NYSBA

Commercial and Federal Litigation Section Newsletter

A publication of the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section of the New York State Bar Association



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Message from the Chair

Change

Change can be daunting and exhilarating at the same time. Going in a new direction can be unnerving, unsettling, and downright stressful. But I have found that it is usually the case that the fear and anxiety of something new and different is far worse than the actual task or event. And it is my experience that change is positive, offering new opportunities, relationships, experiences, and the opportunity to learn new things.

The Section has always been involved in an evolutionary process, which has tended to be iterative. The creation of the Fuld and Haig Awards were milestones, as was the cre-

ation of Smooth Moves, the Section's diversity program. The Section created a Commercial Litigation Academy and released the Social Media Guidelines. Last year, we established the Shira A. Scheindlin Award and the Judith M. Kaye Scholarship program. And this year's Section Report entitled "If Not Now, When?" has been uniformly well received and widely publicized, and is, like Smooth Moves, part of the Section's effort to broaden its message and its impact beyond the substance of commercial law and litigation practice.

We are working to build on our successes, but we are also moving to embrace necessary and beneficial changes. We have some new committee chairs, and each chair is committed to actively engaging with you. We are reviewing the Section's bylaws and expect recommended improvements to be published by the end of 2017. One of our Executive Committee members has volunteered to act as liaison to the Second Circuit to provide volunteer opportunities for the Circuit Court's Justice For All program. Our current Section Ambassador, Mark Zauderer, is working to bring the message of the value of active engagement with the Section to younger lawyers who work in large law firms. We are even working



Mitchell J. Katz

on a fun program to help raise money for the New York Bar Foundation.

As I optimistically expected, the Section's Task Force Report was adopted by the House of Delegates at its November 4 meeting. (Yes, I was mindful of the ill-fated headlines "Dewey Wins" but my confidence remained!) And to maximize the impact of, and to advance, the recommendations of the Report, we have taken the mock trial program out of the Scheindlin Award program and will present it as a part of a bigger CLE program devoted to advancing the development of commercial litigation skills, with a particular focus on women litigators.

Thus the Section will have two standing events—one to honor the accomplishments of women trial lawyers and the other to teach and support the next generation of Scheindlin Award nominees.

We added the word "inclusion" to the name of the committee that brings us the Smooth Moves program and are working to build upon that program to make it even more diverse and inclusive.

And while these changes are ongoing, our Executive Committee continues to look for new opportunities, Section committees will continue to present reports and CLEs, we will hold regular Bench/Bar programs with Commercial Division justices around the State, and publish our outstanding *Newsletter* and *Litigator* magazine. We will again host an Evening at Thurgood Marshall Courthouse in New York City on January 23, our Annual Meeting on January 24, and our Spring meeting at The Sagamore on May 4, 5, and 6.

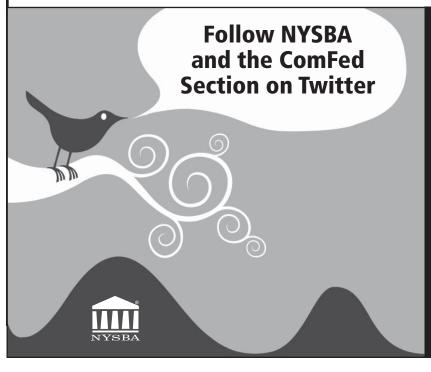
Your ideas, suggestions, and feedback are a critical part of the Section's evolution. Please share them. I look forward to seeing you at one of our Section events. Thanks for being a member of this community.



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Interview From Public Service to a Top Law Firm: How Kevin Smith Became a Prominent Litigator for a Top Law Firm at the Heart of Manhattan

By Andrews Alves-Barros

A top law firm, Sheppard Mullin, is located at Rockefeller Plaza in the heart of Manhattan, and one of their most prominent lawyers in litigation received us for an interview. Kevin Smith, special counsel in the firm's Labor and Employment Department, shared some aspects of his history and his views on the judiciary system. Mr. Smith focuses on civil litigation, including employment, commercial, securities, and class action litigation. The full interview can be found below.

1. Do you have any other lawyers in your family?

No. In fact, my father never graduated high school and entered the U.S. Navy at the age of 17; the times were a little different when he was growing up. My mother graduated from high school but did not attend college. I was the first in my family to attend college and even law school. I credit my parents with instilling in me the benefits of school and a good education.

