

Bar Briefs

January 2026

Louisiana State Bar Association

Vol. 41, No. 1

House of Delegates to Consider Four Resolutions at Jan. 24 Meeting

The Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) House of Delegates will consider four resolutions and other business items at its Midyear Meeting scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 24, at the Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel.

The House will consider four resolutions:

- ▶ Resolution from the Bar Governance Committee proposing to amend the Bylaws to increase the penalty for late payment of dues from \$50 to \$100.
- ▶ Resolution from the Young Lawyers Division Council to amend its Bylaws to conform to LSBA Bylaws, to provide clarification and to align with current structure and operations.
- ▶ Resolution from the Outreach Committee to sunset the committee as a standing committee of the LSBA and to amend the Bylaws accordingly.
- ▶ Resolution from the House of Delegates Task Force to reduce the size of the House of Delegates and to amend the governing documents accordingly.

HOD continued on page 3

LSBA Names Old Republic as New Endorsed Malpractice Insurance Provider

Enhanced coverage and new benefits for Louisiana lawyers begin January 2026.

After a year-long review process, the LSBA has selected Old Republic Lawyers Specialty Insurance (ORLSI) as the Association's endorsed provider of lawyer's malpractice insurance, partnering with Gilsbar to manage and administer the program. The change marks a major enhancement to the LSBA Insurance Program, which now offers more flexible pricing, additional premium credits and stronger risk management benefits designed to reward careful, claims-free practice.

The decision followed an extensive review by the LSBA Insurance Committee, chaired by Kevin C. O'Bryon, which solicited and evaluated proposals from multiple carriers. LSBA President Edward J. Walters, Jr. said the committee's work was instrumental in identifying the best fit for Louisiana lawyers. "The Committee has spent countless hours over the past year to solicit and review bids and meet with potential carriers on what they could offer LSBA members," Walters said. "I'm deeply grateful for their dedication and diligence on this important project and thrilled that we can now offer such an exceptional product to our members."

MALPRACTICE continued on page 2

Inside...

<i>MCLE Deadline, Judicial Interest and Mileage Rate Updates</i>	2
<i>LSBA Midyear Meeting and House of Delegates</i>	3
<i>LASC & U.S. 5th Circuit Rule Updates</i>	4
<i>LSBA Members Certified Elected</i>	6
<i>Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization</i>	6, 8, 9
<i>LSBA Leadership Vacancies</i>	11
<i>LSBA Member Benefits</i>	12
<i>Louisiana Bar Foundation</i>	13
<i>Committee Preference Form</i>	14-15
<i>Focus on Access to Justice</i>	16-17
<i>Focus on Diversity</i>	18-19
<i>Classifieds</i>	20
<i>Young Lawyer Conference</i>	21
<i>Upcoming LSBA CLE Calendar</i>	22

Deadline Jan. 31 for Reporting CLE Credits

The deadline is Jan. 31, 2026, for reporting continuing legal education credits for the 2025 calendar year. Preliminary transcripts were emailed to the membership in December from the email address compliance@lsbamembership.com.

All hours must have been earned by Dec. 31, 2025, and must be reported no later than Jan. 31, 2026, or late penalties will apply.

The annual requirement for attorneys is 12.5 hours, including 1 hour of ethics and 1 hour of professionalism credit.

More information on attorney requirements can be found online at: www.lsba.org/MCLE. Click "MCLE" on the header for information on the calendar, rules, forms and transcript information. ♦

IRS Sets 2026 Mileage Rate for Business Purposes

The Internal Revenue Service has set the 2026 mileage rate for business purposes at \$0.725 cents per mile, effective Jan. 1, 2026. ♦

MALPRACTICE continued from page 1

Under the new partnership, LSBA members will see several improvements to their professional liability coverage, including:

- ▶ Opportunities for a claims-free deductible
- ▶ Additional deductible discounts for eligible policyholders
- ▶ Premium credits for standalone cyber liability policies
- ▶ Increased risk management credits
- ▶ Revised pricing criteria that offer more flexible rates for firms of all sizes

Together, these enhancements aim to make malpractice coverage more affordable and comprehensive for Louisiana practitioners.

LSBA members currently insured through the program will receive notice of the updated coverage beginning with January 2026 policy effective dates. Attorneys interested in joining the program will also have access to quotes for the enhanced, LSBA-endorsed policy starting in January.

For the LSBA, the move underscores its continued commitment to supporting the business and professional needs of its members. "This partnership represents the best of what our Association can do, leveraging relationships and expertise to bring tangible value to our members," Walters said.

For more information about the LSBA's endorsed lawyers' malpractice insurance program, contact Gilsbar at (800)906-9654 or visit www.gilsbar.com/lsba-members-insurance-program. ♦

2026 Judicial Interest Rate is 7.5%

Pursuant to authority granted by La. R.S. 13:4202(B)(1), as amended by Acts 2001, No. 841, the Louisiana Commissioner of Financial Institutions has determined that the judicial rate of interest for calendar year 2026 will be seven and one half percent (7.5%) per annum.

For a Louisiana Judicial Interest Calculator created by LSBA member Charles D. Elliot or to review the Judicial Interest Rates History (from 1980 through 2025), go online: www.lsba.org/Members/JudicialInterestRate.aspx. ♦

Bar Briefs

LSBA President

Edward J. Walters, Jr.

Executive Director

Loretta Larsen, CAE

Communications Director

Kelly Wells Ponder

Communications Coordinator

Barbara Baldwin

Communications Coordinator / Publications & Creative Services

Josh Courtney

Advertising &

Communications Coordinator

Krystal L. Bellanger Rodriguez
(504)619-0131

"Bar Briefs" is published online, in January, March, May, July, September and November, by the Louisiana State Bar Association.

Announcements and news contributions are welcome and should be mailed, faxed or emailed by the first of the month before publication to publications@lsba.org.

**601 St. Charles Ave.
New Orleans, La. 70130-3404
(504)566-1600 • (800)421-LSBA
Fax: (504)566-0930
publications@lsba.org
Web site: **LSBA.org****

For editorial contributions to the Bar Briefs, the right is reserved to select material to be published. Publication of any article or statement is not to be deemed a statement or an endorsement of the views expressed therein by the LSBA or any member of the LSBA, nor shall publication of any advertisement be considered a statement or an endorsement of the product or service involved by the LSBA or any member of the LSBA. Views expressed are those of the authors and contributors only.

Bar Briefs Directory of Paid Advertisers

Bourgeois Bennett..... 3

Gilsbar, Inc. 8

JD Bank..... 7

Patterson Resolution Group 6

Smokeball 5

Online Registration Open for 2026 Midyear Meeting in Baton Rouge

Online registration is open for the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Midyear Meeting, scheduled for Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 22–24, 2026, at the Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel, 7000 Bluebonnet Blvd.

Registration for the Midyear Meeting is free. Pre-registration is required for the free CLEs scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 22.

During the three-day event, the Board of Governors, the House of Delegates and several committees and sections will conduct meetings. The Friday night reception will recognize the 50-, 60- and 70-year LSBA members.

Online registration is open at: www.lsba.org/midyearmeeting.

Meeting Highlights

All events are at the Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel, 7000 Bluebonnet Blvd., unless otherwise noted.

► **Free CLE seminars.** The LSBA is offering free CLE seminars on Thursday, Jan. 22. Registration for these seminars is now closed, participants who completed the free Midyear Meeting registration will be able to attend the free CLE seminars they registered for, door admissions will not be taken.

► **Reception.** The LSBA's 50-, 60- and 70-year members will be recognized at a reception on Friday, Jan. 23. To review the list of 50-, 60- and 70-year honorees, visit www.lsba.org/MidyearMeeting.

► **Free Photo Bar IDs.** The LSBA is offering free photo Bar IDs to members who have not had one issued previously. Attorneys must be in good standing to receive a photo Bar ID. Photo Bar IDs will be offered in the Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel foyer from 1–3 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22, and from 8:30–10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. To view photo Bar ID rules, go to: <http://files.lsba.org/documents/CLE/Diversity/PhotoBarIDFlyer.pdf>. ♦

HOD continued from page 1

The House will also elect delegates to committees.

