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22ND ANNUAL

Family Law Institute

The Place to Connect in Michigan Family Law

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Get invaluable insight from 10 Michigan judges.



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The **Place to Connect** in Michigan Family Law

Get timely advice from the 10 Michigan judges who are speaking, plus network with the dozens of judges in attendance. Justice Megan K. Cavanagh brings you up to speed on the future of the Michigan court system. Judge Janice K. Cunningham returns with a caselaw update that's "worth the price of admission."

Connect with 500+ members of Michigan's family law community. Be prepared to tackle tricky child support issues, the practicalities of spousal support, and complex gray divorces. And brush up on the basics with expert insight on the top evidence rules and more.



Invaluable Insight from Michigan Judges

Nowhere else can you find this much candid advice straight from the bench. All-star judicial faculty provides answers to questions such as:

- What changes are on the horizon for the Michigan court system as a whole?
- How are interim orders approached in different circuit courts?
- How do I make a convincing evidentiary argument?
- How can I improve my advocacy in neglect and abuse cases?
- What can I do to ensure justice for families of all nationalities, ethnicities, and races?
- Which agreements and deviations will most likely fail judicial review, and why?
- How can I better navigate the Revocation of Paternity Act?
- What do I need to know about "gray divorces," from blended family disputes to incapacity issues?



Interact with 10 Judges from Across the State



Hon. Megan K. Cavanagh
Michigan Supreme Court



Hon. Melissa A. Cox
3rd Circuit Court



Hon. Kathleen A. Feeney
Michigan Court of Appeals



Hon. Linda S. Hallmark
Oakland County Probate Court



Hon. Maureen H. Kinsella
6th Circuit Court



Hon. Paul F. Kraus
20th Circuit Court



Hon. Sima G. Patel
Michigan Court of Appeals



Hon. Lorie N. Savin
6th Circuit Court



Hon. Carla G. Testani
3rd Circuit Court

Hon. Janice K. Cunningham
56th Circuit Court

“Judge Cunningham’s session is worth the price of admission.”

See why Judge Cunningham’s caselaw update gets rave reviews every year. Don’t miss this chance to hear from one of our most popular speakers and one of the most respected members of Michigan’s judiciary.





New to Family Law?

See and Be Seen at This Event

Nothing beats in-person networking. Join 500+ of your peers in Novi. See the people you will face in court and be seen by your colleagues. Nowhere else will you be able to connect with Michigan’s entire family law community under one roof. The priceless connections alone are well worth two days out of the office.

Connect with Judges

There will be 10 judges presenting, not to mention many who are simply attending for their own benefit. Get your questions answered after a session and rub elbows with the judiciary during one of the many networking opportunities. Learn about individual pet peeves and processes and walk into the courtroom with confidence.

Connect with Experienced Practitioners

This group of all-star faculty is engaged and eager to share. Could be after a session, could be in a hallway—the point is, you can’t get the same access via Zoom. Get advice and possibly even referrals, so you can start building your own client list.

Connect with Colleagues

Many attendees are just like you—newer to the practice area and wanting to forge lasting connections. Hear what others are doing to build their family law practices or talk through the common challenges facing everyone in this thorny area of law.

95% of professionals agree that face-to-face communication is vital for their business

Zippia. “25+ Important Networking Statistics [2023]: The Power of Connections in the Workplace”



Schedule Highlights for Newer Lawyers

When you're not busy networking, be sure to attend the many sessions designed with newer lawyers in mind. Get advice from practitioners who have been there themselves.

Core Concepts Track

Covers everything from fee agreements to discovery, direct and cross-examination, handling trial briefs, and evidence rules. Choose from five sessions in total.

Pretrial Track

Helps you tackle anything that comes across your desk, with sessions on interim orders and how to "win" at mediation.

