

Special Education Due Process Hearing Officers and Qualifications

(Revised July 2010)

Federal regulation 34 CFR ss300.508 (c) requires that each public agency maintains a current list of Special Education Due Process Hearing Officers and their qualifications. In order to assist LEAs in fulfilling this responsibility, a list of Hearing Officers and their qualifications are listed below.

Qualifications of Hearing Officers:

34 CFR ss300.507(a)(1)(2)

The Hearing Officer may **not** be:

1. an employee of a public agency which is involved in the education or care of the child, or
2. a person having a personal or professional interest which would conflict with his or her objectivity in the hearing.
3. a person having a prior involvement with the child.

Hearing Officers are assigned to hearings on an ad hoc basis. They are chosen to serve in their positions based on their academic achievement, background in special education and special education law, professional experience, writing ability and personal qualities.

Listed below are the one-tier Hearing Officers and their qualifications. The two-tier hearing officers are listed immediately following the one-tier list.

ODR ONE-TIER FULL-TIME HEARING OFFICERS

Attorney Anne Carroll has a degree in Psychology and obtained her teaching certification in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from Seton Hill College, Masters Level Coursework in Educational Psychology from Penn State, and a law degree from Temple University. In addition to private practice experience, Attorney Carroll was the Permanent Law Clerk to Hon. E. Mac Troutman, Senior U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, for fifteen years. Attorney Carroll has been a Custody/Support Master, a volunteer Better Business Bureau Arbitrator, and attended the Certificate Program in Conflict Resolution at the Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, for conflict resolution theory and practice, as well as basic mediation skills training. Attorney Carroll has been a special education due process hearing officer under contract with ODR since 2000.

Attorney William F. Culleton, Jr. served as an advocate for individuals diagnosed with physical and mental disabilities for twenty seven years, both in the courts and in statewide policy committees in New Jersey. He has served as trial and appellate counsel in state and federal courts, conducted investigations and negotiated statewide reforms in mental health service delivery systems. In addition, he served as an administrator in a program providing legal services to individuals with diagnosed disabilities for seven years. Attorney Culleton was a special education due process hearing officer for almost four years under contract with the Office for Dispute Resolution from January 2005 to December 2008. His undergraduate degree is from St. Joseph's University and he has a J.D. from Washington University in St. Louis. He has completed basic mediation training through the New Jersey Office of Dispute Resolution

Attorney Jake McElligott, for the past decade, has been involved in all aspects of education as an administrator at the School of Education at Duquesne University. In addition to his administrative duties, he has taught a wide array of university coursework, as well as secondary social studies classes in public and private high schools. Attorney McElligott teaches school law, as an adjunct instructor, to aspiring teachers and administrators and has presented on school law at professional conferences. Attorney McElligott has served as a Special Education Appeals Panel member for over thirteen years, most of those as Chair of a panel. He expects to get his Ed.D. in Educational Administration in May 2009, with a proposed dissertation entitled "Roadmap of Resolution: An Analysis of Special Education Due Process Opinions in Pennsylvania, 1997-2004." Attorney McElligott has trained in special education mediation.

Attorney Cathy A. Skidmore has been active in the field of special education law in Pennsylvania for over fifteen years in both formal and alternate dispute resolution. She earned her undergraduate degree in Special and Elementary Education from Slippery Rock University, her Juris Doctor from Duquesne University, and her Master of Education in a program of general special education from the University of Pittsburgh. Attorney Skidmore served for many years as an appellate due process hearing officer in Pennsylvania, including seven years as a panel chairperson. She subsequently became involved in collaborative dispute resolution, serving as a special education mediator and facilitator. She also has long-term experience as a judicial law clerk at the state trial and appellate levels. Attorney Skidmore has been a frequent speaker and lecturer on various aspects of special education and disability law and remains active in numerous special education and legal professional organizations.

