



The Portnoff Reporter

Summer 2026

LOW FEES, HIGH PERFORMANCE: THE PORTNOFF MODEL

Clients often ask how Portnoff Law Associates can maintain some of the lowest fees in the industry. The answer is simple: we invest in service, not in splashy marketing. While many law firms and collection agencies might devote 20–30% of their revenue to marketing campaigns, events, and outside consultants, Portnoff takes a different approach. We rely on our own attorneys and staff—the people who know our work best—to build relationships and share how our process can improve municipal collections.

Our outreach may be considered “old school,” but it works. Through direct, informed conversations with municipal leaders, Portnoff has been retained by more than 200 municipal clients across 33 Pennsylvania counties. A significant number of new engagements come from municipal employees who, after moving to a new township, borough, or school district, choose to bring Portnoff with them. We view this as one of the strongest endorsements of our work. These professionals have every opportunity to select a different approach, yet they continue to rely on Portnoff because they have seen firsthand the results we deliver. Word-of-mouth referrals remain another major driver of growth. Whether through government consortiums, intermediate units, or informal conversations among neighboring municipalities, our reputation continues to spread. Many prospective clients reach out after hearing about our effectiveness from their peers.

Our collection process also produces a long-term benefit for many municipalities: a measurable reduction in delinquent accounts. By creating meaningful incentives for timely payment, we often help clients shrink their delinquency lists year over year. We sometimes joke that our own success puts us “out of business” with existing clients—but we are grateful for those who value our work enough to recommend us to others.

At Portnoff, we believe that strong performance—not aggressive marketing—should drive growth. The trust our clients place in us, and the referrals they continue to make, remain the foundation of our success.



PORTNOFF
LAW ASSOCIATES, LTD.

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Montgomery County: 2700 Horizon Drive, Suite 100, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Lehigh County: 1030 West Walnut Street, Allentown, PA 18102

Beaver County: 902 22nd Street, Aliquippa, PA 15001

Tel. (484) 690-9332 • Fax (484) 690-9301 • Web www.portnoffonline.com



The Portnoff Reporter

Michelle Portnoff, Esquire, Publisher
Kevin Buraks, Esquire, Editor

In Person

Jan.
2026

Portnoff attorney Kevin Buraks presented a webinar for the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association (PMAA) titled *"Incentivizing Customers to Pay Their Delinquent Accounts Quickly."*

Mar.
2026

Attorney Buraks presented a webinar for the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) on the topic *"Proven Strategies to Increase Delinquent and Current Collections."*

In addition, presentations were delivered on delinquent tax collection options under the Municipal Claims and Tax Liens Act at the ARIN Intermediate Unit and the Bucks County Intermediate Unit.

Apr.
2026

Attorney Buraks gave a presentation on delinquent tax collection options at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

May
2026

A presentation was given to the Erie Area Council of Governments on the topic of delinquent collections.

In Print

May
2026

An article titled *Incentivizing Property Owners to Pay Their Delinquent Accounts*, penned by Attorney Buraks, was published in the May 2026 edition of *Pennsylvania Borough News*.

If you are interested in having Portnoff Law Associates make a presentation at your next conference or event, please contact us at (484) 690-9332 or kburaks@portnoffonline.com.

Notes of Appreciation

Portnoff Law Associates regularly receives thank-you notes from property owners who appreciate the professionalism and courtesy shown to them throughout the collection process. The following are notes that PLA recently received:

"[Y]ou guys are great. I mean, every time I've called, I've had the best experience and all the help I could ask for, so I just want to say thank you guys again."

A property owner from
Bethlehem, PA

"I just wanted to compliment Joey on his service today... He was very professional, patient, [and] courteous. It was a big mess, and he was very, very helpful."

A property owner from
Wilkes-Barre, PA

"Thank you to anyone who helped with our account this year. You folks have a hard job but have always been very helpful and kind to us."

A property owner from
New Ringgold, PA

By The Numbers

Municipal clients often choose to retain Portnoff Law Associates to collect delinquent real estate taxes rather than relying on the county tax claim bureau because Portnoff offers delinquent taxpayers greater payment flexibility and more collection options. An additional benefit of using Portnoff is the ability to generate revenue quickly while also producing meaningful long-term financial benefits, as demonstrated by the figures below:

43.5%

This represents the percentage of delinquent municipal 2024 real estate taxes and delinquent 2024-2025 school real estate taxes collected by Portnoff by June 30, 2025, when the initial delinquency notice was mailed by April 1, 2025. For school district clients, this means that a large percentage of delinquent tax revenue was collected within the current fiscal year.