“ I think that this is *the* vital event for all family law practitioners. Judge Cunningham's summary of the meaningful caselaw changes makes attendance at the event necessary and worthwhile in and of itself. ”

- Hon. Melissa A. Cox, 3rd Circuit Court, *Detroit*

Stay Up to Date

Hottest Issues Covered

Spousal Support

Mark Bank is back to deliver a comprehensive follow-up to one of last year's most popular sessions. Joined by colleague Thomas A. Benhamou, Mark will show you how to develop your case. Get practical tips for successfully pursuing or defending a claim. Understand options available to litigants and trier of fact, best drafting techniques, and more. Know how to factor in a business valuation if needed.

See *Making and Breaking Spousal Support Claims* on page 9.



Featured Speaker

Mark A. Bank

Bank Rifkin, *Birmingham*

Mark has focused on complex matrimonial matters for more than 25 years. He is a respected lecturer and author on this topic and has served as an adjunct professor at the Michigan State University College of Law, where he taught family law for more than 20 years.

Child Support

Dive deep into the Michigan Child Support Formula Manual and tackle the trickiest issues, such as health insurance, imputation, and deviation. Hear straight from a Formula Committee member and decision maker who can show you how to put together an airtight order that both the courts and referees will accept.

See *Unique Issues with Child Support* on page 10.



Featured Speaker

Tony J. McDowell

Genesee County Friend
of the Court, *Flint*

Tony is director of the Genesee County Friend of the Court. He serves as the administrator responsible for all FOC operations, with a focus on improving access and education related to custody, parenting time, support, paternity, and other family law matters.

Gray Divorces

Late-in-life divorces are increasingly common. Manage the complex issues, from blended family disputes to retirement assets. Get answers to questions like, What happens if one of the divorcing parties is incapacitated or someone is in a care facility? How do you address postdeath estate planning disputes flowing from spousal issues? How do you factor in the adult children who may be involved?

See *Practical Aspects of Late-in-Life Marriages and Divorces* on page 10.



Featured Speaker

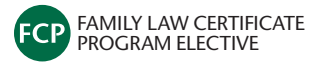
Laura E. Morris

Warner Norcross + Judd LLP,
Grand Rapids

Laura is a partner in the firm and specializes in probate court and family disputes involving trusts, estates, wills, powers of attorney, guardianships, and conservatorships. She has been named a Rising Star by Michigan Super Lawyers every year since 2013.

Agenda

CLE: 8.5 ETHICS: 0.5 LEVEL: Basic/Intermediate/Advanced



8:00am Registration, Continental Breakfast, and Vendor Showcase (Both Days)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2023

9:00am Welcome, Introductions, and Section Update

9:25am Domestic Relations Caselaw and Statutory Update with Analysis

10:45am Networking Break

	Core Concepts Track	Intermediate/Advanced Track	Bench and Bar Track
11:00am	Getting Paid: Fee Agreements, Money Up Front, Trust Accounts, and More	How to Compare Business Valuation Reports from Two Opposing Experts	Talking About Race and Family Law
11:50am	Networking Lunch		
1:05pm	Back to Basics: Discovery	Making and Breaking Spousal Support Claims	What Judges and the FOC Can Do to Support or Interfere with Settlement
2:05pm	Back to Basics: Handling Exhibits, Witness Lists, and Trial Briefs	Unique Issues with Child Support	Revocation of Paternity Act: What You Need to Know
2:55pm	Networking Break		
3:10pm	Back to Basics: Direct and Cross-Examination	Innocent Tax Relief: How Clients Can Be Absolved of Joint Debts	Practical Aspects of Late-in-Life Marriages and Divorces
4:10pm	Back to Basics: Top 5 Evidence Rules You Should Know	Dissecting Elements of Business and Personal Tax Returns	The Roles of Mental Health Professionals in Family Law

5:00pm Family Law Town Hall

5:30pm Networking Reception

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023

9:00am The Future of the Michigan Court System

	Law Practice Management Track*	Pretrial Track*	Juvenile and Child Protection Track*
10:25am	Law Practice Succession Planning	Fight for Your Right to (Ex) Parte: Interim Orders in Divorce Cases	The Who, What, When, Where, and How of Neglect and Abuse Cases
11:15am	Networking Break		
11:30am	Successfully Onboarding New Hires with a Book of Business	“Winning” at Mediation	Caught Between a CPS Investigation and Child Custody Court Orders

*MP3 download of all sessions in this track will be available to registrants after the seminar.

