

Honorable John M. Cleland was appointed in 1984 to the McKean County Court of Common Pleas. He was subsequently elected in 1985 and reelected in 1995 and 2005. In 2008 he was appointed to the Superior Court of Pennsylvania, an intermediate appellate court, where he served through 2010. He then returned to the trial court as a senior judge.

In 2009 he was appointed chair of the Interbranch Commission on Juvenile Justice that investigated the so-called “kids for cash” scandal.

For eight years he served as co-chair of the Education Committee of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges. He has served as chair of the Conference’s Juvenile Law Section, and is currently a member of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission.

Active in various issues involving public health law, he has served a co-chair of committees that prepared court reference materials for handling biohazard materials in courthouses, preparation for pandemic flu, continuity of operations planning, and the development of Pennsylvania’s public health law bench book.

He was an invited participant in the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government’s Executive Session for State Court Leaders in the 21st Century. He has served as a Trustee of the University of Pittsburgh, and as Advisory Board Chair of the University’s Bradford Campus.

He is a 1969 graduate of Denison University and a 1972 graduate of the National Law Center of The George Washington University.