

# Legal Connections



LEGAL EXPERTISE FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

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Check out *Pandemic Perspectives* to see local attorneys sharing their personal experiences over the past year: [cbalaw.org](http://cbalaw.org)

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## JUDICIAL CANDIDATE RATING SYSTEM GETS AN UPDATE

In Ohio, judges serve six-year terms and are elected by voters in a partisan primary, followed by a non-partisan general election. This means that judges do not have a party label next to their names on the ballot. Common Pleas Court judges are elected in even-numbered years, and Municipal Court judges in odd-numbered years.



**CHRISTINA CORL, ESQ.,**  
Plunkett Cooney

Columbus Bar's Judicial Screening Committee when interviewing judicial candidates prior to the fall elections.

Each year, the CBA's Judiciary Committee meets to personally interview candidates for judgeships in Franklin County. The committee has an extensive protocol for evaluating the

qualifications of judge candidates and issues evaluations of the candidates who have screened with the committee. The committee considers many factors when evaluating judge candidates such as integrity, professional experience, legal knowledge, legal ability, judicial temperament, diligence, public service and sensitivity to issues of bias. Many members of the voting public do not have the opportunity to evaluate judicial candidates with this level of scrutiny and detail prior to casting their ballot. The CBA publishes the results of the committee's evaluation of judges and views this as a valuable resource for voters.

The Columbus Bar Association believes voters deserve impartial, nonpartisan information about local judges and judicial candidates. JudgeTheCandidates.org is a great resource to help voters make an informed decision when it is time to elect judges for Franklin County courts.

For more than 20 years, the Columbus Bar has provided voter education tools to help voters make informed decisions when electing local judges. Every spring, Franklin County attorneys are asked to evaluate the performance of sitting judges, and the results of this evaluation are also an element considered by the

Periodically, the Columbus Bar examines these resources to ensure they continue to be helpful for local voters. This year, we asked the voters themselves how we could improve the judicial screening process to make it more user friendly. The committee spent time interviewing voters in Franklin County to determine what type of judicial ranking system would be most understandable and effective. The overwhelming majority of voters agreed that a "star" rating system would be the best and most understandable method by which to rate judicial candidates. So this year's judicial candidate ratings will see the following star rating system beginning in August 2021.

**1 star (Fails)** – the candidate does not possess the education, experience, training, character and fitness, and/or temperament necessary [to carry out the duties of a judicial officer]

**2 stars (Lacks)** – the candidate is significantly lacking with respect to either their education, experience, training, character and fitness, or temperament [necessary to carry out the

duties of a judicial officer]

**3 stars (Meets)** – the candidate offers the minimum education, experience, training, character and fitness, and temperament [necessary to carry out the duties of a judicial officer]

**4 stars (Exceeds)** – the candidate's qualifications exceed those necessary to carry out the duties of a judicial officer whether due to education, experience, training, character and fitness, or temperament

**5 stars (Superior)** – the candidate offers superior qualifications for carrying out the duties of a judicial officer whether due to education, experience, training, character and fitness, and/or temperament

Look for the judicial candidate rankings from the committee in early fall at [www.JudgeTheCandidates.org](http://www.JudgeTheCandidates.org). The site contains a wealth of information about the judicial candidates in Franklin County and about the important role judges play in our communities. ■

AS THE WEATHER WARMS UP, MORE BIKERS WILL BE OUT AND ABOUT. LEARN ALL ABOUT WHO IS AT FAULT IN BIKE ACCIDENTS AT OUR CLE ON JULY 14: [CBALAW.ORG](http://CBALAW.ORG)

## WANT TO GET AWAY? DON'T GET SCAMMED!

Nearly every part of our daily lives is evolving to incorporate the benefits offered by new technologies and business models. While these changes can offer convenience, they may also create uncertainty. The travel industry is no exception. And as the pandemic in the United States starts to slow and America begins to reopen, the demand for travel has exploded.

In searching for vacation deals, people may look to property rentals through companies like Airbnb and Vrbo. These companies, which provide a marketplace where homeowners can offer property rentals directly to customers, have recently grown in popularity. This growth is partially due to the promise of a unique travel experience

and an alternative to hotels. But these new businesses also create new opportunities for scammers.

One common scam involving rental companies is the classic bait and switch, in which the customer books a stay online, and minutes before they are supposed to check in, the host calls, stating that there was an unforeseen issue with the property that prevents the customer from staying there. Oftentimes, the host will blame an unfixable plumbing or electrical problem. The host then offers a different property located nearby. Upon arrival at the back-up location, the customer discovers a property that is not nearly as nice as the original.

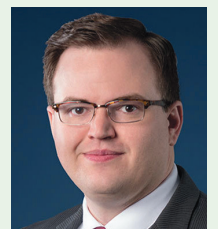
Another common scam occurs when

hosts request payment outside of the app. Usually, the host offers some sort of incentive for outside payment, such as a lower rate or a perk upon arrival. Scammers often claim that outside payment is either more convenient or allows both parties to avoid service fees. A request for outside payment is a red flag because it allows the host to bypass the company's standards or disappear after receiving payment.

One way to avoid becoming a victim is educating yourself about common scams that take place. Customers should scrutinize a host's profile. Be suspicious of profiles with stock photos and poor or obviously phony reviews. Before booking online, be aware of the company's cancellation and fraud-reporting policies.



**ZACHARY PYERS, ESQ.,**  
Reminger Co., L.P.A.



**KENTON STEELE, ESQ.,**  
Reminger Co., L.P.A.

Finally, if you pay with a credit or debit card, familiarize yourself with your rights through the card's issuer, which may include the ability to recover payments made to a fraudulent renter. Being aware of common scams, how to avoid them, and knowing what to do if you are the victim of vacation rental fraud will help ensure your vacation offers rest and relaxation. ■



## ANIMAL LAW UPDATE



### Featuring Judge Stephanie Mingo Miles

For the animal advocate, insurance attorney, veterinary medicine attorney, or just plain animal lover—this live CLE webinar (presented on Zoom) will cover current legislation, caselaw, and courtroom practices in the world of animal law. This program was organized by John Bell, Esq.

[www.cbalaw.org](http://www.cbalaw.org) 🐾 (614) 221-4112