Tracks

Plenary Sessions

8:00am/Thursday & Friday

Registration, Continental Breakfast, and Vendor Showcase

9:00am/Thursday

Welcome, Introductions, and Section Update

Hear from the chair-elect of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan.

Kristen L. Robinson, Mellin Robinson PC, *Troy*

9:25am/Thursday

Domestic Relations Caselaw and Statutory Update with Analysis

The Hon. Janice K. Cunningham returns with her expert analysis of recent court decisions and legislative enactments.

Hon. Janice K. Cunningham, 56th Circuit Court, *Charlotte*

11:50am/Thursday

Networking Lunch

5:00pm/Thursday

Family Law Town Hall

Select faculty members lead an interactive discussion of new developments, statewide and local trends, and up-to-the-minute practice strategies in this freewheeling session. Get in on the discussion and get your questions answered.

J. Matthew Catchick, Jr., Catchick Law PC, *Bloomfield Hills*; Hon. Melissa A. Cox, 3rd Circuit Court, *Detroit*; Tony J. McDowell, Genesee County Friend of the Court, *Flint*

5:30pm/Thursday

Networking Reception

Relax and join faculty, exhibitors, and fellow registrants for light hors d'oeuvres and cocktails.

9:00am/Friday

The Future of the Michigan Court System

Consensus-based and data-driven decision-making. Public engagement and transparency. From statewide case management to e-filing, state-of-the-art technology implementation. Funding reform. Diversity, inclusion, and 100% access to justice. Building a juvenile justice system that keeps kids out of the system. The Michigan Judicial Council is bringing stakeholders to the table,

and for the first time, the state judiciary has a unified vision and plan to achieve justice for all.

Thomas P. Boyd, Michigan Supreme Court, *Lansing*; Hon. Megan K. Cavanagh, Michigan Supreme Court, *Lansing*; Kristen L. Robinson, Mellin Robinson PC, *Troy*

Core Concepts Track

11:00am/Thursday

Getting Paid: Fee Agreements, Money Up Front, Trust Accounts, and More

A fee agreement can help manage risk, increase the likelihood of payment, and reduce client misunderstandings and complaints. Together with the ethics rules, it governs the relationship with your client. What should it include? What should be left out? Can you really charge a “nonrefundable” fee? How do you properly handle fees, client, and third-party funds under trust accounting rules? Explore these and other questions relating to payment for your work.

Mark A. Armitage, Michigan Attorney Discipline Board, *Detroit*

1:05pm/Thursday

Back to Basics: Discovery

Transform your legal game with critical discovery tips. Devise strategies early in your case to maximize success. Learn the ins and outs of discovery rules, including timing, sequence, and goals. Decide between interrogatories or depositions and know when to schedule them. Consider requests to admit or subpoenas. Use innovative tools to access key information through preliminary financial disclosures. Make discovery your ally, avoiding unnecessary data that can overwhelm you and your client.

Monica Brinkman, Elder Brinkman Law, *Dearborn*; Julia A. Perkins, Varnum LLP, *Novi*

2:05pm/Thursday

Back to Basics: Handling Exhibits, Witness Lists, and Trial Briefs

Learn crucial trial preparation tips and valuable strategies so you can confidently be prepared for trial if settlement negotiations and mediation fail (and surprisingly boost your negotiating position for a pretrial settlement). Get advice on pretrial discovery techniques, witness and exhibit lists, testimony outlines, courtroom technology requests, pretrial motions (summary disposition and motions in limine), and pretrial

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stipulations to streamline the admission of evidence and exhibits.