80.4%

This is the percentage of Portnoff's tax clients that experienced a reduction in the number of delinquent accounts after engaging Portnoff (as of the end of 2025). For each taxpayer who subsequently pays their tax bill on time, the taxing authority avoids incurring the county's 5% collection commission, resulting in significant ongoing cost savings.

Employee Spotlight

Doug Gerwick, Esquire

Doug Gerwick is a Client Management Attorney with Portnoff Law Associates. He joined the firm in 2021 and is responsible for client relationships in Allegheny, Beaver, Blair, Butler, Clarion, Cumberland, Dauphin, Indiana, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.

Doug earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Clarion University of Pennsylvania and received his Juris Doctor from the Duquesne University School of Law. While attending Clarion, he served for three years as a school board member for the Allegheny Clarion Valley School District. During his time at Duquesne, Doug was awarded the Paul J. Gitnik Academic Scholarship and also obtained certification in mediation and arbitration from Cornell University's Scheinman Institute on Conflict Resolution. Following his graduation from law school, Doug was appointed by Governor Robert Casey as a magisterial district judge in Venango County. He was subsequently elected to three terms and served the community in that role for more than 18 years.

Doug values his work at Portnoff Law Associates for its collegial, team-oriented environment, where employees collaborate to achieve their clients' goals. Drawing on his experience as a magisterial district judge and school board member, Doug understands the importance of timely collections for local governments. He recognizes that nonpayment by some taxpayers can result in unnecessary financial burdens on those who do meet their obligations.

Doug currently resides in northern Allegheny County with his wife and youngest son. His eldest son and daughter-in-law also live in Allegheny County. Prior to his recent move, Doug served on the Grove City Area School Board for six years, including four years as board president. Doug enjoys living in Western Pennsylvania and can often be found attending Pittsburgh Pirates and Penguins games. He and his wife also appreciate their proximity to the city for Broadway shows, performances by the Pittsburgh Symphony, and a variety of special events. Pittsburgh's growing reputation as a "foodie" destination—with its many excellent restaurants and unique shopping in the Strip District—is another favorite weekend attraction for Doug and his family. During the summer months, they enjoy spending time outdoors in local parks and occasionally renting boats on area lakes.

New Clients

PLA was hired by 14 new clients in 2025:

Allen Township
Central Cambria School District
Donora Borough
East Coventry Township
East Whiteland Township
Kennett Township
Lackawanna River Basin Sewer Authority
Lancaster Area Sewer Authority
Laurel School District
Mohawk Area School District
Parkesburg Borough
Point Township Sewer Authority
Shenandoah Borough
Yardley Borough

Hello Cambria County!

Portnoff Law Associates is pleased to welcome its first client in Cambria County. PLA has been retained by the Central Cambria School District to collect its delinquent real estate taxes. With this engagement, Portnoff Law Associates now collects delinquent accounts in 33 Pennsylvania counties.

Hiring Portnoff

Portnoff Law Associates represents more than 200 townships, boroughs, cities, school districts, and municipal authorities across 33 counties throughout Pennsylvania. PLA's proven collection process is flexible and can be tailored to meet your municipality's specific needs. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the benefits of our services.

If you are interested in learning more about how PLA can help maximize your delinquent collections at minimal cost to your municipality, please contact us at (484) 690-9332 or kburaks@portnoffonline.com.



2700 Horizon Drive, Suite 100
King of Prussia, PA 19406
www.portnoffonline.com
(484) 690-9332

**PORTNOFF LAW ASSOCIATES HELPS ITS MUNICIPAL CLIENTS IMPROVE THE COLLECTION OF
DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS WHILE PROVIDING PROPERTY OWNERS WITH
MORE PAYMENT OPTIONS AND FLEXIBILITY.**

With over 35 years of collection experience, Portnoff Law Associates represents more than 200 municipalities, school districts and municipal authorities across 33 Pennsylvania counties in the collection of the following types of delinquent accounts:

- Real Estate Taxes
- Sewer Fees
- Abatement of Nuisance Charges
- Trash Fees
- Water Bills
- Tapping Fees



Michelle Portnoff, President
Portnoff Law Associates

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