► Election of one member to serve a three-year term on the House of Delegates Liaison Committee, to commence at the conclusion of the 2026 Annual Meeting and end at the conclusion of the 2029 Annual Meeting. This member shall be elected from House of Delegates members representing the 20th through 42nd Judicial Districts.

► Election, from the three Liaison Committee members, of a chair of the House of Delegates Liaison Committee for 2026–27 whose term will commence at the conclusion of the 2026 Annual Meeting. The chair of the Liaison Committee is a voting member of the Board of Governors.

To review the full resolution, go to: www.lsba.org/BarGovernance/HouseofDelegates.aspx. ♦

In a word,

Seasoned.

Financial Damage Analysis
Discovery Assistance
Business Valuations
Expert Testimony
Insurance Claims
Commercial Litigation
Class Action Accounting & Administration
Fraud and Embezzlement Investigations

OUR CLIENTS HAVE A HUNGER FOR RESULTS.

This is why so many of Louisiana's most prominent law firms choose to work with us. We offer an impressive menu of services and knowledge gained from many years of experience and serve up solutions when the unexpected arises. Give us a call and make a reservation – once you get a taste of exemplary service, you'll be hooked. And there will always be room at our table for you and your clients.

NEW ORLEANS	504.831.4949
NORTH SHORE	985.246.3022
HOUMA	985.868.0139
THIBODAUX	985.447.5243

Bourgeois Bennett
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS | CONSULTANTS
A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

Louisiana Supreme Court Announces Rule Updates and Enhanced Electronic Filing System

On Dec. 22, 2025, the Louisiana Supreme Court issued an order that repealed and re-enacted Rules I through XII and XLII, repealed Rule XIV, and adopted new Appendices G-1 and G-2, effective Jan. 1, 2026. The changes modernize court procedures and enhance electronic filing for attorneys practicing before the Louisiana Supreme Court.

The updated rules address filing requirements, including new formatting standards, deadlines, and confidentiality protections for sensitive information such as minors' identities and medical records. The revisions also affect civil and criminal case procedures governing records, briefs, motions, writ applications, oral arguments, and rehearings.

Amended Rule XLII governs electronic filing and allows attorneys to submit documents through the Court's secure electronic filing portal. Electronic filings are legally equivalent to paper filings and include requirements for registration, document format, filing fees, and error handling. Appendices G-1 and G-2 provide additional details regarding electronic filing fees, eligible document types, and terms of use. A sample cover sheet reflecting the updated filing requirements is available on the Louisiana Supreme Court's website at www.lasc.org.

Further, pursuant to amendments to La. Code Civ. Proc. art. 253(B) (2) and La. Code Crim. Proc. art. 14.1(B) by Acts 2025, No. 352, §§ 1–2, effective Jan. 1, 2026, filings by attorneys licensed in Louisiana and in good standing with the Louisiana Supreme Court must be filed either in person in paper form or electronically through the Court's electronic filing portal in accordance with the Supreme Court Rules. Filings by all other litigants may be submitted by U.S.P.S., commercial courier service or in person.

The full text of the revised rules and appendices is available on the Louisiana Supreme Court's website at www.lasc.org. ♦

U.S. 5th Circuit Adopts Amendments and Local Rule Change

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit has adopted amendments to its local rules, effective Dec. 1, 2025, to align with recent changes to the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure.

The full text of the amended rules and related guidance is available on the Fifth Circuit's website at www.ca5.uscourts.gov.

One amendment revises 5th Circuit Rule 25.2.1 to clarify electronic filing requirements. After implementation dates set by the clerk, all cases will be assigned to the court's electronic filing system. Counsel must file briefs, motions, and petitions for rehearing in searchable PDF text format, not scanned documents, unless paper filing is specifically directed. Any paper filings must be identical to the electronically filed versions. Non-incarcerated pro se litigants may request permission to participate in electronic filing in civil cases.

The court also amended Rule 39 regarding taxable costs. The revised rule updates reproduction cost rates for briefs and appendices, confirms that required binding costs are taxable, and clarifies that mailing and commercial delivery fees are not recoverable as taxable costs. The amendment also restates the timing requirements for filing bills of costs and objections.

Review the Rules and Internal Operating Procedures of the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals by visiting their website at www.ca5.uscourts.gov. ♦

Louisiana Act 352 Overhauls Court Filings Starting Jan. 1, 2026

Act 352 changes how Louisiana lawyers file court papers starting Jan. 1, 2026. After that date, attorney filings must be made either in person using paper or electronically through a clerk-approved e-filing system. For e-filings, a document is considered filed on the date and time shown on the system's acceptance confirmation. Approved e-filing systems include the parish courts' Louisiana Clerks' Remote Access Authority (LCRAA) portal and the independent filing systems of the five Courts of Appeal and the Louisiana Supreme Court.

The Act applies across civil and criminal matters. In courts that accept e-filings, the electronic record will serve as the official record, with separate treatment for trial/hearing exhibits in criminal cases. Public access to electronically filed records follows the same access rules that apply to paper filings.

A key compliance change is privacy: filers, not clerks, are responsible for ensuring that sensitive personal information is not included in public filings. Do not include

Social Security numbers, driver's license or state ID numbers, financial account numbers, full dates of birth, tax IDs, or any information protected from disclosure by law. Firms should add redaction checks to templates and workflows and train staff accordingly.

Only a narrow set of "original documents" may still be sent by U.S. mail or courier: original wills/testaments; original promissory notes or other authentic-form instruments; motions for default judgment that do not require a hearing (with supporting documentation); and any document the law requires to be an original. Everything else must be filed in person or e-filed.

Louisiana practitioners are urged to plan by choosing your default filing mode, verify which courts require filings in which manner, create a list of court or parish-specific platforms, update engagement letters and templates for redaction, and build a process to confirm e-filing acceptance near deadlines and train support staff on this change. Finally, as a general rule, attorneys should avoid

waiting until the last minute to file papers. Most courts do not provide IT assistance for filers outside of regular court hours.

The Louisiana Supreme Court issued an order on Dec. 22 amending the practice and procedure rules. Additional information, including the full text of the order and sample cover sheets are available on the Louisiana Supreme Court's website www.lasc.org.

For more information, visit the Louisiana Legislature's site to read the full text of Act 352 (<https://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1425958&utm>) or read the Louisiana 5th Circuit's notice regarding the Act ([www.fifthcircuit.org/PDF/ACT352\(2025\)FilingMethods.pdf?utm](http://www.fifthcircuit.org/PDF/ACT352(2025)FilingMethods.pdf?utm)) or find out more about the Louisiana Clerks Remote Access Authority on the Louisiana Clerks of Court Association website (www.laclerksofcourt.org/lcraa/lcraa-overview?utm) ♦



Claim Your **FREE** Trust Accounting & Billing Software

Now included in your **LSBA** membership, Smokeball Bill helps law firms manage trust accounting compliantly, bill easily, and get paid faster.

Billing Dashboard

Today's Billable **4.4 Hrs** **2,600**

Last 7 Days Billable **22.4 Hrs** **11,200**

[Go to Time/Fees](#)

Billable/Non-Billable
Last 7 Days Till Today

Day	Billable	Non-Billable	Total
Fr	5	4	9
Sa	3	6	9
Su	1	2	3
Mo	5	1	6
Tu	6	5	11
We	8	1	9
Th	9	2	11
Today	6	3	9

Overdue Invoices (24)

[View All](#)

32 Unreconciled Trust Transactions
Last Reconciled 45 Days Ago On 02/03/26

[View All](#)

Recent Matters

William Holden	Larry Smith Unpaid	Garrett	Smith Corp. Unpaid
----------------	---------------------------------	---------	---------------------------------

[View All](#)



Scan to get **FREE** Smokeball Bill

Or visit smokeball.com/louisianabill

Smokeball is the trusted provider of legal practice management software to small and mid-size firms.



Members Certified Elected for Leadership Positions

Several LSBA members have been certified elected for leadership positions on the Board of Governors, Nominating Committee and Young Lawyers Division Council, following the close of first-round voting on Nov. 17.

The following members have been Certified Elected for their leadership positions.