J. Matthew Catchick, Jr., Catchick Law PC, *Bloomfield Hills*; John K. Kline, Kline Legal Group PLC, *Ann Arbor*

3:10pm/Thursday

Back to Basics: Direct and Cross-Examination

The next piece of the puzzle: you have mastered discovery and submitted your trial documents—what's next? Get key pointers for effective direct and cross-examination techniques and how the most successful case is the one planned before you ever set foot in the courtroom. Learn strategy on who to call, when to call, and how to highlight witness testimony starting with the end goal in mind.

Roquia Draper, Warner Norcross + Judd LLP, *Bloomfield Hills*; Jennifer M. LaTosch, Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP, *Southfield*

4:10pm/Thursday

Back to Basics: Top 5 Evidence Rules You Should Know

Gain the winning formula for the most common evidence issues at trial. Take control of the unpredictable so that the bad stuff stays out and the good stuff comes in. Your confidence will soar when you master the top evidentiary rules that every family practitioner must know. Join this session so you know the scope and limits of the rules and what you need to show the judge. Guaranteed to deliver tips you can use today.

Hon. Maureen H. Kinsella, 6th Circuit Court, *Pontiac*; David C. Sarnacki, The Sarnacki Law Firm PLC, *Grand Rapids*; Jacob N. Simon, The Law Office of Susan E. Cohen, *Bloomfield Hills*

Intermediate/Advanced Track

11:00am/Thursday

How to Compare Business Valuation Reports from Two Opposing Experts

Review a real business valuation report and hear comments from two valuation experts as they compare and contrast key assumptions. Hear opposing expert opinions on contentious issues such as reasonable compensation, personal perks, unreported cash, COVID-19, and others. Gain valuable tips to help you effectively prepare for cross-examining a valuation expert.

Eric Larson, Doeren Mayhew, *Grand Rapids*; Jason W. LeRoy, Doeren Mayhew, *Troy*

1:05pm/Thursday

Making and Breaking Spousal Support Claims

Explore the relevant facts, factors, theories, and arguments to successfully pursue or defend a spousal support claim. What options are available to the litigants and trier of fact? What presentation and drafting techniques obtain the best results? How to best explain and prove the various factors? How to use spousal support as a vehicle to address other economic issues?

Mark A. Bank, Bank Rifkin, *Birmingham*; Thomas A. Benhamou, Bank Rifkin, *Birmingham*

Moderators



Intermediate/Advanced Track

Mark A. Bank
Bank Rifkin, *Birmingham*



Core Concepts Track

Roquia Draper
Warner Norcross + Judd LLP,
Bloomfield Hills



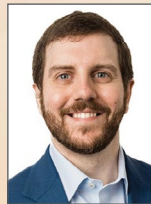
Pretrial Track

Ruth Goldner
Goldner Deeg PLLC, *Royal Oak*



Law Practice Management Track

Shalini Nangia
Varnum LLP, *Ann Arbor*



Juvenile and Child Protection Track

Josh Pease
Michigan Appellate Assigned Counsel
System, *Lansing*



Plenary Session

Kristen L. Robinson
Mellin Robinson PC, *Troy*



Bench and Bar Track

Karen S. Sendelbach
Nichols Sacks Slank Sendelbach Buiteweg
& Solomon PC, *Ann Arbor*

Tracks

2:05pm/Thursday

Unique Issues with Child Support

Child support is sneaky. It looks like it is just income and overnights, but it is much more than that. With a Formula Committee member as a guide, dig into the tricky parts of the Michigan Child Support Formula Manual and go over a picture-perfect Uniform Child Support Order. Get practice tips on: income in the new economy, imputation, deviation, ordinary medical obligations, dependent benefits, health insurance, and more.

Tony J. McDowell, Genesee County Friend of the Court, *Flint*

3:10pm/Thursday

Innocent Tax Relief: How Clients Can Be Absolved of Joint Debts

By filing a joint tax return, a person agrees to be held liable for any potential tax debt. In some cases, people come to regret that decision. Learn about the options for taxpayers with jointly held debt. Gain an overview of how the IRS Innocent Spouse program works and the requirements for relief.