Linda M. Valentini, Psy.D. is a senior special education due process hearing officer who has presided over more than 1,500 special education disputes throughout Pennsylvania over the past thirteen years. In Summer 2009, Dr. Valentini became a certified hearing official by the National Association of Hearing Officials (NAHO). Dr. Valentini received her Bachelor's Degree in psychology summa cum laude from LaSalle University and her Masters and Doctoral Degrees in clinical psychology from Hahnemann Medical College; in partial fulfillment of her doctoral requirements she studied for six months with Miss Anna Freud in London, England. A licensed psychologist in the state of Pennsylvania, Dr. Valentini is also a Pennsylvania certified school psychologist. She has been a houseparent in a residential treatment facility for juvenile offenders, an assistant director of a private youth services agency, the executive director of a private children's mental health agency specializing in children ages birth through seven, and a private practitioner, is a certified mediator, a consultant in the area of child/adolescent physical and sexual abuse and behavioral health, and a frequent speaker in special education and administrative law training programs. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, she has lived in Philadelphia for thirty-eight years and also lived in Italy for a year.

ONE-TIER HEARING OFFICERS UNDER CONTRACT WITH ODR

Attorney James Gerl is currently in private practice, a West Virginia Due Process Hearing Officer and Mediator, Alaska Special Due Process Hearing Officer and Utah Due Process Hearing Officer. Attorney Gerl is certified by the National Association of Hearing Officials. Attorney Gerl has provided state trainings and consultations to Wyoming, Utah, Oklahoma, Iowa, West Virginia and Delaware. Attorney Gerl has provided numerous special education law presentations at national and regional conferences and hearing officer trainings. Attorney Gerl received his J.D. from University of San Francisco School of Law, his Master's Degree from the University of Illinois – Chicago and his undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana. Attorney Gerl will be assigned as a Pennsylvania Due Process Hearing Officer only when Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit is a party in the due process matter.

Rosemary E. Mullaly, Esquire is currently serving as an interim Special Education Hearing Officer for the Office for Dispute Resolution. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia acting as special assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Before her current position, Ms. Mullaly was a member of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Chief Counsel where she advised the Department on special education and pupil personnel matters. From 2003-2007, Ms. Mullaly previously served as a Special Education Hearing Officer. She has also been a self-employed consultant to districts in Chester and Berks counties providing legal advice and guidance in non-adversarial matters and presenting educational law seminars to public school professionals, parents, university students, and attorneys throughout Pennsylvania. From 1991-2000, Ms. Mullaly represented districts and intermediate units throughout Pennsylvania in the areas of pupil personnel issues and special education developing extensive knowledge of every aspect of the Pennsylvania system of administrative agency review of claims arising under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Through resolutions as varied as settlement prior to hearing, multi-session administrative hearings, second-tier state-level review, and federal court litigation, she developed a comprehensive understanding of issues faced by parents and school entities in the dispute resolution process and the challenges faced by hearing officers in fulfilling their role. She received her B.A. *magna cum laude* from St. Joseph's University, and her law degree *cum laude* from Boston College Law School. Ms. Mullaly is also the parent of a nine-year old son with an autism spectrum disorder.

Attorney Gloria Satriale has served as a Hearing Officer with the United States Department of Justice for over ten years, has 16 years teaching experience and 4 years experience as a school administrator. She holds certifications in TEEACH, PECS, CIP, PCT and Applied Behavior Analysis. In addition to her legal and educational experience, Attorney Satriale has extensive systems experience in Mental Health as Chair of Chester County's Early Intervention Committee and is the longest running Chair of Chester County's Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. She holds a Gubernatorial Appointment to the Advisory Council to the Governors Cabinet on Disabilities and has recently been named to the Board of one of the largest mental health treatment facilities for children and adolescents. Attorney Satriale has served as a consultant to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Education, Intermediate Units, School Districts, PaTTAN and to many mental health providers and educational programs. For the Office of Dispute Resolution, Attorney Satriale has been a member of the "Creating Agreement" Training Team training educators and parents in alternative dispute resolution and effective

communication methods. She has lectured nationally on transition issues, community integration, effective teaching and innovative strategies using technology in education. Attorney Satriale designed and published: *"The Use of Blue Tooth Technology to Promote Independent Responding in the Community: The Reduction of the Stigma of Prompting,"* which explores the use of assistive technology and environmental adaptations to facilitate successful community emersion for students with profound disabilities. Attorney Satriale is the parent of an adolescent with special needs.