Board of Governors

First Board District

J. Christopher (Chris) Zainey, Jr.

Fifth Board District

Valerie Briggs Bargas

Nominating Committee

District 1A

Kristen D. Amond
Barry H. Grodsky

H. Minor Pipes III
J. Christopher (Chris) Zainey, Jr.

District 2A

Hon. Kelly E. Balfour
David Abboud Thomas

District 3C

Charles D. Elliott

Young Lawyers Division Council

First District

Margaret L. Manning

Fifth District

Manning P. Greene

For more information on the election and all election results, go to: www.lsba.org/goto/elections. ♦

2026 LBLS Annual Dues Notices: Payments Due by March 10th to Avoid Penalties

The 2026 Annual Dues Notices will be mailed in mid-January to all qualified Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization (LBLS) specialists. The completed original dues notice, together with proof of professional liability insurance and the appropriate fee, should be mailed or delivered to the LBLS office, 601 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans, LA 70130, no later than March 10, 2026, to avoid a penalty assessment.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Wegmann, Specialization Director, Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization, at (504)619-0128, or email maryann.wegmann@lsba.org. ♦

THE
Patterson
RESOLUTION GROUP



RESOLUTION is the **SOLUTION** MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION OF COMPLEX DISPUTES

Offering Dispute Resolution Services in complex cases to families and individuals across Louisiana and the Gulf South. Group members include retired judges and past presidents of the Louisiana State Bar Association.

Substantive experience among the group includes the following areas: Oil and Gas; Maritime; Commercial Real Estate; Construction; Products Liability; Professional Liability; Governmental; Healthcare; Banking; Employment and Insurance.

Experience in Business Disputes Includes:

- Breach of contract and contract-related issues
- Corporate and partnership dissolution
- Unfair business practices/unfair competition
- Banking, lending, and financial industries
- Entertainment and sports industries
- Real Estate
- Insurance
- Non-compete enforcement/defense
- Intellectual property

BATON ROUGE | LAFAYETTE | LAKE CHARLES | MONROE | NEW ORLEANS | NORTHSORE | SHREVEPORT

P: 866.367.8620 E: info@pattersonresolution.com W: pattersonresolution.com

JD **IOLTA** CHECKING ACCOUNT

GET TO KNOW THE JD IOLTA - INTEREST ON LAWYERS' TRUST ACCOUNTS - CHECKING ACCOUNT FROM JD BANK

In the course of regular business, Lawyers may need to hold funds for retainers, settlement proceeds, court-awarded damages, among other reasons. Using an IOLTA account – Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts – **ensures any interest earned is remitted to state bar associations or bar foundations**, which are donated to support legal aid programs and other public service initiatives.

 JD BANK LOUISIANA'S COMMUNITY BANK	JD IOLTA CHECKING ACCOUNT
MONTHLY FEE	NO
MINIMUM BALANCE	NO
EARNS INTEREST	Earns interest, paid to Louisiana Bar Foundation
WIRE FEES	No fee domestic and international wires

Account Qualifiers: Registered with the Louisiana Bar Foundation.
Maintain a JD Bank commercial checking account for your firm.

 **JD BANK**
LOUISIANA'S COMMUNITY BANK™



800-789-5159 | JDBANK.COM

Board Certified Specialists: Report Credit Hours to MCLE by Jan. 31 to Avoid Penalties

In accordance with the requirements of the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization, board certified attorneys in specific fields of law had to meet a minimum CLE requirement for the calendar year ending Dec. 31, 2025. All attendance information must be delivered to the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Committee (MCLE) no later than Jan. 31, 2026. Failure to earn and/or timely report specialization CLE hours will result in a penalty assessment. For the 2025 compliance period, the Louisiana Supreme Court set the limitation for "computer-based credit" at 4.0 hours annually. Preliminary specialization transcripts were sent in late November to all specialists who were delinquent in their specialization CLE hours for 2025. For more information, contact Specialization Director Mary Ann Wegmann at (504)619-0128 or email maryann.wegmann@lsba.org. ♦

LSBA Announces 2026 Seven Points CLE Series

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) is set to launch its annual Seven Points series of CLE seminars, traveling across Louisiana to provide free, high-quality continuing legal education to attorneys throughout the state. This popular program brings seasoned speakers directly to seven cities, delivering timely updates and practical guidance on law practice management, legal technology, ethics, and professionalism.

Designed to make CLE more accessible for busy practitioners, the Seven Points series allows attorneys to learn from experienced presenters without the need for extensive travel or registration costs. Each stop on the tour features programming focused on the latest tools, trends, and challenges in modern law practice, ensuring Louisiana lawyers stay informed and well-equipped to serve their clients.

With its emphasis on practical

knowledge, professional responsibility, and emerging technologies, the Seven Points series continues to be one of the LSBA's most valuable resources for statewide member engagement. Attorneys are encouraged to attend the location most convenient to them and take advantage of this no-cost opportunity to earn CLE credit while enhancing their practice.

For registration information and updates on the Seven Points CLE programming, visit www.lsba.org/cle/. ♦

Help Keep LSBA Records Current

To keep our records current, the LSBA asks members (and families) to notify us when a colleague has passed away. If you learn of a deceased member who may still appear as eligible, please email the obituary to the Membership Department at processing@lsba.org



NEW MALPRACTICE POLICY WITH SPECIAL BUNDLED RATES AVAILABLE.

Learn more at gilsbar.com/lsba-members-insurance-program

GILSBAR
GILSBAR

Endorsed by
 Louisiana State Bar Association
Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.

Louisiana Supreme Court Amends Plan of Legal Specialization

The Louisiana Supreme Court has issued an order amending Sections 8.4, 9.2, and 10 of the Louisiana State Bar Association Plan of Legal Specialization.

The amendments recognize qualifying judicial and academic service as satisfying full-time practice requirements and establish an automatic inactive designation for board-certified specialists who take judicial office and are prohibited from practicing law. Specialists granted inactive status during judicial service are exempt from maintenance and recertification requirements and may apply for reinstatement to active status within one year of leaving office.

The rule changes became effective upon signing in December 2025. To read the full order, visit the Louisiana Supreme Court's website at www.lasc.org. ♦

LA Board of Legal Specialization Will Accept Applications for Board Certification Through Feb. 28, 2026

The LBLS is accepting applications for board certification in seven (7) areas — appellate practice, employment law, estate planning and administration, family law, health law, labor law, and tax law from Nov. 1, 2025 through Feb. 28, 2026. The LBLS is accepting applications for business bankruptcy law and consumer bankruptcy law certification from Jan. 1, 2026 through Sept. 30, 2026.

In accordance with the Plan of Legal Specialization, a Louisiana State Bar Association member in good standing who has been engaged in the practice of law on a full-time basis for a minimum of five (5) years may apply for certification. Further requirements are that each year a minimum percentage of the attorney's practice must be devoted to the area of certification sought, passing a written examination to demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skills and proficiency in the area for which certification is sought and five (5) favorable references.

Peer review shall be used to determine that an applicant has achieved recognition as having a level of competence indicating proficient performance handling the usual matters in the specialty field. Please refer to the LBLS standards for the applicable specialty for a more detailed description of the requirements for application.

In addition to the above, applicants must meet a minimum CLE requirement for the year in which application is made and the examination is administered:

- ▶ Appellate Practice—15 hours of appellate practice
- ▶ Employment Law—15 hours of employment law
- ▶ Estate Planning and Administration—18 hours of estate planning and administration
- ▶ Family Law—15 hours of family law
- ▶ Health Law—15 hours of health law
- ▶ Labor Law—15 hours of labor law
- ▶ Tax Law—18 hours of tax law
- ▶ Bankruptcy Law—CLE is regulated by the American Board of Certification, the testing agency.

Approved specialization CLE courses can be viewed on the LBLS Approved Course Calendar at [Approved Course Calendar](#).

With regard to applications for business bankruptcy law and consumer bankruptcy law certification, although the written test(s) is administered by the American Board of Certification, attorneys should apply for approval of the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization simultaneously with the testing agency in order to avoid delay of board certification by the LBLS. Information concerning the American Board of Certification will be provided with the application form(s).

