

CJ Griffin Quoted in njtoday.net discussing How Recent NJ Supreme Court Ruling Sets the Bar for Why Police Records Should be Disclosed

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CJ Griffin, Director of the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, was quoted in the *njtoday.net* article, “Supreme Court allows dirty laundry out in sexist, racist Police Director case.” The article discusses the recent New Jersey Supreme Court victory in which Griffin represented the plaintiff seeking the internal affairs records of the director of the Elizabeth Police Department who had been found to violate Elizabeth’s anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. While acknowledging that police internal affairs reports are not subject to the Open Public Records Act, the NJ Supreme Court held that such reports should be released under the common law right of access. The Court also set forth factors that public agencies and trial courts should consider when deciding whether to release internal affairs reports. The Court reversed the Appellate Court decision and ordered the trial court to release the records, with appropriate redactions.

CJ Griffin, the attorney who won the case, credited her client, “who has also devoted his life to police transparency and ending corruption.”

Griffin said the ruling should help open internal affairs records in at least the most egregious cases of police misconduct.

Griffin also said the decision sets a bar for why such records should be disclosed, unlike previous precedents, which outlined reasons supporting non-disclosure.

“Maybe we’re not going to get the records that are like ‘so-and-so was punished because they were tardy,’ but we’re going to get the ones that are about excessive force and discrimination and cases like this,”

Griffin said. “We will have to keep litigating because police departments are so secretive. But I think this decision is going to go a long way to opening these records.”

Griffin is the director of the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden (Stein Public Interest Center). Established in 2019, the Stein Public Interest Center is dedicated to a broad range of public interest impact litigation and appellate advocacy that advances social, racial, and economic justice; protects civil liberties and constitutional rights; and promotes an open and transparent government.

Her legal practice focuses on media law, appellate advocacy, employment, criminal defense and cannabis law and Griffin has earned a reputation in the state as one of the leading attorneys representing media companies, nonprofit organizations and citizens in Open Public Records Act (OPRA) litigations.

To view the full article, click here.

<https://njtodaynet.wordpress.com/2022/03/14/supreme-court-allows-dirty-laundry-out-in-sexist-racist-police-director-case/>