2. I understand you graduated from Brooklyn Law School and worked as an assistant corporation counsel with the City of New York, Office of the Corporation Counsel. Do you think that lawyers entering into employment law and civil litigation should work a few years for the government?

> That path worked well for me. At the time I was graduating from law school I wanted to enter the public sector to give back to the community, but I also wanted to litigate and try cases in court and before juries. Being a lawyer for the City of New York gave me that opportunity. I spent four years in that office, and it is one of the best law offices in the City. It was a great experience. I was able to work with excellent attorneys, very good people, and at the same time try numerous cases in federal court, which provided me with invaluable experience that I have continued to use to this day as a trial lawyer.

3. What do you like most about your job?

I don't view being a lawyer—either at Sheppard Mullin or anywhere else—as a job but rather as a career. That's how I view it every day. There are many things about this profession that I truly enjoy. I love trying cases before a judge, jury, arbitrator, or mediator, making presentations of evidence, examining witnesses, and presenting arguments to convince one of those decision-makers to see the case from your client's viewpoint and win. All of this, however, is with the ultimate goal to help the client solve their legal issue, which can sometimes be daunting and overwhelming to non-lawyers. The other great aspect of being a lawyer is to help clients avoid legal problems in the first place, before an issue arises.

4. How does the future look in your field?

The legal field, like many other fields, has been and continues to go through substantial changes. These changes range from an increased focus on alternative dispute resolution, including arbitrations and mediation, in lieu of full-blown trials before a court or juries, to changes in the way that lawyers are paid for the services that they provide clients in the form of alternative fee arrangements. Given that this is a client service and we serve clients at their pleasure, lawyers and the justice

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system will continue to find ways to provide the best service at the best cost in the most expeditious manner. As for trials, I foresee many more cases going to arbitration rather than proceeding before a jury; the costs of a jury trial have become very expensive unfortunately. The financial industry, through FINRA, takes many of their employment disputes to arbitration. I see that trend continuing in other industries as well.

5. Do you feel that the current policies in regard to immigration will make the profession harder for employment lawyers?

Sometimes changes to policies, laws, or regulations by the government create challenges for lawyers to provide clearcut advice for their clients or require that lawyers continually update their clients with new or changed guidance to ensure continued compliance with those changed policies, laws, or regulations.

6. The United States is slowly leaving a recession after almost 10 years, and you worked closely with the American Arbitration and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. Do you think that the country is ready to start a period of deregulation in the financial markets?

> Given that the Congress has started to pass legislation to lessen those regulations, including changes to Dodd-Frank, for example, the country will likely see some form of de-regulation. However, because of other developments in the world in which we live, we will likely see increased controls arise out of other areas, including, for example, data security and cyber risks. No matter what happens, though, the market has and continues to adjust and adapt to the changes in regulation and controls and there are enough lawyers to guide the financial industry through them.

7. What tips would you give to lawyers who are pursuing a career in litigation?

If a new attorney wants to specialize in litigation, I recommend that they obtain as much experience as possible in the courtroom presenting evidence and arguments to a jury and judge. Doing so hones legal skills and allows that lawyer to focus on the evidence and issues that the lawyer will encounter during the litigation that will be important and relevant when it comes time to try the case. The judge, jury, or arbitrator will only want to see and hear about relevant evidence. I also recommend that they try to find a mentor or mentors willing to spend the time to work with them; typically, mentors have invaluable advice that goes a long way to avoiding mistakes during a litigation.



Kevin Smith

8. I researched your profile and I saw that one of your areas of expertise is health care. What do you think about the current health care system? And, if the current administration replaces the Obamacare will that affect the health field for lawyers?

Just as with immigration reform and the financial industry changes mentioned earlier, health care reform and changes in the health laws will require lawyers to continue to be abreast of those changes and advise their clients accordingly. Each change generates a required analysis of the law or regulation and advice to our clients.