Anyone interested in applying for certification should contact LBLS Specialization Director, Mary Ann Wegmann, email maryann.wegmann@lsba.org, or call (504)619-0128, for an application packet. For more information, please go to the LBLS website, <https://www.lsba.org/Specialization>. ♦



- ▶ **Bossier City**
Tuesday, March 3, 2026
Hilton Garden Inn – Bossier City
- ▶ **West Monroe**
Wednesday, March 4, 2026
West Monroe Convention Center
- ▶ **Houma**
Tuesday, March 10, 2026
Marriott Courtyard Houma
- ▶ **Lafayette**
Wednesday, March 11, 2026
River Oaks
- ▶ **Baton Rouge**
Wednesday, May 6, 2026
Lod Cook LSU Alumni Center
- ▶ **Covington**
Friday, May 8, 2026
The Greenwood
- ▶ **New Orleans**
Monday, May 11, 2026
Loyola University, Monroe Hall

For more information or to register, visit www.lsba.org/CLE

LSBA Announces 2026 Solo, Small Firm & TECH Conference, Set for April 10

The Louisiana State Bar Association will host its annual Solo, Small Firm & TECH Conference on Friday, April 10, 2026, bringing together attorneys from across the state for a full day of technology insights, substantive law updates, and practical guidance for law practice management.

This popular conference will once again feature two simultaneous CLE tracks — a TECH Track and a Substantive Law Track — allowing attendees to customize their experience based on their practice needs. Whether participants are looking for a technology tune-up, time-saving office management solutions, or the latest developments in civil and criminal law, the program offers a broad mix of sessions for every type of practitioner.

Need a tech tune-up? Looking for the latest legislative updates? Hoping to streamline your practice or strengthen client communication? The conference offers all of this and more, providing a one-stop opportunity to gain practical skills, receive guidance from notable speakers, and earn a significant portion of CLE credit

early in the year.

Attendees may earn up to 6.5 hours of CLE credit at one of the most cost-effective programs offered by the LSBA. Early Bird pricing (\$175) opens February 1, 2026 and ends March 9, 2026, and thereafter, \$225 until April 6, 2026, and \$275 at the door.

The content is designed for all Louisiana practitioners — solo and small firm attorneys, new lawyers, seasoned professionals, and even those working within larger firms. The technology and substantive law sessions offer broad value regardless of practice size or focus.

In addition to CLE programming, the conference will feature legal technology exhibitors offering hands-on product demonstrations and practical advice to help attorneys strengthen efficiency, communication, and client service in their practices. As always, attendees can expect unmatched collegiality and networking opportunities with fellow lawyers from across the state.

For full details and registration information, visit www.lsba.org/goto/SoloSFTConference.

LSBA Section Membership: Renew or Sign Up by April 30

The 2026-27 application for membership in the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) sections will be mailed in mid-February. Members are encouraged to sign up for the sections by returning the application and payment by April 30, to: Section Membership, Louisiana State Bar Association, 601 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans, LA 70130-3404.

The Section application and brochure also will be available online by mid-February at: www.lsba.org/BarGovernance/Sections.aspx. Members needing an additional copy should follow the link to download and print the application or brochure. Note: Members should select the correct application based on the fiscal year in which they would like to join.

For more information, contact the Membership Department, (504)566-1600, (800)421-5722, or email processing@lsba.org. ♦

Start the New Year by Participating in LSBA Mentoring Programs

Start the New Year off right by taking advantage of the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) mentoring programs.

The LSBA Committee on the Profession's "Transition Into Practice" (TIP) mentor program provides new lawyers a great opportunity to gain practical experience and networking from seasoned lawyers. The program also offers experienced Bar members a chance to give back and to guide new lawyers in the right direction. Mentors and mentees will meet four times over the course of the program to discuss various well-defined and organized topics. These meetings can take place via Zoom or in-person. There is a handbook available that contains all the information mentors and mentees would need to cover the topics required by the program. Mentors are not required to do any independent

preparation other than reviewing the handbook; most of the information shared will come from personal experience. Topics such as civility, professionalism, work/life balance, careers and career objectives, law school debt, conflicts, ethics issues, dealing with the "difficult" client, time records, billing, fees and trust accounts are included. Register to be a mentor or mentee on the website: www.lsba.org/Mentoring/MenteeVolunteerV2.aspx or www.lsba.org/Mentoring/TIPMentorApplicationV2.aspx

The SPOT Mentoring Program is an on-demand mentoring opportunity for attorneys with two to seven years in practice. It gives young attorneys the chance to seek guidance, advice or information from a database of more than 700 mentors from a wide range of career fields.

There is no need to sign up. Lawyers are eligible based on years of admission.

The program can be accessed through members' LSBA accounts and questions can be posted in the secure system to the mentors. Examples of spot mentoring questions that can be posted might include career development, legal practice skills, professionalism, practice development, client service/management and family/work integration. This innovative program is a great resource and aid. Many young attorneys who have utilized the program have found it to be very beneficial and have always gotten a wealth of valuable advice from the database of mentors. <https://www.lsba.org/Mentoring/SpotMentoring.aspx>

All of these resources, and much more, can be found on the Mentoring Homepage.

If you have any questions, please contact Lucia Anderson at TIP@lsba.org or 504-619-0110. ♦

Interested in an Appointed LSBA HOD Leadership Position?

Several Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) House of Delegates seats received no qualifiers by the Oct. 13, 2025 qualifying deadline. These positions will be filled by presidential appointment. Members interested in being considered for appointment to these positions should email LSBA Governance Coordinator Jen France at jen.france@lsba.org. Available positions are listed below.

LSBA House of Delegates (June 2026–June 2028 term)

- First Judicial District: 7 appointments pending.
- Second Judicial District: 3 appointments pending.
- Third Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Fourth Judicial District: 5 appointments pending.
- Fifth Judicial District: 2 appointments pending.
- Sixth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Seventh Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Eighth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Tenth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Twelfth Judicial District: 2 appointments pending.
- Thirteenth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Fourteenth Judicial District: 7 appointments pending.
- Fifteenth Judicial District: 7 appointments pending.
- Sixteenth Judicial District: 5 appointments pending.

- Seventeenth Judicial District: 2 appointments pending.
- Eighteenth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Nineteenth Judicial District: 10 appointments pending.

The following vacancies in the LSBA House of Delegates are also open for appointments.

LSBA House of Delegates (June 2025–June 2027 term)

- Twenty-First Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Twenty-Third Judicial District: 2 appointments pending.
- Twenty-Fifth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Twenty-Sixth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Twenty-Seventh Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Twenty-Eighth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Thirtieth Judicial District: 3 appointments pending.
- Thirty-First Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Thirty-Second Judicial District: 4 appointments pending.
- Thirty-Third Judicial District: 2 appointments pending.
- Thirty-Sixth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Thirty-Seventh Judicial District: 1 appointment pending.
- Thirty-Ninth Judicial District: 1 appointment pending. ♦



TECHSHOW2026

March 25-28, 2026
Hyatt Regency McCormick Place
Chicago, Illinois

Now, more than ever, lawyers and legal professionals must seek out the newest advances in technology. TECHSHOW 2026 is your gateway to harnessing AI's true potential, learning all things related to the future of legal tech, and enhancing access to justice. Join us for a week filled with CLE sessions, networking events, keynotes, and so much more.

ABA AMERICANBARASSOCIATION
Law Practice Division



Louisiana®
State Bar
Association

Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.

Register with discount code **EP2603**
to receive \$100 off standard registration



LSBA Member Discounts – Technology Services

ABA Shop

- ◆ www.abanet.org
- ◆ (800) 285-2221

The American Bar Association (ABA) offers LSBA members a 20% discount off the regular non-member list price of publications in the ABA Shop. Go to www.abanet.org, find the publication title, and at checkout enter code PAB5ELAB for the LSBA discount.

Clio

- ◆ www.clio.com/partnerships/bar-associations/labar/
- ◆ (888)858-2546

Clio is the most widely used, cloud-based practice management system in the world. Every day, tens of thousands of lawyers use Clio to schedule meetings, organize cases, track time, and invoice their clients. LSBA members receive a 10% lifetime discount on Clio.

Dell Computers

- ◆ www.dell.com/mpp
- ◆ (800)999-3355

Dell provides LSBA members: products and services at a discount; dedicated online and telephone support; and online services to help members establish an Internet presence. Call 1-877-568-3355 to place your order. Your sales rep applies your LSBA member discount.

