attorney and then partner with Welt & Stockton. Mr. Mead is a member of the American, New York State and Albany County Bar Associations and of NYSBA's Torts, Insurance and Compensation Law Section, Workers' Compensation Law Division.

MICHELLE LECLAIR PANICCIA, ESQ.

Michelle LeClair Paniccia graduated from the University of Vermont in 1989 and thereafter was employed by the State of Maine Attorney General as a support enforcement paralegal. Ms. LeClair Paniccia earned her J.D. *cum laude* in 1995 from Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Subsequently, she was employed by Unum and then First Cardinal Corporation. In 2001, she became a senior attorney with the New York State Workers' Compensation Board, Administrative Review Division. In that capacity, she reviewed appeals, conducted research and prepared memoranda of Board Panel decisions, many of which involved issues surrounding Workers' Compensation Law § 29. Currently, Ms. LeClair Paniccia is a senior attorney with the Waiver Agreement Management Office (WAMO). In that capacity, she negotiates and prepares settlements of cases that have qualified for reimbursement from Special Funds under Workers' Compensation Law § 15(8).

JACKLYN M. PENNA, ESQ.

Jacklyn Penna is a partner of Buckner & Kourofsky, LLP, in Rochester, where she concentrates her practice on workers' compensation defense. She graduated from Ohio Northern University Law School. Ms. Penna is a member of the New York State and Monroe County Bar Associations. She has authored several publications and is a legal adviser for the Churchville Chili High School Mock Trial Team.

HONORABLE DAVID M. PURCELL

David Purcell was appointed a Workers' Compensation Law Judge in July 1984 and served in that position until his retirement in March 2003. Thereafter, Mr. Purcell joined the securities brokerage firm of Purshe Kaplan Sterling Investments in Albany, where he presently serves as General Counsel. Between 1980 and 1984, he was an assistant attorney for the County of Albany. Prior to that time, he worked as an assistant attorney for the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles and as a legal assistant for the Albany County Department of Social Services. He graduated from Albany Law School of Union University and the State University of New York at Albany.

LEITH CAROLE RAMSEY, ESQ.

Leith Carole Ramsey is Of Counsel with Stockton, Barker & Mead, LLP, in Albany, where she focuses on insurance defense, workers' compensation law and appellate practice. After graduating from Western New England Law School, she was an associate attorney with Welt & Stockton for three years before assuming her current position. She is a member of the American Bar Association.

BRENDA A. RIGAS, ESQ.

Brenda Rigas is counsel to Snashell Associates in Cazenovia, New York, where she concentrates her practice on workers' compensation, regulatory affairs, governmental relations and administrative law. After graduating from Syracuse University College of Law, she served as counsel to the chairman of the New York State Workers' Compensation Board. Ms. Rigas is a member of the New York State Bar Association and the Association of Professional Insurance Women and serves on the Board of Trustees and Ethics Committee of St. Camillus Health and Rehabilitation Center in Syracuse. She has lectured for the New York Self-Insurers Association.

MARY M. RUSSO, ESQ.

Mary M. Russo has been practicing workers' compensation defense for more than 30 years. She is a *magna cum laude* graduate both of SUNY-Buffalo and SUNY-Buffalo School of Law. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and has chaired and continues to be a member of the Erie County Bar Association Workers' Compensation Committee and the Workers' Compensation Division of the New York State Bar Association's Torts, Insurance and Compensation Law Section. She has been a frequent speaker and author for seminars, including CLE programs.

HONORABLE JOANI SEDACA

Judge Sedaca is the senior law judge of the New York State Workers' Compensation Board's Brooklyn District Office, where she has supervised the judges and senior attorneys in Brooklyn and Staten Island for the past three years. From 2002 until her promotion, she worked as a law judge in the Manhattan office of the Board.

For 13 years, Judge Sedaca served the Corporation Counsel's Office of the City of New York, first as an assistant corporation counsel, then senior counsel and trial counsel in the Workers' Compensation, Tort and Medical Malpractice Divisions. She is an alumna of Brooklyn Law School and Binghamton University.

Judge Sedaca was a featured speaker on "Judicial Perspectives" at the American Conference Institute's "National Forum on Defending and Managing Workers' Compensation Claims and Litigation" at the Union League in Philadelphia.

RAYMOND J. SELIGMAN, ESQ.

Raymond Seligman limits his practice to workers' compensation, Social Security Disability, negligence and long-term disability matters. He and his partners have attended tens of thousands of hearings on behalf of injured workers. Mr. Seligman is a member of various national, state and county bar associations and chairs the Workers' Compensation Committee of the Albany County Bar Association. He received his B.S. degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and his J.D. degree from Albany Law School of Union University.

KEITH M. SNOW, ESQ.

Keith Snow is a senior counsel and supervisor in the Pensions Division of the New York City Law Department, Office of the Corporation Counsel, and concentrates his practice on municipal employee benefits and litigation. He provides retirement benefit, investment and securities litigation counsel to the five New York City Retirement Systems and Pension Funds, which together service more than 600,000 retired and active members and manage more than $100 billion in assets. He also represents the funds in all aspects of state and federal civil litigation and appeals arising from challenges of individual and classwide benefit determinations, handles federal class-action securities litigation on behalf of the funds as lead plaintiff, and drafts and reviews potential pension legislation.

Before joining the Pensions Division, Mr. Snow served as an assistant corporation counsel, and later a senior counsel, in the Law Department's Workers' Compensation Division for six years. There, he handled workers' compensation hearings, trials and appeals, as well as Workers' Compensation Law § 15(8) reimbursement conferences and New York Insurance Law § 5105 arbitrations on behalf of the City of New York.

Mr. Snow presented a CLE program regarding strategies for successful litigation of workers' compensation schedule loss of use awards at the New York Self-Insurers Association in 2007. He recently finished a three-year appointment as a member of the New York City Bar Association's Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation Committee. He is also a member of that association's Subcommittee on ERISA Fiduciary Duties/ Plan Investments and Subcommittee on Governmental and Not-for-Profit Employee Benefit Plans.

Mr. Snow received his J.D. from the City University of New York School of Law at Queens College, and his B.A. in philosophy, politics and law from the State University of New York at Binghamton.

HONORABLE EDWARD O. SPAIN

Justice Edward O. Spain has served as an associate justice of the Appellate Division, Third Department since 1994. He began his legal career in private practice in Troy with his father, John H. Spain, who regularly appeared in workers' compensation proceedings before the Board and at the regional office in Menands, New York. Justice Spain has served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy JAG Corps, an assistant district attorney, a deputy city corporation counsel and a clerk in Surrogate's Court. In 1977, he was elected Troy Police Court Justice, where he served until 1985, when he was elected to Rensselaer County Family Court. In 1991 he was elected to the Supreme Court. He has also served as Administrative Judge of the Third Judicial District and has lectured at various CLE programs throughout the state on both substantive and procedural law. Justice Spain is a graduate of LaSalle Institute in Troy, Boston College and Albany Law School of Union University.

NANCY E. WOOD, ESQ.

Nancy Wood is a supervising attorney with the New York State Insurance Fund. She is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and the University of New Mexico Schools of Law and Public Administration. She was admitted to practice in New York State in 1991.