Venar Raad Ayar, Ayar Law, *Farmington Hills*

4:10pm/Thursday

Dissecting Elements of Business and Personal Tax Returns

Financial experts provide insight on what key elements they look for while dissecting personal and business tax returns in a divorce case. What follow-up questions or discovery requests should lawyers consider? Why is there so much focus on a K-1? How do you ask for returns in one's discovery request?

Brian M. Bakker, Stout Risius Ross LLC, *Grand Rapids*; Jason Bodmer, Bodmer Price, *Bloomfield Hills*

Bench and Bar Track

11:00am/Thursday

Talking About Race and Family Law

In 2022, the ABA approved new law school standards requiring education to law students on bias, cross-cultural competency, and racism. As race, nationality, and ethnicity intersect with family law, it is imperative that lawyers and judges join the conversation too. Looking at family law through the lens of race offers opportunities to build processes that promote trust, help eliminate stereotypes and microaggressions, and ensure justice for families of all nationalities, ethnicities, and races.

Zenell B. Brown, Inspiring Minds Inc, *Southfield*; Hon. Sima G. Patel, Michigan Court of Appeals, *Detroit*

1:05pm/Thursday

What Judges and the FOC Can Do to Support or Interfere with Settlement

Lawyers can spend hundreds of hours reaching a complex settlement in a seemingly impossible situation, only to have the Court/Friend of the Court refuse to enter the judgment. Aren't we all on the same team? Discover which agreements and deviations will most likely fail judicial review and why. Learn effective arguments advocating for parental agreements. Grasp how judicial officers can empower lawyers and divorcing parties to resolve their disputes, while also enforcing those resolutions later.

Hon. Lorie N. Savin, 6th Circuit Court, *Pontiac*; Karen S. Sendelbach, Nichols Sacks Slank Sendelbach Buiteweg & Solomon PC, *Ann Arbor*

2:05pm/Thursday

Revocation of Paternity Act: What You Need to Know

Do you find that the many tendrils and nuances of ROPA present a muddled mess? This detailed session will break down the Revocation of Paternity Act, 2012 PA 159, and offer simple, straightforward guidance to help you master it.

Hon. Melissa A. Cox, 3rd Circuit Court, *Detroit*; Scott Farida, Oakland County Prosecutor's Office, *Pontiac*; Jennifer M. Granzow, Kalamazoo County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, *Kalamazoo*

3:10pm/Thursday

Practical Aspects of Late-in-Life Marriages and Divorces

'Til incapacity do we part. Death and divorce are not the only times that prenups or the lack thereof become important. Grasp best practices for situations where one is incapacitated (often promoted by children), disputes over prenup abuse when one spouse has diminished capacity, blended family disputes, and postdeath estate planning disputes flowing from spousal issues.

Hon. Linda S. Hallmark, Oakland County Probate Court, *Pontiac*; Laura E. Morris, Warner Norcross + Judd LLP, *Grand Rapids*

4:10pm/Thursday

The Roles of Mental Health Professionals in Family Law

Grasp what mental health professionals can and can't do in each of their roles, including counselors who treat or treated a party or child; hired/appointed evaluators; GALs; parent coordinators; and mediators. What are the rules regarding privilege, psych evals and assessments, meeting with a child without parental consent, disclosing notes, offering opinions (which may or may not be evaluations), and more. What is especially helpful to the court, and what is not, from each?

Elizabeth K. Bransdorfer, Mika Meyers PLC, *Grand Rapids*; Hon. Kathleen A. Feeney, Michigan Court of Appeals, *Grand Rapids*; Richard W. Wooten, Matrix Psychological Consulting LLC, *Southfield*

Law Practice Management Track

10:25am/Friday

Law Practice Succession Planning

Rule 21, effective September 1, 2023, requires lawyers in private practice to designate an interim administrator “to protect clients by temporarily managing the attorney’s practice if the attorney becomes unexpectedly unable to practice law.” Gain an understanding of how best to implement this rule in your practice and learn about the State Bar’s Interim Administrator Program and resources.