MyCase

- ◆ www.mycase.com/associations/louisiana-bar-association
- ◆ (800)571-8062

MyCase is an easy-to-use web-based practice management software that helps you manage cases, track time, billing and communicate with your clients. LSBA Members receive a 10% lifetime discount on the MyCase software.

PracticePanther

- ◆ www.practicepanther.com/louisianabar
- ◆ (800)856-8729

PracticePanther is user-friendly Law Practice Management Software - never miss deadlines, get paid faster with one- click billing, & track billable time & expenses. Mobile app available. Integrates with Gmail, Outlook, Quickbooks, LawPay and much more.

Ruby

- ◆ www.ruby.com/campaign/lsla
- ◆ (866)611-7829

Ruby's live virtual receptionist and chat services deliver next- level client experiences — from US-based offices, receptionists and highly-trained live chat specialists convert callers and website visitors into loyal clients. LSBA members receive a lifetime 8% discount off the monthly plan.

TechnoLawyer

- ◆ www.technolawyer.com/affinity/lsla.asp

technolawyer is an online resource with more than 13,000 members in which legal professionals can share their knowledge and experiences with their peers and access volumes of archived articles and information to assist with technology in the practice of law. technolawyer's entire archive is available to LSBA members for free.

ezBriefs powered by Benchly

- ◆ www.ezbriefs.com
- ◆ (281) 293-9900

Benchly knows the litigation needs of Louisiana attorneys. Through a comprehensive and exclusive offering to members of the Louisiana State Bar Association, Benchly offers a faster and simpler review of complex legal documents for Louisianian legal teams. Louisiana State Bar Association members are eligible for a 5% savings on a firm-wide license to ezBriefs using promo code LOUISIANABAR.

Cosmolex

- ◆ www.cosmolex.com/partners/strategic/louisiana-state-bar-members
- ◆ (866) 878-6798

CosmoLex combines practice management, billing and accounting, all in one login. Billing section captures all time and expenses as soon as they occur. The accounting menu handles all the intricacies of business and IOLTA trust accounting. LSBA members receive a 10% lifetime discount.

LawPay

- ◆ lawpay.com/member-programs/louisiana-state-bar/

- ◆ (866)730-4140

The LawPay solution is designed to correctly separate earned and unearned fees to avoid commingling funds when accepting credit card payments. More importantly, LawPay contractually protects your client funds by restricting the ability of any third- party from debiting monies from a Trust or IOLTA account.

Omnizant

- ◆ www.omnizant.com/lsla

Since 2006, Omnizant has helped over 2,200 law firms create dynamic websites and effective lead-generation campaigns. Whether you're a solo practitioner looking to develop a professional website on a budget or a partner in a large practice wanting to double down on client generation with SEO, Omnizant has the experience and expertise to get you results.

Rocket Matter

- ◆ www.rocketmatter.com/partnerships/bar-association/louisiana-bar
- ◆ (866)710-1845

Rocket Matter helps law firms offer better client service and increase revenues by more than 20%. The first cloud-based legal practice management software on the market, it landed its first client in 2007. LSBA members receive a 15% lifetime discount on a Rocket Matter monthly subscription.

Smith.ai

- ◆ <https://smith.ai/partner/louisiana-state-bar-association>

Smith.ai is a virtual receptionist service for live calls and web chat, primarily serving solo and small-firm attorneys. Smith.ai also provides AI software that filters spam, routes calls, and facilitates integrations and workflows with email, CRM, billing, and calendaring programs.

TimeSolv

- ◆ www.timesolv.com/lp/louisiana-state-bar

TimeSolv has become the preferred web-based billing, timekeeping, and payments solution for tens of thousands of attorneys for almost 25 years and is the #1 ranked software for usability according to G2. Try TimeSolv for free for 30 days with unlimited one-on-one training and support. LSBA members can receive a \$100 credit per user for up to 10 users.

Tracers

- ◆ www.tracers.com/partnerships/lsla

Tracers, the #1 cloud-based investigative research software, helps you find key pieces of information available in public and private records. Tracers provides access to an online database of over 43 billion records with a variety of search tools, customizable solutions, and affordable pricing. LSBA members receive a 10% lifetime discount.

LBF Sets Application Deadlines for 2026–27 Programs

The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) has set application deadlines for the 2026–27 Loan Repayment Assistance Program and the Kids' Chance Scholarship Program.

Applications for 2026–27 Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) funding will be available online through Feb. 27. LRAP provides forgivable loans of up to \$5,000 per year to attorneys working in a public interest position. For more information on LRAP, email Renee LeBoeuf at renee@raisingthebar.org or go online:

raisingthebar.org/loan-repayment-assistance-program/.

Applications for the 2026–27 academic year for the LBF Kids' Chance Scholarship Program will be accepted online through Feb. 27. Kids' Chance Scholarships are for dependents of Louisiana workers who have been killed or permanently and totally disabled in an accident compensable under a state or federal Workers' Compensation Act or law. For more information on Kids' Chance, email Renee LeBoeuf at renee@raisingthebar.org or go online: raisingthebar.org/kids-chance-scholarship-program/. ♦

LBF Seeking Nominations for 2026 Boisfontaine Award

The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) is seeking nominations for the 2026 Curtis R. Boisfontaine Trial Advocacy Award. Nominations must be received in the LBF office by Friday, Feb. 6, 2026. The award will be presented at the Louisiana State Bar Association's Annual Meeting in Destin, Fla. The recipient will receive a plaque and \$1,000 will be donated in the recipient's name to a non-profit, law-related program or association of the recipient's choice that provides services in Louisiana.

Nominations should include the nominee's name, contact information, a brief written statement on the background of the nominee, and reasons why the nominee is proposed as the award recipient. Nominations should be forwarded to

Dennette Young at the Louisiana Bar Foundation, Ste. 1777, 601 Poydras St., New Orleans, LA 70130, or email dennette@raisingthebar.org by the deadline.

This trial advocacy award was established through an endowment to the Louisiana Bar Foundation in memory of Curtis R. Boisfontaine, who served as president of the Louisiana State Bar Association and the Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel. Donations from Sessions, Fishman, Nathan & Israel, LLP, the Boisfontaine Family and friends established the fund.

The award is given to a Louisiana attorney who exhibits longstanding devotion to and excellence in trial practice and upholds the standards of ethics and consideration for the court, litigants and all counsel. ♦

Claim Your Free Trust Accounting & Billing Software

As a Louisiana State Bar Association member, you get access to Smokeball Bill completely free. This powerful trust accounting and billing software is valued at \$588 per user/per year but is accessible at no cost to all LSBA members.

[Claim Your Free Software Now](#)

Trust accounting and billing are essential—but they don't have to be complicated. Smokeball Bill helps law firms with:

- Easy trust account management
- Flexible invoicing options
- Faster payments

Sign up today at www.smokeball.com/louisianabill ♦

Save the Date: Friday, April 17, 2026 LBF 40th Anniversary Gala

The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) will hold its 40th Anniversary Gala on Friday, April 17, 2026, at the Four Seasons Hotel in New Orleans. During the event, the 2025 Distinguished Honorees and the recipient of the Calogero Justice Award will be recognized.

The 2025 honorees are Hon. Dana M. Douglas, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (Distinguished Jurist); Michael A. Patterson, Long Law Firm (Distinguished Attorney); and Monica Hof Wallace, Loyola University College of Law (Distinguished Professor). Hon. Freddie Pitcher Jr. (Ret.) will receive the 2025 Calogero Justice Award.

The Gala, the largest fundraiser hosted by the LBF, will begin with a Patron Party at 6:30 p.m., followed by the formal program. The event will commemorate the Foundation's 40th anniversary.

Additional information is available at raisingthebar.org or by contacting the Louisiana Bar Foundation at (504) 561-1046 or gala@raisingthebar.org. ♦



LSBA Encourages Notification About Deceased Members

As a means to keep the membership database accurate and up-to-date, the Louisiana State Bar Association is encouraging members to notify staff about deceased members (either from colleagues or the families of the deceased members). Members who become aware of a deceased colleague who may still be listed in the membership rolls as eligible are encouraged to email their colleague's obit to the LSBA Membership Department at processing@lsba.org.

Committee Preferences: Get Involved in Your Bar!

