

**AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
SECTION OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW  
MENTORING PROGRAM  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What are the Mentoring Program goals?**

To attract and integrate new lawyers, minority lawyers, women lawyers, and lawyers with disabilities to the Section.

To facilitate a better understanding of the pathways to leadership with the Section.

To develop relationships and institutional loyalty between mentees and the Section.

To provide support mechanisms that will encourage mentees to meet their professional and organizational goals and attain leadership positions in the Section.

To ensure commitment to the Section's Diversity Plan, focusing on new lawyers, women lawyers, lawyers of diverse ethnic backgrounds, and lawyers with disabilities.

**What are the Section's expectations of mentors?**

To provide mentee with advice concerning participation in Section activities.

To introduce mentee to the culture of the Section, including any unwritten or informal practices and policies of the Section that might relate to his/her ability to progress to a leadership position.

To introduce mentee to Section leaders, including officers, council members and committee chairs.

To meet lawyers in their geographical regions who can provide advice and guidance regarding practice in their area.

To help mentee become in his/her committee of interest, help mentee get involved in committee projects and spend some time with mentee during meetings they both may already be attending (e.g. Committee mid-winter meetings).

To serve as a resource and to answer questions and address issues that the mentee may have but would feel uncomfortable raising with other members of the Section.

To meet or correspond with the mentee on an informal basis at least quarterly.

To withdraw from the pairing without recrimination or adverse consequence and to request a new mentee if, for reasons beyond the mentor's control, the mentor feels the relationship is not working.

### **What are the Section's expectations of mentees?**

Effectively and productively to participate in the work of the Section by volunteering for assignment as a speaker, writer, subcommittee co-chair, or other activity that forwards the Section's goals.

To develop both a professional and personal relationship with the mentor.

To obtain a clear understanding of the role the mentor has been asked to perform as well as clear understanding of the Mentoring Program.

To make an effort to seek out the mentor and take advantage of the opportunity to meet and consult with the mentor.

To recognize that the mentor relationship is a two-way street and that the mentee must work at developing the relationship as much as, if not more than, his/her mentor.

### **How long does the Section expect the mentoring relationship to last?**

It is expected that the mentoring relationship will be for a two-year term.

### **How does the Mentoring Program assign mentors to mentees?**

The primary criteria used for the matches will be geographic location and the substantive committee in which the mentor and mentee share an interest.

### **What are the geographic regions for the Mentoring Program?**

The country is split into four quadrants: Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific.

### **How soon after the mentee's assignment is the mentor expected to contact the mentee?**

The mentor is required to make contact with the mentee within two weeks of the assignment and to confirm the contact with the mentee to the ABA national co-chairs. The mentor's initial contact with the mentee must be by telephone. The call should entail an in-depth discussion of the services the mentee's needs.

### **How often should the mentor and mentee make contact?**

The mentor and mentee should make contact as often as reasonably necessary to achieve the goals of the program and meet the mentee's needs. Contact may be made by telephone, e-mail, and in-person visits, as appropriate.

**What happens if the mentee needs a mentor in his/her practice area or needs a mentor closer to his/her geographic location?**

The first mentor is required to locate another mentor in the practice area or geographic location and to conduct a conference call to introduce the new mentor to the mentee. The national co-chairs and council members would serve as a resource to the first mentor in identifying a new mentor if the first mentor did not know an active ABA member in the mentee's practice area or geographic location. After making the three-way conference call among the first mentor, the new mentor, and the mentee, the first mentor is then required to confirm the new mentor to the ABA and national co-chairs.

**What is the Mentoring Program's Council?**

The mentoring council is comprised of active members from each of the four quadrants. The council serves in the following functions: oversight (to ensure the system is working), resources (to help with tasks as needed—e.g., locating an active ABA member in a particular city if a mentor needs that kind of assistance), and possible base for selecting national co-chairs?

**Who should mentors and mentees contact if they have suggestions for the Mentoring Program?**

Mentors and mentees should contact the national co-chairs.