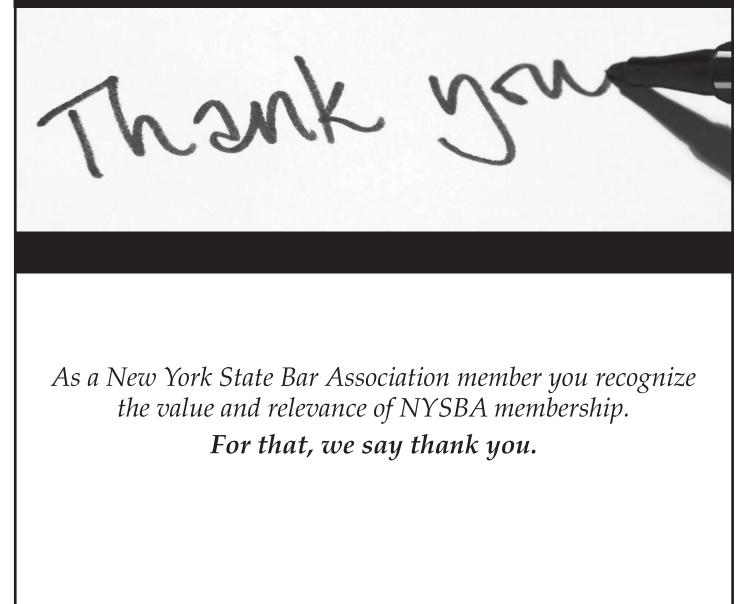
9. Which lawsuit was the hardest for you?

I wouldn't say that any particular lawsuit is hard for me. Each lawsuit has its own uniqueness, but I will say that employment litigation, compared to a business or contract dispute, contains a bit more emotion from the parties that make them harder to resolve.

10. What do you think about the current judicial system? Do you think it attends to the citizens demands?

Yes. Although the wheels of justice move slowly, the right result is typically achieved. Of all the judges and arbitrators before whom I have appeared, I do believe each one wants to get to the just result and do the right thing for the parties who are appearing before them.





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Sharon Stern Gerstman President Pamela McDevitt Executive Director



Safeguarding Against Cyber Attacks

By Jamilia Moore

On September 19, 2017, the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) held a CLE program at Kraft Kennedy on "Safeguarding Against Cyber Attacks". The Committee on Law Practice Management, the Committee on Continuing Legal Education, and the Committee on Technology and the Legal Profession co-sponsored the CLE. Marian C. Rice, Esq., Michael S. Kraft, Esq., John Kogan, Mike Mooney, and Leeann Nicolo were all panelists. Mark A. Berman, Esq., Chair of NYSBA's Committee on Technology and the Legal Profession, introduced the program.

The three-hour program began with a presentation by Marian C. Rice of L'Abbate, Balkan, Colavita & Contini, LLP, explaining the impact of cyber security within the legal field. Rice examined a study of 200 law firms and their cyber security practices, which found that 80 percent of those firms did not vet in advance third party users with which they had contracted. Rice also shared recent litigation experiences arising from hacking into small and large law firms. She also shared the implications of ABA Formal Opinion 477, which states that a lawyer "should keep abreast of changes in the law and its practice, including the benefits and risks associated with relevant technology." Michael S. Kraft of Kraft Kennedy continued educating attendees by outlining various possible security breaches by hackers, such as phishing, spoofing, and malware. John Kogan and Leeann Nicolo, also of Kraft Kennedy, continued the CLE by addressing how the legal industry can seek to prevent such scams from endangering law firms. Such prevention practices and procedures would include patching systems, anti-virus software, and backing up important files for recovery.

Mike Mooney, a professional liability practice leader from USI Affinity, wrapped up the programming by discussing industry standards for insurance coverage regarding cyber attacks. As a general rule, all companies need up-front separate insurance for cyber liability because once an attack occurs the company will be unable to obtain such coverage for the attack. Though cyber insurance protects companies from many types of losses, it will not protect against theft of intellectual property, brand damage, loss of future revenue, and negligence induced by cyber breaches.

In the end, all attendees returned to their lives more informed about the risks and legal duties of cyber security.





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September 7, 2017, Section Executive Committee Meeting

By Chris Donati

Chief Judge Robert Katzmann of the Second Circuit opened the meeting by praising the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section for serving as a link between the Bar and the courts. The Chief Judge commended the report published by the Section (written by the Section's Task Force on Women's Initiatives) titled "If Not Now, When? Achieving Equality for Women Attorneys in the Courtroom and in ADR."