Committee assignment requests are now being accepted for the 2026-27 Bar year. Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) President-Elect Curtis R. Joseph, Jr. will make all committee appointments. Widespread participation is encouraged in all Bar programs and activities. Appointments to committees are not guaranteed, but every effort will be made to accommodate members' interests. When making selections, members should consider the time commitment associated with committee assignments and their availability to participate. Also, members are asked to list experience relevant to service on the chosen committees. The deadline for committee assignment requests is Friday, April 10. The current committees are listed below.

Access to Justice Committee

The committee works to ensure that every Louisiana citizen has access to competent civil legal representation by promoting and supporting a broad-based and effective justice community through collaboration between the Louisiana State Bar Association, the Louisiana Bar Foundation, Louisiana law schools, private practitioners, local bar associations, pro bono programs and legal aid providers.

Bar Governance Committee

The committee ensures effective and equitable governance of the association by conducting an ongoing evaluation of relevant procedures and making recommendations to the House of Delegates regarding warranted amendments to the association's Articles of Incorporation and/or Bylaws.

Children's Law Committee

The committee provides a forum for attorneys and judges working with children to promote improvements and changes in the legal system to benefit children, parents and the professionals who serve these families.

Client Assistance Fund Committee

The committee protects the public and maintains the integrity of the legal profession by reimbursing, to the extent deemed appropriate, losses caused by the dishonest conduct of any licensed Louisiana lawyer practicing in the state.

Continuing Legal Education Program Committee

The committee fulfills the Louisiana Supreme Court mandate of making quality and diverse continuing legal education

opportunities available at an affordable price to LSBA members.

Criminal Justice Committee

The committee recognizes and addresses issues affecting the Louisiana criminal justice system, provides a forum for discussion, and works with stakeholders to develop programs and solutions for fair and effective administration of justice.

Diversity Committee

The committee assesses the level of racial, ethnic, national origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability diversity within all components of the legal profession in Louisiana, identifies barriers to the attainment of full and meaningful representation and participation in the legal profession by persons of diverse backgrounds, and proposes programs and methods to effectively remove barriers and achieve greater diversity.

Ethics Advisory Service Committee

The committee encourages ethical lawyer conduct by supporting the LSBA's Ethics Counsel in his/her provision of informal, non-binding ethics opinions to members of the Bar.

Insurance Committee

The committee ensures the long-term stability of all Bar-endorsed insurance plans, balancing the most favorable rates, coverage and service for Louisiana lawyers by overseeing the relationship between the Louisiana State Bar Association, its carrier and its third-party administrator. The committee is charged with management of the professional liability, life, disability and other group plans offered to members

of the Louisiana State Bar Association. The committee is comprised of a chair and up to 18 additional members.

Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee

The committee provides members of the bench, Bar and general public with a greater understanding of the legal needs and rights of persons with disabilities, and helps persons with disabilities meet their legal needs and understand their rights and resources.

Medical/Legal Interprofessional Committee

The committee works with the joint committee of the Louisiana State Medical Society to promote collegiality between members of the legal and medical professions by receiving and making recommendations on complaints relative to physician/lawyer relationships and/or problems.

Practice Assistance and Improvement Committee

The committee serves the Bar and the public in furtherance of the association's goals of prevention and correction of lawyer misconduct and assistance to victims of lawyer misconduct by evaluating, developing and providing effective alternatives to discipline programs for minor offenses, educational and practice assistance programs, and programs to resolve minor complaints and lawyer/client disputes.

continued on next page

Committee on the Profession

The committee encourages lawyers to exercise the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professionalism in their conduct; examines systemic issues in the legal system arising out of the lawyer's relationship and duties to his/her clients, other lawyers, the courts, the judicial system and the public good; provides the impetus and means to positively impact those relationships and duties; improves access to the legal system; and improves the quality of life and work/life balance for lawyers.

Rules of Professional Conduct Committee

The committee monitors and evaluates developments in legal ethics and, when appropriate, recommends changes to the Louisiana Rules of Professional Conduct; acts as liaison to the Louisiana Supreme Court on matters concerning the Rules of Professional Conduct; reviews issues of legal ethics and makes recommendations to the LSBA House of Delegates regarding modifications to the existing ethical rules; oversees the work of the Ethics Advisory Service and its Advertising Committee, Publications Subcommittee and other subcommittees; and promotes the highest professional standards of ethics in the practice of law.

Transitioning Lawyers Committee

The committee safeguards the public by educating members of the legal profession about age-related disabilities. The committee also helps attorneys suffering from impairments that prevent them from practicing law competently to transition out of the practice of law with dignity.

Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee

The committee protects the public from incompetent or fraudulent activities by those who are unauthorized to practice law or who are otherwise misleading those in need of legal services.

Louisiana State Bar Association 2026-27 Committee Preference Form

Indicate below your committee preference(s). If you are interested in more than one committee, list in 1-2-3 preference order. On this form or on a separate sheet, list experience relevant to service on your chosen committee(s).

Print or Type

- Access to Justice
- Bar Governance
- Children's Law
- Client Assistance Fund
- Continuing Legal Education Program
- Criminal Justice
- Diversity
- Ethics Advisory Service
- Insurance
- Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities
- Medical/Legal Interprofessional
- Practice Assistance and Improvement
- Committee on the Profession
- Rules of Professional Conduct
- Transitioning Lawyers
- Unauthorized Practice of Law

Response Deadline: April 10, 2026

Mail, email or fax your completed form to:

**Christine A. Richard, Program Coordinator/Marketing & Sections
Louisiana State Bar Association
601 St. Charles Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70130-3404
Fax (504)566-0930
Email: crichard@lsba.org**

LSBA Bar Roll Number _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email Address _____

List (on separate sheet) experience relevant to service on the chosen committee(s).

2026 Pro Bono Publico and Children's Law Awards Nominations

The Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Access to Justice (ATJ) Department is accepting nominations for the 2026 Pro Bono Publico and Children's Law Awards. These awards honor outstanding contributions to pro bono legal work across multiple categories. Recipients will be honored at the Louisiana Supreme Court in May 2026.

Award Categories

Career Public Interest Award

This award recognizes an individual who has devoted at least 10 years to public interest legal work, demonstrating excellence, leadership, and service to the poor and disenfranchised.

Century Club Award

This award recognizes Louisiana attorneys who provided over 100 hours of verified pro bono service in the previous calendar year (Jan. 1, 2025–Dec. 31, 2025) through an established pro bono organization.

Children's Law Award

This award honors an attorney or organization for outstanding contributions to children's law.

David A. Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award

The most prestigious LSBA Pro Bono Award honors a Louisiana attorney who has demonstrated a lifetime commitment to pro bono services.

Friend of Pro Bono Award

This award honors individuals (attorneys or non-attorneys), law firms, or organizations that have significantly enhanced pro bono services in Louisiana. Direct provision of legal services is not considered.

Law Student Pro Bono Award

This award recognizes a law student from each ABA-accredited Louisiana law school who has demonstrated exceptional dedication to providing legal services to the poor.

Pro Bono Publico Award

This award recognizes attorneys or law firms for providing exceptional pro bono services that exceed the aspirational goal of 50 hours of service per year, as outlined in Rule 6.1 of Louisiana's Rules of Professional Conduct.

Submission Guidelines

For information about eligibility for the Pro Bono Publico and Children's Awards and to submit a nomination: www.lsba.org/Nominations/NominationAnnouncements.aspx. Nominations must be submitted online by Friday, Feb. 20, 2026.

The nomination forms require a detailed explanation of how the nominee meets the award criteria. Supporting materials, such as résumés, letters and clippings are encouraged, as selections are based on the nomination packet. Multiple nominations are permitted. Incomplete or noncompliant nominations will not be considered.

For assistance, contact ATJ Coordinator Bridget Berins at Bridget.Berins@lsba.org. ♦

6th Annual Disability Law Training Series

The Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities and Accessibility Committees jointly hosted the 6th Annual Disability Law Training Series.

The hybrid training was held on Dec. 5, 2025, in New Orleans and was designed to ensure that all attorneys, even those

who may only occasionally encounter disability-related issues, are well-equipped to serve the public and fulfill the duties of the profession.

Judge John A. Keller of the 22nd Judicial District Court presented on "Mental Health and Court Involvement."

