



# Well-being week returns for five days of webinars supporting attorney wellness

Well-Being in the Law Week will return from May 1–5 with a series of webinars including a New Jersey State Bar Association webcast on the relationship between attorney wellness and ethics.

The NJSBA program, scheduled for May 5 at 10 a.m., will look at how good mental health practice complements an attorney's ethical obligations. The program, "Improving Well-Being in the Workplace and Complying with Ethics Obligations," will include tips on de-escalation and ways to promote collegiality and community in the profession. The speakers include Kim Ringler, an expert in attorney ethics, and Paula Shagin, of Green Button Counseling.

"Collaborating with an experienced mental health clinician on self-care and practical steps to improve well-being is a great way to promote competence and to extend lawyers' professional shelf life. To practice law ethically means taking self-care seriously.

This program melds ethics standards with key components of self-care. The information and insights are sorely needed," Ringler said.

The seminar is one of many wellness lessons offered during Well-Being in the Law Week, which aims to help legal practitioners get the practice guidance and insight they need to stay away from unhealthy lifestyles and create professional norms and cultures that encourage well-being.

**Registration is open at [njsba.com](http://njsba.com).**

The New Jersey Lawyers Assistance Program will host free virtual programs throughout the week. Each day features a session on a different aspect of well-being—physical, spiritual, emotional—with advice on everything from balanced nutrition to seeking help with mental health.

As part of that weeklong series of webinars, NJSBA President Jeralyn L. Lawrence will lead a discussion on May 3 about the state of attorney wellness in New Jersey and the work of the

Putting Lawyers Task Force, which recently released a report and recommendations about ways to make life easier in the legal profession and the tools needed to thrive in the ever-changing legal landscape.

NJLAP's schedule for the week:

- **Monday:** Optimizing Physical Well-being to Maximize Professional Outcomes
- **Tuesday:** What Does Spirituality Have to Do With It?—A panel of attorneys will discuss how they derive meaning from their work, nourish their spirits, foster personal growth, align their work with their values, and how their spiritual practices promote their well-being.
- **Wednesday:** How We Put Lawyers First—Lawrence will lead a frank discussion on the state of well-being among legal professionals in New Jersey and provide a hopeful look at efforts and collaborations underway to improve these conditions.

- **Thursday:** Put Away Your Legal Pad—A seminar on the drawbacks of thinking and talking like a lawyer in personal relationships.

- **Friday:** Self-Care for Lawyers—A candid discussion about developing practical self-care tools that can help lawyers cope under challenging personal and professional circumstances.

**Visit [njlap.org](http://njlap.org) to get the full schedule and register for the programs.**

In addition to the NJSBA and NJLAP programming, the state Judiciary will also offer a program during the week. The event will be held on May 2 to raise awareness of the heightened risks of mental health issues, substance use disorders and suicides among law professionals. The event is free and open to the public at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton and through a virtual broadcast.

**Visit [njcourts.gov](http://njcourts.gov) to learn more.**

## NJSBA urges changes to character and fitness application

The New Jersey State Bar Association called upon the state Supreme Court to revise its evaluation process for admission to the New Jersey bar. The Association asked the Court to eliminate questions on the New Jersey bar application relative to an applicant's mental health, more specifically question 12B. This question requires applicants to disclose any condition or impairment, including a mental, emotional or nervous disorder or condition that affects the applicant's ability to practice law. The question further asks for a description of any ongoing treatment programs to reduce or ameliorate the condition.

"The veil of shame has begun to lift around the freedom people feel to seek assistance and discuss their mental health, yet several reports indicate law students are increasingly reluctant to seek mental health assistance out of fear that act of wellness could jeopardize their admission," said NJSBA Pres-

ident Jeralyn L. Lawrence in her letter to Chief Justice Stuart Rabner.

The initiative arises from the recommendations by the Putting Lawyers First Task Force, which explored



### CAPITOL REPORT

issues of lawyer well-being with a specific focus on mental health. According to a recent survey conducted by the Task Force, the results reflected high percentages of anxiety, burnout, feelings of isolation and other mental health-related issues among attorneys, including suicidal ideation. The American Bar Association conducted a similar study that showed more than half the respondents reported a mental health diagnosis.

