



STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I thought you might be interested in this.

As we prepare for the holidays, I want to remind you of a few deadlines that are approaching involving important issues that will affect our profession and the clients we serve. I also want to make sure you are aware of some of the services and resources the State Bar offers.

Proposed Changes to Disciplinary Rules

The Supreme Court of Texas is accepting comments through December 31 on proposed amendments to the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. The amendments were printed in the November issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* with the Court's order and an [overview](#) written by the Court's rules attorney. A [redlined version](#) of the proposed changes is available on the Supreme Court and State Bar of Texas websites. Comments can be sent to Kennon L. Peterson, Rules Attorney, at P.O. Box 12248, Austin, Texas 78711 or kennon.peterson@courts.state.tx.us.

Professional Liability Insurance Disclosure

The Supreme Court of Texas has asked the State Bar Board of Directors to recommend to the Court whether lawyers should be required to disclose to clients whether or not they carry professional liability insurance, and, if they do have a duty to disclose that information, the best method for that disclosure. In October and November, the Board held a series of public hearings around the state. The hearings took place in San Antonio, Harlingen, Houston, El Paso, Dallas, Lubbock, and Austin. Audio recordings of the hearings are available at www.texasbar.com/plidisclosure, as are written summaries of the testimony from each hearing and background materials. Lawyers and members of the public can post comments to the [Texas Bar Blog](#). The Board will vote on these issues during its January 29 meeting and then forward its recommendation to the Court.

State Bar, FindLaw Discontinue MyTexasBar.com

The State Bar and FindLaw discontinued the MyTexasBar.com service on December 15. After a long and successful partnership, this was a mutual decision. Both parties are working to streamline and improve services to members and customers. State Bar members continue to have access to their member accounts and free legal research through [My Bar Page](#) on TexasBar.com. (The State Bar's free legal research service, Casemaker, was recently expanded to include all 50 states and an expanded federal library.) MyTexasBar users who registered for Justice.com email accounts can access those directly through www.justice.com. For more information, visit www.texasbar.com/findlaw.

Helping Legal Professionals in Need

The holiday season, for many, is one of the happiest times of the year. For others, it is among the most challenging. For 20 years, the [Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program](#) has been helping Texas

lawyers, judges, and law students with substance abuse, dependency, or mental health issues. TLAP operates a confidential, 24-hour hotline at (800)343-8527. For more information, visit the TLAP website, where you will find resources and can watch the video, *Practicing from the Shadows: Depression and the Legal Profession*.

Resources for Tough Times

The State Bar maintains a webpage of [resources](#) for Texas lawyers, including [job search](#) and [networking](#) tools, [free online CLE classes and articles](#), and [member benefits](#) including discounts on auto insurance, rental cars, apparel, wireless service, office supplies, and delivery services.

State Bar Offers Online Referral Service

The State Bar [Lawyer Referral Information Service](#) has started offering an online referral service for counties not served by a local referral service. In January, the program will begin offering LRIS members online status updates through a case management system. Lawyers interested in becoming an LRIS member can download an application [here](#) (PDF format).

Mentoring Programs

Last month, more than 2,000 new lawyers were inducted into the State Bar of Texas. As these young lawyers begin their new careers, we, as a profession, need to reach out to them to ensure they are prepared for the responsible practice of law.

This year, the State Bar has created two programs designed for this purpose: 1) *Transition to Practice: A Mentoring Initiative for Local Bar Associations* provides local bars, law firms, and corporate or governmental legal departments with the tools to create a mentoring program for young lawyers. To download a PDF of the program materials, click [here](#) . 2) *AfterTheBarExam.com* is a free online educational resource aimed at those who have taken the Texas bar exam and are awaiting results. The site provides instructional videos on a variety of legal topics, from law practice management to ethical and professionalism issues to different areas of law. For more information, visit [afterthebarexam.com](#).

Save the Date

I'm pleased to report that the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting will return to my hometown of Fort Worth this year. The meeting will take place June 10-11 and offer exceptional CLE programming for one low price. [Register](#) now.

I hope you and your loved ones have a safe and happy holiday season. Please let me know if I may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Roland K. Johnson