Other session topics were "Beyond the Individual Trust: Leveraging Pooled Trusts to Access and Preserve Benefits in Elder and Disability Estate Planning," presented by Jason Asbill of Louisiana Guardianship Services, Inc., and "Court Accessibility and Attorney's Responsibility," which was presented by Melanie Bray of Disability Rights Louisiana and Caitlin Morgenstern of the Louisiana Supreme Court.

This year's training was also interpreted in its entirety by New Orleans Sign Language Services.

The Disability Law Training Series



Judge John A. Keller of the 22nd Judicial District Court presented on "Mental Health and Court Involvement."



Jason Asbill of Louisiana Guardianship Services, Inc. presented "Beyond the Individual Trust: Leveraging Pooled Trusts to Access and Preserve Benefits in Elder and Disability Estate Planning."

was well attended and brought together private and public interest practitioners from across the state. ♦

ATJ Department's 2025 Top Accomplishments

As we look back on 2025, the Access to Justice Department extends its sincere gratitude to the supporters and partners who worked alongside us to advance access to justice for all. This past year marked the Access to Justice Commission's 10th anniversary, celebrating a decade of coordinated efforts that have expanded access to legal services. While the year brought both challenges and opportunities, through strong collaboration we made meaningful progress. Below are just a few of our shared accomplishments.

1 Record-Setting Volunteerism During National Celebrate Pro Bono Week

Louisiana marked a record-setting Celebrate Pro Bono Week in 2025 as our Lawyers in Libraries initiative, now in its 12th year, hosted 206 events with 192 volunteer attorneys contributing more than 500 hours of service, reaching every parish through in-person and virtual consultations. In addition, we led and participated in a range of statewide and multistate events, including a Free Legal Answers clinic with Entergy and Baker Donelson, law school presentations, a pro bono CLE for new admittees, and wills clinic in partnership with Louisiana Appleseed.

2 Brought Pro Bono Leaders Together to Develop Statewide Priorities in a Summit Co-Hosted with the LBF

The event brought together pro bono leaders, advocates, and program professionals from across the state and the ideas generated and strategic planning developed will be the focus of much of the ATJ's Pro Bono Subcommittee's work this year.

3 Strengthened Louisiana's Disaster Response Through Coordinated Training

In 2025, the Access to Justice community strengthened Louisiana's disaster response by co-hosting two major events with Southeast Louisiana Legal Services: a 20th-anniversary Hurricane Katrina legal symposium and the third Disaster Law Collaboration Summit. Together, these gatherings brought legal experts, policymakers, and community leaders together to address disaster preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and the long-term legal impacts of past disasters.

4 Hosted Criminal Justice Summits for practitioners, judges, and stakeholders in Baton Rouge and Natchitoches

The LSBA's Criminal Justice Committee expanded its statewide engagement by hosting two regional summits that brought together prosecutors, defenders, judges, law enforcement, and policy advocates to address emerging issues in Louisiana's evolving criminal legal landscape. By holding events in both South and Central Louisiana, the Committee strengthened accessibility and collaboration to ensure that these conversations reached practitioners across the state.

5 Conducted Trainings for Law Students on Their Role in Advancing Access to Justice

ATJ delivered trainings at Southern University Law Center, Loyola University College of Law, and LSU's Paul M. Hebert Law Center to educate students on how they can help bridge the justice gap as future attorneys. The sessions emphasized the growing need for affordable legal services and highlighted pathways for meaningful involvement, including joining the Modest Means Directory and offering limited scope representation.

6 Celebrated 22 years of statewide public-interest training for civil legal aid attorneys through the Louisiana Justice Community Conference and its Child In Need of Care (CINC) Pre-Conference

This multi-day event brought together 150 civil legal aid attorneys from across the state to strengthen access to justice for underserved communities. This year's theme, "Tools for Effective Advocacy in a Changing Legal Landscape," guided 15 sessions, including topics related to CINC, emerging legal developments, organizational strategies, and practical advocacy skills among others.

7 Hosted 6th Annual Disability Law Training Series

For the first time, the Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities and Accessibility Committees jointly hosted the 6th Annual Disability Law Training Series, a hybrid event designed to expand the legal profession's understanding of issues affecting persons with disabilities and those with language access needs. This year's sessions covered topics such as the intersection of mental health and the judicial system,

pooled special trusts, and attorneys' obligations to secure interpreters.

8 Expanded Rural Access to Justice Through Justice on the Geaux

Justice on the Geaux events led by Acadiana Legal Service Corp. held in DeRidder, Lake Providence, Ferriday, and Harrisonburg brought free civil legal services and education to 74 community members. Participants received guidance on family law, successions, and veterans' services, and engaged with partner organizations to learn how to access legal resources and support in their communities.

9 Held Third Annual ATJ Conclave to Support Judicial and Community Collaboration

The event brought together judges, legal professionals, and community leaders from across Louisiana to advance coordinated strategies for closing the civil justice gap. This year's program highlighted expanded judicial engagement, strengthened partnerships with community organizations, and promoted scalable models and tools, including the Civil Legal Navigator, LEAP Law Talks, and statewide legal resource portals, to deepen collaboration and improve access to justice statewide.

10 Updated IFP Resources Released to Address Statewide Access-to-Justice Challenges

As part of this year's top achievements, the ATJ Committee, building on a decade of work with Louisiana Appleseed and recent input from its IFP Working Group, released an updated In Forma Pauperis White Paper and a new Reference Card to help judges, clerks, and attorneys address persistent IFP challenges across the state.

These accomplishments are made possible by the dedication of hundreds of attorney volunteers and the ongoing work of Louisiana's civil legal aid and pro bono organizations. Together, they play a critical role in ensuring access to justice across the state. The Louisiana State Bar Association remains committed to working alongside the Civil Justice Community to strengthen the legal profession and serve the public. To learn more, go to: www.lsba.org/atj. Read about the 10th Anniversary of the ATJ Commission www.lsba.org/goto/10AnnATJcommissionArticle. ♦

Focus on Diversity

For more information on items in this section, visit www.lsba.org/diversity.

Nomination Procedures Listed, Forms Online for Trailblazer Award, Guardian of Diversity Award

The Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Member Outreach and Diversity Department has announced the nomination periods and procedures for the Trailblazer Award and the Guardian of Diversity Award. Nominations for both awards opened on October 1, 2025, and remain open through February 27, 2026. For more information about the awards and to access nomination forms, visit <https://www.lsba.org/Members/Awards.aspx> and click on "Diversity and Inclusion Awards," or email the Member Outreach and Diversity Department at diversity@lsba.org.

LSBA Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award

The LSBA Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award was established in 2016. It combined two previous diversity awards — the Trailblazer Award (established in 2013) and the Human Rights Award (established in 2010). The Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award is awarded by the Association annually in June at the LSBA's Annual Meeting. The nomination period runs from October through February. This award recognizes individual attorneys and judges who champion the ideals set forth by Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson, the first African American chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, who has always exhibited an unwavering commitment

to enhancing diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. Nominees must be admitted to practice in Louisiana. Judges must have been elected or appointed to a state or federal court in Louisiana; the lawyer or judge can be on active or inactive status and from any practice setting; and the lawyer or judge cannot be a current member of the LSBA's Committee on Diversity in the Legal Profession. The Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award recipient should demonstrate a unique blend of experience, skills, and accomplishments that translate into successful diversity and inclusion efforts, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

Supporting and encouraging attorneys who are members of an unrepresented group within the legal profession to reach their career and personal potential;

- Ensuring opportunities for the advancement of diverse people through mentoring efforts and diversity outreach;
- Commitment to addressing issues of equality, fairness, and injustice in the legal profession; and
- Participation in community service activities that promote and broaden the diversity pipeline to the legal profession.