The Chief Judge next reviewed the Second Circuit's community engagement and outreach programs. One resource discussed was the Justice for All: Courts and the Community program and its website, which provides information for teachers and students. This program provides classroom materials, information on naturalization ceremonies, and materials for reenactments of significant court cases. The Chief Judge also mentioned the Teachers Institute run by the Justice Resource Center, which pairs a scholar and a judge with a teacher participating in the Institute to discuss curriculum for civics classes.

The Chief Judge made a call for participation by members of the Section in the Constitution and Citizenship Day program that each year sends attorneys and judges to schools to discuss the legal system. The Chief Judge also hopes to develop materials to provide to the attorneys and judges who participate in this program. The Chief Judge ended his comments by extolling the Section's efforts in promoting civic engagement and stressing the importance of educating young people on the legal system and the importance of protecting our constitutional system.

After the prior meeting's minutes were approved, Mitchell Katz discussed the Scheindlin Award and the award ceremony. Mitchell encouraged attendance at the ceremony for the Award. Mitchell also discussed the plan for an event to reach-out to law clerks to be held at the Thurgood Marshall Courthouse before the Annual Meeting.

The Section next discussed the 2017 Litigation Academy, which was a great success. The Section is looking for members to help build out the event for Spring 2019, to be held at Fordham Law School.

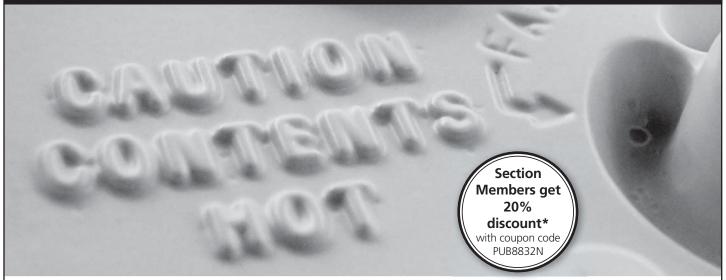
Also discussed was the Section's Task Force on Women's Initiatives and its recently published report. The Section has created a group to prepare materials for speakers to bring the message contained in the report wherever there is a request for it. Feedback on how to continue discussions on the report and promote its message are welcome.

Mitch also requested volunteers to form an ad hoc committee to act as liaisons between the Section and the Second Circuit's outreach programs to assist the Second Circuit in its efforts on those programs.

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Kings (2nd)	Gregory M. LaSpina	Borchert & LaSpina, P.C.						
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Monroe (7th)	Jeffrey J. Harradine Stacey Eve Trien	Ward Greenberg Heller & Reidy LLP Leclair Korona Vahey Cole LLP						
Erie (8th)	Heath J. Szymczak	Bond Schoeneck & King PLLC						
Westchester (9th)	Courtney Rockett	Boies, Schiller & Flexner LLP						
Nassau/Suffolk (10th)	Michael Cardello, III Kathryn C. Cole	Moritt Hock & Hamroff LLP Farrell Fritz, PC						
Queens (11th)	Frances Y. Ruiz	Ruiz Law Group PC						

The Section's District Leaders

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Editors-in-Chief

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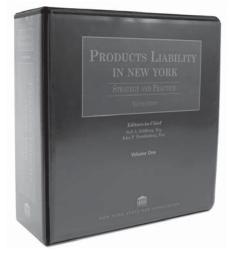
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Social Media CLE Panel September 2017 Highlights

By Chelsea Gonzalez

On September 18, 2017, a CLE program conducted a panel discussion on the ethical implications of social media. Panel members included:

- Mark A. Berman, Esq., Ganfer & Shore LLP, New York, NY
- Hon. John M. Curran, Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Division, Fourth Judicial Department, Buffalo, NY
- Riane F. Lafferty, Esq., Bond, Schoeneck & King, Buffalo, NY
- Amber Melvin, Esq., University at Buffalo School of Law, Buffalo, NY
- Heath Szymczak, Esq., Bond, Schoeneck & King, Buffalo, NY.

Recognizing the increasing popularity of social media and its integral role in our everyday lives, panelists discussed guidelines for using different social media platforms as responsible attorneys. It is first important to note that the Social Media Committee of the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section of the New York State Bar Association was established in 2014, when it first developed and issued guidelines for social media. These guidelines remain at a Section level and are updated when necessary.

