

# Press



# Release

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## For Immediate Release

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### **Former County Legislator Sam Colman Remembered**

#### **Colman Served As Chairman Of County Legislature, As Deputy Majority Leader Of State Assembly And As A Ramapo Town Justice**

**New City, NY (March 7, 2023)** – Former Rockland County Legislator Sam Colman has died at the age of 89.

“On behalf of the entire County Legislature, I offer my heartfelt condolences to Judge Colman’s family and friends,” Rockland County Legislature Chairman Jay Hood Jr. said. “He served others through his involvement in the County Legislature and the state Assembly before becoming a Ramapo town justice.”

A service for Judge Colman will take place at noon on Wednesday, March 8 at the Community Synagogue of Monsey, with burial to follow at the Monsey Community Synagogue Cemetery.

Judge Colman was working as an engineer in Rockland when he decided, albeit reluctantly, to run for the County Legislature. He said at the time that he did not think an observant Jew had a chance, but he was successful and was twice elected to the board, rising to become its chairman in 1978 and in 1979.

Judge Colman then ran for the New York State Assembly, where he served for 18 years and rose to become deputy majority leader before being named a Ramapo town justice, a post to which he was reelected twice. He retired from the job and from public service at the end of 2009.

Judge Colman and his wife, Shifra, who survives him, were also active in local causes, including sponsoring an annual lecture series at the Holocaust Museum & Study Center, now known as the Holocaust Museum & Center for Tolerance and Education and based at Rockland Community College. She is a survivor of the Bergen-Belsen camp.

As a 6-year-old, Judge Colman and his family fled their native Poland as the Nazis invaded in 1939, only to be captured by Russian soldiers and sent to a Siberian labor camp. At the time, Hitler and Stalin had agreed to divide the spoils of Poland between them. Judge Colman’s father died at the camp about a month later. Eventually the family made it to France, but Judge Colman’s mother and brother were not able to stay and relocated to Israel, leaving Judge Colman on his own in an orphanage for Jewish children.

At 21, he obtained a visa and moved to New York to continue his education. Judge Colman recounted his life story in a 2018 memoir, *Lifted from the Trash Heaps*. The Rockland County Legislature will adjourn its Wednesday meeting in his memory.