LSBA Guardian of Diversity Award

The Guardian of Diversity Award,

established in 2013, recognizes non-profit groups, local and specialty bar associations, and public interest organizations that implement and advance diversity programs to promote and support diversity in the legal community. It is presented at the LSBA's Annual Meeting. The nomination period is October through February. Nominees can be bar associations, courts, law firms/ departments, or community organizations (including non-profits and public interest organizations). Recipients should demonstrate the following diversity and inclusion efforts within the legal profession or the practice of law:

- Creating and implementing innovative strategies to promote and advance the concept and spirit of diversity and inclusion;
- Making a significant impact on diversity issues in the legal profession;
- Enhancing access and equality in employment, economic and educational opportunities in the legal profession;
- Advocating and promoting an understanding and awareness of diversity in the legal profession;
- Dedication to improving and bridging the relationship between diverse groups in the legal profession; and
- Proven commitment to creating a culture of diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. ♦

18th Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession

OUR DIVERSITY
OUR DIVERSITY



OUR STRENGTH
OUR STRENGTH

August 7, 2026 • Four Seasons Hotel New Orleans • New Orleans, LA



Save
the
date!

Midyear Meeting CLE Seminar

Thursday, Jan. 22, 2026 | 1–4:45 p.m.

Free • 3.25 CLE credit hours

Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel
7000 Bluebonnet Blvd., Baton Rouge

Lunch and Learn CLE Seminar: Generational Differences

April 15, 2026 | 12:00 p.m.–1:15 p.m.

Louisiana State Bar Association • 601 St. Charles Avenue • New Orleans, LA • 70130

Hosted by: LSBA's Diversity Committee's Pipeline to Diversity and Outreach Subcommittee

LSBA's Diversity Committee's Pipeline to Diversity and Outreach Subcommittee &
Art, Entertainment and Sports Law Section

ENTERTAINMENT LAW CLE SEMINAR

SAFEGUARDING THE SPOTLIGHT

APRIL 16-17, 2026 • 8 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M. • LOUISIANA BAR CENTER

Online Application Portal Now Open for 2026 Suit Up Program

Do You Know Any High School Students Interested in the Legal Profession?

Applications are now being accepted for the Louisiana State Bar Association's Suit Up for the Future High School Summer Legal Institute and Intern Program, scheduled for June 8–26, 2026.

The application deadline is May 4, 2026, for high school juniors, seniors, and students entering their first year of college in Fall 2026. Students may access the online application portal at www.lsba.org/goto/suitup.

The Louisiana State Bar Association, in collaboration with the Louisiana Supreme Court, JusttheBeginning, and the Louisiana Law Schools, hosts an annual internship

program. This program is available to incoming high school juniors, seniors, and recent graduates interested in the legal profession. Students participate in a three-week legal institute that incorporates the following: an abridged law school session with lectures by professors from area law schools; tours of law schools and courts; job shadowing at local law departments, courts, and agencies; the opportunity to research and draft a legal memorandum addressing a mock fact problem; and an actual oral argument before real judges. Students provide their own transportation and housing. Over the course of the three-week program, participants are introduced to lawyers, legal documents, and the legal system—all designed to help them



consider one important question: "Do I really want to be a lawyer?"

Attorney Job Shadowing Opportunities

Legal professionals are being asked to participate in job shadowing opportunities. During the program's second week (June 15–19, 2026), students will be provided with an opportunity to job shadow attorneys at firms, courts, and agencies. This is an opportunity for students to see what attorneys do daily and to spend one-on-one time with them in the workplace. Attorneys in the greater New Orleans area who are interested in hosting one or more students should contact the LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity team at diversity@lsba.org. ♦

Classified Advertisements

Standard classified advertising in our regular typeface and format may now be placed in "Bar Briefs" and on the LSBA Web site, *LSBA.org*. All requests for classified notices must be submitted in writing and are subject to approval. Copy must be typewritten and payment must accompany request. Our low rates for placement in both are as follows:

Rates

Non-members of LSBA

\$85 per insertion of 50 words or less

\$1 per each additional word

\$20 for a C-Box number

Members of the LSBA

\$60 per insertion for 50 words or less

\$1 per each additional word

No additional charge for a C-Box

Screens: \$25

Headings: \$15 for initial headings in large type

Deadline

Payment and copy must be received by the first of the month before publication.

Send to:

Bar Briefs Classified Notices
Louisiana State Bar Association
601 St. Charles Ave.
New Orleans, La. 70130

Responses

To respond to a box number, address your envelope to:
Bar Briefs C-Box No. _____
c/o Louisiana State Bar Association
601 St. Charles Ave.
New Orleans, La. 70130

Positions Offered

Mayer, Smith & Roberts, LLP, a Shreveport, Louisiana law firm, with an emphasis in litigation and insurance defense is seeking experienced attorneys for associate or partnership positions. Please send all resumes to Colly Roberts, colly@msrlaw.com

Services

Briefs/Legal Research/Analysis of Unusual or Problem Cases

JD with honors, federal judicial clerk, graduate of top 10 law school, 25 years' experience federal and state litigation, creative legal thinker. Available for briefs, research, court appearances, analysis of unusual or problem cases. References on request. Catherine Leary, (504)436-9648, statewide services, registered office Jefferson Parish. Email CatherineLeary2021@gmail.com.

Classified ads are paid advertisements. Publication of any advertisement or statement is not to be deemed a statement or an endorsement of the views expressed therein by the LSBA or any member of the LSBA. Views expressed are those of the advertisers only.

LSBA Member Services

The mission of the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) is to assist and serve its members in the practice of law. The LSBA offers many worthwhile programs and services designed to complement your career, the legal profession and the community.

In the past several years, the legal profession has experienced many changes. The LSBA has kept up with those changes by maturing in structure and stature and becoming more diverse and competitive.



For more information, visit www.lsba.org

POUR A CUP.
TAKE A SCROLL.
DISCOVER
A BENEFIT
YOU DIDN'T
KNOW YOU HAD.

#YourLSBA
Perk Break
Brewed for your
practice

DID YOU KNOW...

As a member of the Bar you
have access to many
wonderful benefits, services,
and discounts?

Visit: <https://www.lsba.org/Members/ToolsandServices.aspx>



SAVE THE DATE!



“THE REEL FUTURE OF LAW”

Louisiana Young Lawyers Conference

New Orleans Marriott Warehouse Arts District Hotel
859 Convention Center Blvd., New Orleans, LA

April 10, 2026

Lights. Camera. Law. The Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division proudly presents the annual Louisiana Young Lawyers Conference, an unforgettable production by young lawyers for young lawyers. This must-see event includes CLE sessions crafted for today's young practitioners, a red-carpet awards ceremony celebrating excellence in the profession, and a keynote sure to bring renewed excitement to your legal career.

For up-to-date info, visit: www.lsba.org/yld

UPCOMING LSBA CLE OPPORTUNITIES

S
A
V
E

T
H
E

D
A
T
E

Criminal Law

Friday, March 13, 2026

*Hyatt Centric French Quarter Hotel
800 Iberville St., New Orleans*

AI & The Law

Friday, March 20, 2026

*Jones Walker
201 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans*

Evidence

Friday, March 27, 2026

*New Orleans Marriott
Warehouse Arts District Hotel
859 Convention Center Blvd., New Orleans*

Medicare, Medicaid & Elder Law CLE

Friday, April 10, 2026

*Limited space available!
Louisiana Bar Center
601 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans*

CLE during French Quarter Fest: 18th Annual White Collar Crime Symposium

Friday, April 17, 2026

*Hyatt Centric French Quarter Hotel
800 Iberville St., New Orleans*

CLE during Jazzfest

Friday, April 24, 2026

*Hyatt Centric French Quarter Hotel
800 Iberville St., New Orleans*

Bridging the Gap

April 28-29, 2026

*New Orleans Marriott
Warehouse Arts District Hotel
859 Convention Center Blvd., New Orleans*



**Louisiana
State Bar
Association**

Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.

“Experience Charleston”

- A Multi-Topic CLE

March 16–18, 2026

*The Charleston Place Hotel
205 Meeting St., Charleston, SC*

Through sumptuous accommodations, delicious food and drink, shopping, restorative wellness services, and warm, generous hospitality, The Charleston Place stirs the senses and lives forever in the minds and souls of all who gather.

Arbitration CLE

Friday, May 8, 2026

*Hyatt Centric French Quarter Hotel
800 Iberville St., New Orleans*

Hanging Out Your Own Shingle Webinar

May 2026

Joint LJC / LSBA Summer School
May 31–June 5, 2026
Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

Ethics & Professionalism Summer ReRun

Friday, June 19, 2026

*Hyatt Centric French Quarter Hotel
800 Iberville St., New Orleans*

WWW.LSBA.ORG/CLE