April J. Alleman, State Bar of Michigan, *Lansing*; James J. Harrington, III, Harrington Law PLC, *Novi*

11:30am/Friday

Successfully Onboarding New Hires with a Book of Business

Failing to plan is planning to fail. Your idea for a winning collaboration demands more than good intentions. Learn how to successfully and ethically onboard a lateral hire to success and avoid the unimaginable headaches that can occur without implementation of a thought-out plan.

Shelley A. Kester, Wilson Kester PLLC, *Traverse City*; Shalini Nangia, Varnum LLP, *Ann Arbor*

Pretrial Track

10:25am/Friday

Fight for Your Right to (Ex) Parte: Interim Orders in Divorce Cases

What should you consider before making a request for ex parte relief? Should you object to an ex parte order? Review the relevant rules and learn strategies for requesting or opposing relief. Learn how to draft and request interim orders, including financial orders, orders relating to minor children, and support orders. Examine the statutes and court rules, learn how they are approached in different circuit courts, and take home sample orders.

Ruth Goldner, Goldner Deeg PLLC, *Royal Oak*; Hon. Carla G. Testani, 3rd Circuit Court, *Detroit*

11:30am/Friday

“Winning” at Mediation

Are you prepared for mediation? Gain insight into why your mediation summary is the most important document you will draft, while learning how to prepare from day one of your case. Dive deep into the necessary components of a summary and hear practical advice about the best arguments to make during your mediation presentation.

Sean A. Blume, Blume Law Group PLLC, *Sterling Heights*; Mathew Kobliska, Kobliska Law + Mediation, *Bloomfield Hills*

Juvenile and Child Protection Track

10:25am/Friday

The Who, What, When, Where, and How of Neglect and Abuse Cases

Learn all about the neglect and abuse system, from the filing

of the initial petition until reunification or termination of parental rights. Discover how the process may be started by DHHS or private lawyers, the importance of advocacy at all hearings, the standard/burden of proof, rules of evidence issues, and an overview of recent significant caselaw. For both new and seasoned practitioners.

Shon A. Cook, Tabono Law, *Muskegon*; Hon. Paul F. Kraus, 20th Circuit Court, *Grand Haven*

11:30am/Friday

Caught Between a CPS Investigation and Child Custody Court Orders

Child custody cases are tricky enough, but when CPS starts investigating, the complexity quickly multiplies even if no child protection case is filed in court. Gain an understanding of the problems and intricacies of these intertwining and often competing matters, covering both legal and extralegal considerations.

Joshua B. Kay, University of Michigan Law School, *Ann Arbor*; Josh Pease, Michigan Appellate Assigned Counsel System, *Lansing*

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- \$45 Print Handbook⁴ and Electronic Materials

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Prices guaranteed until 11/17/23. Cannot combine discounts. ¹Please attach additional sheet listing registrants attending. All registrations must be submitted and paid for at the same time. ²Current sitting state court judges (limit 40) attend free and must call ICLE or submit order form to register. ³Limited to five registrations from any one office and must call ICLE or submit order form to register. ⁴Limit one print handbook purchase per registrant. Print handbooks are nonrefundable after the event cancellation date. **Complete Seminar Policies:** www.icle.org/info/seminarpolicies. **Cancellation Policy:** For a full refund, notify ICLE by 11/02/23. Registrants who cancel after that date will be charged a \$60 cancellation fee. No refunds will be issued after 11/09/23. **Walk-in Registrations:** Permitted on a space-available basis or if registrants fail to claim their seat in the first 15 minutes of the seminar. **Persons with Disabilities or Dietary Restrictions:** For special arrangements please contact ICLE no later than seven days before the seminar.

Accommodations: A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hyatt Place Detroit/Novi Hotel in Novi, under group code G-ICAR for 11/15-16/23. Visit www.icle.org/family/hotel or call 800-591-1234 and mention ICLE's *Family Law Institute* to reserve a room. Reservations must be made by 10/15/23. Registrants are responsible for their own hotel expenses.