

# Murray reappointed to municipal attorney, legal defense fund boards

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James J. Murray, a partner in the Petoskey office of Plunkett Cooney and City attorney for the cities of Petoskey and Boyne City, was recently reappointed to the Board of Directors of the Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys (MAMA) and to the Board of the Michigan Municipal League Legal Defense Fund (LDF).

"I am pleased to continue my involvement with these very dynamic organizations," said Murray. "Through the LDF, we agreed to participate in many important municipal cases that have a strong likelihood to help not only cities in Northern Michigan, but throughout the state of Michigan."

Established in 1935 as a chartered section of the Michigan Municipal League (MML), the Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys is a non-profit corporation consisting of attorneys who represent MML member cities and villages and includes their deputies, assistants and League staff members admitted to practice law in the state of Michigan. Attorneys with a substantial interest in municipal law may also join MAMA as associate members.

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) was formed in 1983 and currently, over 85 percent of Michigan communities who are members of the MML are eligible for LDF assistance. The LDF was designed to offer various types of legal aid to Michigan communities. Typical examples of assistance from the LDF are *amicus curiae* briefs filed with the Michigan Court of Appeals or the Michigan Supreme Court by an attorney retained by the MML and financed by the LDF.

An *amicus curiae* brief is a way of presenting the courts with arguments, information and legal authority to assist the court with the broad perspective of the case in terms of the impact on municipalities generally, as well as on the litigant community. There is no automatic right to file an *amicus curiae* brief, so the court's permission must be sought by filing a motion.

The LDF also provides other legal assistance the board finds legal and proper, and is a way of providing support and assistance to MML members, and their attorneys, in cases where issues have a broad impact on the municipality.

MURRAY REAPPOINTED TO MUNICIPAL ATTORNEY, LEGAL DEFENSE FUND BOARDS Cont.

As a MAMA board member, Murray will work with his colleagues to advance the organization's goals, which include strengthening the quality of legal representation of municipal corporations through continuing education, serving as a research organization for corporate counsel representing MML cities and villages, creating a forum for consultation among members, and honoring individuals who have made significant contributions in the area of municipal law.

Murray has been a partner with Plunkett Cooney since 1998. In addition to his municipal law practice, Murray has extensive experience in the areas of business law, real estate, banking, commercial litigation and title insurance. His municipal practice is wide ranging and includes direct representation of municipalities and defense of litigation involving public entities.

Murray is a member of the American Bar Association, the State Bar of Michigan, and he is a past President of the Emmet-Charlevoix Bar Association. Additionally, he serves as a member of the Grievance Panel for the State Bar of Michigan, as well as a member of the Les Cheneaux Community Foundation Board of Directors.

Established in 1913, Plunkett Cooney employs more than 160 attorneys in nine Michigan cities, Columbus, Ohio and Indianapolis, Indiana. The firm has achieved the highest rating (AV) awarded by Martindale-Hubbell, a leading, international directory of law firms and has received several awards naming the firm a top place to work in the legal industry.

*For more information about James J. Murray's reappointment to the MAMA and LDF Boards of Directors, contact the firm's Practice Development Manager, John Cornwell at (248) 901-4008.*

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