



Member Services

Missouri Lawyers Assistance Program

The Missouri Lawyers Assistance Program (MOLAP) is a confidential counseling program for lawyers, judges, law students and their families. The program addresses depression, substance abuse, marital and family issues, stress and burnout or other personal problems that adversely affect personal or professional well-being.

The program director, a licensed mental health professional, provides evaluation, counseling, and referral services. Counseling is done via phone or face-to-face at the program office in Jefferson City. The program maintains a toll-free number (800-688-7859) for ready access. The program also maintains a list of local therapists who have worked well with bar members in the past, and often refers. Through the national lawyer assistance program network, information is available for referral to distinctive need or nationally known programs. In addition, the program maintains a roster of lawyer volunteers, people who have had difficulties themselves, progressed, and now stand ready to assist others through peer support. The program director will offer volunteer services to callers when circumstances are appropriate.

Roughly two-thirds of calls to MOLAP come from the person of concern. The other one-third come from family members, judges, law colleagues, or official sources. In those third-party matters, the director provides coaching and assistance to the caller to plan best help for the person of concern. During the past nine years, an average of 127 new matters per year have come to MOLAP. Each year, about one-third of new matters are about alcohol problems. Depression and marriage/family issues are the second- and third-most frequent concerns.

The director also makes presentations about MOLAP topics to various bar groups and conferences. Topics have included depression, burnout, and procrastination as well as substance abuse issues.

MOLAP conversations are kept confidential. MOLAP does not report to the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel or The Board of Law Examiners. From time to time those agencies contact MOLAP for assistance for a person who is already involved with those offices.

MOLAP services can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by calling 1-800-688-7859. There is no charge for MOLAP services. MOLAP is a program of The Missouri Bar, but is partially funded by The Bar Plan Mutual Insurance Company.

Jobs for Missouri Lawyers

Jobs for Missouri Lawyers assists lawyers and graduating law students in search of legal positions, as well as employers with positions available. This program is provided at no cost to lawyers and firms or other organizations with legal positions to fill. Web analytics recently showed that this is the most frequently accessed page on The Missouri Bar's website, averaging 1,400 visits per day.

This free listing of opportunities contains advertisements from law firms, corporations and other businesses and institutions with employment opportunities for lawyers. The listing is available via a link in the state bar's electronic newsletter, *ESQ.*, or by visiting the bar's website. Lawyers may also sign up for home delivery of the printed listing, which is mailed twice a month.

The service's listings are divided into three groups: employment opportunities, contract services, and office space/office sharing.

Employers with positions to fill, as well as lawyers seeking positions, may contact Jobs for Missouri Lawyers by calling 573-638-2249. More information and an online form for employers to submit their positions are also available on The Missouri Bar website (www.mobar.org).

Lawyer-to-Lawyer Dispute Resolution Program

Operating under Supreme Court Rule 5.10, the Lawyer-to-Lawyer Dispute Resolution Program offers a mediation-like process and binding arbitration to resolve disputes between lawyers over money and property issues as well as complaints about professionalism matters. These services are offered free-of-charge to Missouri Bar members as a member service. The program is overseen by the Lawyer-to-Lawyer Dispute Resolution Committee. Volunteer lawyer facilitators serve the program without compensation. That makes it possible to offer this service without cost to the members who use it.

MoBar Net

MoBar Net is a subscription service provided by The Missouri Bar through a technical partner, REJIS (Regional Justice Information Service) in St. Louis. This service provides online access to legal databases that are not readily available on the Internet. This includes information such as driving records, motor vehicle registration, and criminal history checks, among others.

During 2011, MoBar Net services were expanded to include Kansas City Municipal Court case and docket information as well as warrants and arrests in the Kansas City area.

Fee Dispute Resolution Program

Fee dispute complaints are often the result of misunderstandings between attorneys and clients or complaints from clients about inferior service. The Fee Dispute Resolution Program offers mediation and binding arbitration on a voluntary basis to resolve disputes between lawyers and clients about fees charged for legal services.

The major focus of the services within this program is to assist the parties in coming to a mutually agreeable resolution in mediation or a determination of a fair fee for the legal services provided through binding arbitration.

Lawyers and non-lawyer professionals volunteer their efforts to this public service program, which makes it possible to provide the program at no cost to the parties.

During 2011, the fee dispute resolution program offered by the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis was discontinued. As a result, The Missouri Bar Fee Dispute Resolution Program began offering fee dispute resolution services in the St. Louis area. Many of the volunteers serving the BAMSL program attended an orientation and became volunteers within The Missouri Bar program. The rule under which the program operates was revised to streamline the process in order to serve an increased case load.

Complaint Resolution Program

The Complaint Resolution Program works toward improving the image of the legal profession by assisting with the resolution of less serious complaints about lawyers outside of the formal disciplinary system. Complaints are referred to the program from the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel when it appears that the parties would be better served by working with a neutral facilitator to attempt to resolve these issues themselves rather than through the disciplinary system.

Meaningful resolutions are often reached when the parties have an opportunity to voluntarily meet, discuss their concerns, re-establish broken communication lines, and work together toward a resolution that is acceptable to both parties. The volunteer facilitators are lawyers from all around the state who have completed training to assist the parties under these circumstances.

Lawyer Resources for a Changing Economy

A special committee of the Board of Governors continues to work to address hardships Missouri Bar members are facing due to the economic downturn in this country. A website features a compilation of many services that are provided to members by The Missouri Bar. The committee also coordinated with the Leadership Academy to produce a manual for new lawyers to assist them in acclimating to the practice of law.

The committee has plans to develop a series of podcasts on various substantive law topics to assist lawyers who are starting a practice without much experience or those who are starting over in their careers.

Free Online Legal Research by Fastcase

Through Fastcase, a Washington, D.C.-based provider, The Missouri Bar offers its members unlimited access to online legal research at no cost. This significant member benefit saves Missouri lawyers thousands of dollars annually in online legal research costs.

Members may access Fastcase through The Missouri Bar's website. Fastcase features Boolean and natural language searching; the ability to search across caselaw, statutes, CSR, court rules, and CLE deskbooks (if a subscriber) in one search; dual-column printing; the ability to search by date range, jurisdiction, and others; the ability to sort by document authority (most cited) and relevance; free customer service and training; and much more.

Due to the success of this project, an extended contract was negotiated with Fastcase during the year, and an array of new services will be added without additional cost to The Missouri Bar or members.

LawPay Merchant Account Member Benefit

To further assist attorneys in being paid by their clients, The Missouri Bar offers LawPay Merchant Account as a member benefit. Attorneys are able to accept credit and debit card payments from clients through this service at a discount. The service complies with ABA and state requirements for managing client funds and correctly handles earned and unearned fees.

UPS Discount Member Benefit

A new member benefit offering discounts on UPS shipping and at UPS stores was brought on board to assist members in cutting overhead expenses during 2011.

Other Member Benefits

The Missouri Bar has negotiated with various insurance companies to offer discounted or very desirable rates for Missouri Bar members. Endorsed or recommended insurance services include professional liability, cancelable and non-cancelable disability insurance, and retirement planning.

Law Practice Management Services

The Missouri Bar offers assistance with managing a law practice through the following services:

- A practice management advisor on staff to answer questions and provide resources;
- An online Law Practice Management Center rich with resources of all types on starting and managing a law practice;
- A lending library of resources;
- Various law practice management educational programs offered throughout the year; and
- Solo and Small Firm Conference.