

CJ Griffin Quoted in Law360 Pulse on Precedential Ruling Confirming Fee-Shifting in OPRA Requests Made by a Party's Attorney

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CJ Griffin, partner and Director of the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, was quoted in the Law360 Pulse article, "NJ Panel Okes Counsel Fees For Attys Seeking Public Records." The article discusses a recent ruling, in a precedential published decision of the New Jersey Appellate Division, that parties can seek counsel fees in litigation stemming from a public records request pursuant to New Jersey's Open Public Records Act (OPRA) made by the party's attorney and not the party itself.

"The practice of an attorney filing a records request on behalf of a client is commonplace, but the appellate opinion helps to solidify this method, according to CJ Griffin, a partner at Hackensack, New Jersey-based Pashman Stein Walder Hayden PC.

Griffin, who was not involved in the Underwood Properties matter, specializes in OPRA law.

"Sometimes a client wants to exercise their statutory right to be anonymous so they have their attorney file it; other times like this case it's just easier for the attorney to handle it," Griffin told Law360 Pulse on Tuesday. "It's widely accepted by federal courts and other state courts that attorneys can file public records requests on behalf of a person and that person still has standing to sue as the plaintiff, so the city's argument in this case lacked any merit whatsoever."

Since the appellate panel's opinion was precedent-setting, Griffin said it will help to "keep other agencies from making this argument to try to avoid OPRA's fee-shift."

To view the full article, click [here](#)