It is no secret that social media networks and their policies continue to evolve frequently. Research is key to learning more about a particular platform. Begin by reading the terms of service or user agreement, which provide the most basic user information. Another option is to visit Mashable.com, a website that may be utilized to determine best social media practices and provides tips on usage. Attorneys may also sign up for a social media network, without releasing their personal information, in a first attempt to discover how to use the site or app. It is beneficial to know how users interact with each other on a specific social media platform, as well as how information and notifications are displayed. Further, the purpose of the platform is meaningful. For example, understand whether the platform is primarily for peer-to-peer communication or whether the information is disseminated among larger audiences.

For attorneys, the Rules of Professional Conduct are in place to ensure professionalism and appropriate conduct at all times. Rule 1.1 discusses competence, which is a requirement of every legal professional. Reading the terms and rules, or, most importantly, privacy implications, of a social networking site is absolutely essential. Social media use by attorneys in their capacity as attorneys, whether soliciting new clients or giving legal advice, has the potential to create ethical violations. It is easy to forget one's role when engaging in social media. One must be aware of positional conflicts and actively work to make certain one is not putting one's license, firm, or client(s) at risk.

Providing legal advice via social media requires care and caution. Private communication is always best. If asked a legal question in a Bar-sponsored chatroom, one may give a generic answer and offer one's contact information for further inquiries. Be aware that solicitation is prohibited via live communication. Chatrooms fall into this category, as communication is instant. It may be useful to archive any email messages in the event that one needs them at a later time as proof.

Depending on the platform and privacy settings, social media can also be used to mine evidence against parties. Attorneys should never directly contact a represented party. However, viewing the profile of an unrepresented party creates a larger gray area. When interacting with others online, even those who are not represented, one's statements must always be truthful. Deception is considered an ethical violation. If making a friend request on a social media network, an attorney's accurate name must be displayed on his or her profile. Within some jurisdictions, one must also disclose that one is an attorney and identify one's place of employment. Attorneys should never interact with jurors, even online. This is another instance when competence is crucial because notifications on social media platforms can constitute communication. Terms and conditions of social media networking sites are always subject to change, which emphasizes the need to be familiar with their policies as they evolve.

In regard to attorney-client relationships, attorneys are encouraged to advise clients on social media use by informing them of privacy settings, what they may post, or they may be advised to remove a post. As a legal professional, one may not disclose any client information online, as that constitutes an ethical violation. This again emphasizes the need for attorneys to be competent in their social media use because sensitive information of clients must be protected at all times. However, in the event that a former client posts a negative review online, attorneys are able to respond generically, never revealing sensitive information about the client.

Overall, as technology advances, attorneys must stay informed and aware of those advances and how they may impact their clients and business. When in doubt, one should refer to the ethics guidelines and err on the side of caution.

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Questions?

Contact Kristen Wagner Director, Pro Bono Services, NYSBA kwagner@nysba.org | 518.487.5640



CPLR Amendments: 2017 Legislative Session

(2017 N.Y. Laws ch. 1-407)

CPLR §	Chapter (Part) (Subpart, §)	Change	Eff. Date
503(a)	366	Adds to proper venue the county in which a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred	10/23/17
2112	99 (2)	Deletes exception that e-filing may not be mandated in certain types of ac- tions and proceedings	7/24/17
3408(a)	58 (FF, 2)	Adds exception for certain reverse mortages	4/20/17 (until 2/13/20)
4518(c)	229	Adds procedure for certification of out-of-state hospital records	8/21/17

Notes: (1) The expiration of CPLR 1101(f) and the amendment to CPLR 1101(d), as enacted by 1999 N.Y. Laws ch. 412, Part D, § 4, as amended, was extended from Sept. 1, 2017, to Sept. 1, 2019. 2017 N.Y. Laws ch. 55, Part A, § 16.

(2) The expiration of CPLR 2111(b)(2-a), as enacted by 2015 N.Y. Laws ch. 237, was extended from Sept. 1, 2017, to Sept. 1, 2018. 2017 N.Y. Laws ch. 99, § 3.

NYLitigator Invites Submissions

The *NYLitigator* welcomes submissions on topics of interest to members of the Section. An article published in the *NYLitigator* is a great way to get your name out in the legal community and advertise your knowledge. Our authors are respected statewide for their legal expertise in such areas as ADR, settlements, depositions, discovery, and corporate liability.

