

DENISE OAKES SHAFFER

EDUCATION

May 1989 – B.A. (English) *Cum Laude*
Loyola College, Baltimore, MD (now Loyola University)
Honors: Cardin English Award, Honors Program Graduate

May 1991 – J.D. *Order of the Coif*
University of Maryland School of Law
Honors: The Hoffberger Clinical Law Prize, Public Service Award. American Jurisprudence Awards: Legal Professionalism and Criminal Law

May 1995 – Candidate for LL.M. (Trial Advocacy)
Georgetown University Law Center, E. Barrett Prettyman Fellow

CLERKSHIP

1991-1993, Law Clerk, Maryland Court of Appeals, The Honorable John C. Eldridge
(Memorial Minute: 466 Md. IVV-XLVIII (2019))

EXPERIENCE

January 1999–present
Maryland Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH)

Administrative Law Judge; Director of Quality Assurance (November 2017-July 2022); Deputy Director of Operations (July 2014-November 2017); Deputy Director of Quality Assurance (July 2008 – July 2014)

I preside over administrative hearings involving over thirty-five state agencies and various legal subjects and issue bench or written decisions for each case.

When I transitioned to management, I retained a caseload of administrative hearings cases while assuming leadership roles in OAH's two principal management divisions, Quality Assurance (QA) and Operations. The Director and Deputy Director of QA are responsible for the initial training of new ALJs in all subject areas and continuing legal education of all ALJs, staff attorneys, law student interns, and paralegals. I also partnered with HR and IT to provide training to all OAH employees. I supervised and evaluated over fifty ALJs in writing and demeanor at hearings and provided continuing education through monthly training sessions and a weekly newsletter. In addition, I supervised a staff of five staff attorneys and one paralegal. Through membership in the National Association for Judicial Education and affiliation with the National Judicial College, I have developed expertise in tailoring education and training to the learning needs of adult professionals. During the pandemic, I shifted all training modules to a remote platform and incorporated technology-based interactive components in all training sessions.

I have presented training and lectured at state and national conferences on various topics, including special education, best practices for unrepresented litigants, evaluating expert witnesses, forensic interviews of child witnesses, and authentication of digital evidence, including social media and body camera evidence. I developed and delivered a 40-hour mediation program for newly hired ALJs, law student interns, and interested OAH staff. The QA Division supports a legal internship program for current law students. I have mentored dozens of law students in the internship program.

Fall Semester 2024-2026; Spring Semester 2024-2026,
Adjunct Professor, Lawyering I & II, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law

Spring Semester 2021-2023
Adjunct Professor, Introduction to Trial Advocacy, University of Baltimore School of Law

Spring Semester 2014 – Spring Semester 2018
Adjunct Professor, Mediation Skills, University of Baltimore School of Law

August 1995 – August 1998
Assistant Public Defender, Office of the Public Defender, Maryland, Appellate Division (January 1996-August 1998), Baltimore County, District Court Division (August 1995-January 1996)

August 1993 – August 1995
E. Barrett Prettyman Fellow, E. Barrett Prettyman Fellowship and Stuart Stiller Post-Graduate Fellowship Program, Criminal Justice Clinic, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C.

I represented criminal defendants in misdemeanor, felony, and post-conviction matters at trial and appellate levels in conjunction with a graduate-level program in trial advocacy and clinical teaching. I supervised third-year clinical law students in all aspects of the defense of misdemeanor and felony cases and prepared the Maryland division class curriculum, reading lists, and simulation exercises. I also co-taught weekly academic and trial skills courses.

PRESENTATIONS

Sample of National Training Presentations: Judicial Ethics for Remote Proceedings, Authentication of Digital Evidence, ADR Options for Resolution of Special Education Disputes

Sample of In-State Training Presentations: Administrative Law (Maryland Judicial College); Overview of Changes to the Maryland Public Information Act (MSBA), Antitrust Public Hearings and Training (OAH and Health Care Occupations Boards), Ethical Research in the Internet Age (OAH), Sexual Harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity (MD EEO Conference), Access to Justice for the Self-Represented Litigant (OAH), Foreclosure Mediation (PBRC)