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> Daniel K. Wiig, Esq. Municipal Credit Union Legal Department 22 Cortlandt Street New York, NY 10007 dwiig@nymcu.org

Authors' Guidelines are available under the "Article Submission" tab on the Section's Web site: www.nysba.org/NYLitigator.

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2017 Amendments to the Uniform Rules for Supreme and County Courts, Rules Governing Appeals, and Certain Other Rules of Interest to Civil Litigators (West's N.Y. Orders 1-20)

A copy of these rules changes is available on the Section's website at http://www.nysba.org/Sections/Commercial_Federal_Litigation/ Commercial_and_Federal_Litigation_Section.html under the New Rules tab.

22 NYCRR §		Subject (Change)	Eff. Date
130-1.1-a(b) (ii)	All	Corrects cross-reference to Rules of Professional Conduct Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/chiefadmin/AO-70-17.pdf	4/5/17
202.70(d)(2)	Sup.	Adds (1) provision on forum selection clauses consenting to the exclusive jurisdic- tion of the Commercial Division and choice of law clauses and (2) sample forum selection clause (App. C) and choice of law clause (App. D) Links: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO-116-17-ForumSelection. pdf http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO-205.pdf	7/1/17 & 1/1/18
202.70(g), Rule 10	Sup.	Requires certification of discussion of availability of ADR with opposing counsel and whether party is willing to pursue mediation; adds form for attorney ADR certification Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO%20202.pdf	1/1/18
202.70(g), Rule 11	Sup.	Adds date for identification of mediator where parties certified willingness to pur- sue mediation under Rule 10 Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO%20202.pdf	1/1/18
202.70(g), Rule 20	Sup.	Requires that notices of TRO include copies of all supporting papers Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/TROs-AO-71.pdf	7/1/17
202.70(g), Rule 26	Sup.	Court may require that estimate of trial length contain total number of anticipated hours for trial, on which court may rule Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO-64-17-Comm%20Div%20 hours.pdf	7/1/17
202.70(g), Rule 30(c)	Sup.	Adds a requirement for consultation regarding expert testimony Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/Expert%20Consultation.pdf	5/1/17
202.70	Sup.	Revises Model Status Conference Stipulation and Order (App. A) Links: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO-205.pdf http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO-206.pdf	1/1/18
202.70	Sup.	Establishes a Large Complex Case List pilot program for Commercial Division, New York County Link: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/orders/AO%20203.pdf	1/1/18

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Proposed Rules of Interest to Civil Litigators

(http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/index.shtml) Note: The comment periods for all of the following proposed rules, except the first, have expired.

November 15, 2017: Proposed Amendment to Commercial Division Rule 11-g to Mitigate Risk Associated with Inadvertent Privilege Waiver During Disclosure

Discription of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/InadvertentPrivilegeWaiver.pdf Email comments to rulecomments@nycourts.gov by January 16, 2018

August 7, 2017: Proposed Amendment of Rules of the Attorney-Client Fee Dispute Resolution Program to Provide for Notice of the Right to Arbitrate

Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/PCR-Part137.pdf

June 1, 2017: Proposed Rules for Electronic Filing in the Appellate Division of Supreme Court Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/Request-AppDivEfiling.pdf

May 25, 2017: Proposed Statewide Practice Rules of the Appellate Division Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/Appellate-Division-Rules.pdf

April 10, 2017: Proposal to Amend E-filing Rules to Require an Opportunity to Correct a Failure to Provide Working **Copies of Motion Papers**

Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/Efile-WorkingCopiesA.pdf

December 14, 2016: Proposed CLE Requirement on Diversity, Inclusion and the Elimination of Bias

Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/CLE-DiversityInclusionEliminationOfBias.pdf

October 12, 2016: Proposed Amendment to Commercial Division Rules – Sealing of Court Records Description of proposal:

http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/RequestPublicComment-Commercial%20Division-Sealing.pdf **Public Comments:**

http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/received/SealingCourtRecords-Comment.pdf

October 6, 2016: Proposed Amendment to Commercial Division Rules - Hyperlinking

Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/RPC-Commercial-Division-Hyperlinking.pdf

September 16, 2016: Proposed Amendments to the Rules Governing Electronic Filing

Description of proposal: http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/Request-Public-Comment-E-Filing.pdf **Public Comments:** http://nycourts.gov/rules/comments/PDF/received/ElectronicFilingRules-Comment.pdf

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