"The NJSBA believes that, instead of contributing to a reluctance to seek mental health assistance we should be championing efforts of bar applicants and attorneys to seek the help

they need as early as possible," said Lawrence.

Both Rutgers and Seton Hall Law School leadership support this request and their letters were submitted in addition to Lawrence's. The NJSBA also pointed out that the Institute for Well-Being in the Law and the Conference of Chief Justices have called for similar action to eliminate mental health questions on bar admission applications. There are 26

states that have either eliminated, substantially modified or never used mental health status on their bar applications.

The NJSBA pointed out that there are other ways to obtain relevant information necessary to determine a bar applicant's fitness to practice law, including maintaining question 12A. This question addresses past conduct of an applicant and the impact that conduct will have on the applicant's ability to practice in a competent, professional and ethical manner.

"In focusing on actual conduct rather than 'conditions' or 'impairment,' this inquiry, more than 12B, provides pertinent disclosures necessary to examine an individual's fitness to practice and accomplishes the goal of gathering information necessary to protect the integrity of the practice," said Lawrence.

The full letter and enclosures are available at [njsba.com](http://njsba.com). ■

NJSBA

# ANNUAL MEETING AND CONVENTION

Presented by the New Jersey State Bar Association  
and the New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education



May 17–19

Borgata Hotel, Casino & Spa, Atlantic City

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16

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### WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

Firearms and the Second Amendment in New Jersey  
Hot Topics in Commercial Real Estate  
Cultural Competency in Family Law Mediation and Settlement Conferences  
What I Wish I Knew  
Introduction to Estate Planning  
DWI Update  
Hot Tips for Hot Litigators  
Automobile Insurance Update  
Representing Consumer Debtors  
Trends in Construction Arbitration  
Financial and Educational Concerns with Special Needs Children  
Death and Divorce  
The Keys to Confidence in the Courts—What Lawyers Can Do  
Big Brother Could Be Watching: Privacy Issues In Today's Hybrid Working Environment  
Transitioning to Junior Associate—Professional Tips to Make It a Success for New Lawyers: Part I, Advice from Associates  
Transitioning from Law Clerk to Associate—Professional Tips to Make It a Success for New Lawyers and Those Who Hire Them: Part II, Advice from Partners and Experienced Practitioners  
Law Firm General Counsel Roundtable—The Ethics of Advertising Lawyer Awards and Other Issues Unique to Law Firm Representation  
Personal Well-Being in a Profession That Serves Others  
Investigating Police Shootings and Oversight of Police Departments  
The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Protection (or Not) Under Your Legal Malpractice Policy  
Looking Beneath the Surface: How Practitioners Can Recognize and Disrupt Implicit Poverty and Race Bias in the Justice System  
Inside Trenton: What It All Means to You  
Live Wire? The Use of Workplace Impairment Recognition Experts and Other Methods to Determine Cannabis Impairment in the Workplace  
Global Explosion of Cyber Exploitation and Discrimination in the Digital Age: The Disparate Impact on Women, Children, and Religious, Ethnic and Racial Minorities  
Trends and Hot Topics in Financial Services  
Writing With Style And Persuasion  
Weathering the Storm: Insurance Coverage for Natural Disasters  
College Expenses Outside of a Simple Allocation of Income  
Sittin' In With the DJs (With a Little Help from Two Retired AJs!)—A Candid Discourse on Federal Trial Practice With a Comparison to State Trial Practice  
The Mental Health Diversion Program  
Ethical and Practical Marketing Skills: Building Your Network to Boost Your Business  
Microaggressions in the Workplace  
Pathways to the Bench

PFAS Litigation in New Jersey—What the New Regulations Surrounding “Forever Chemicals” Mean to Water Suppliers and Consumers  
Fire Spreading in Our Midst: The Urgency of Protecting Transgender and Non-Binary Adults, Youth, and Children

### THURSDAY, MAY 18

Prosecuting Animal Cruelty Cases—Past, Present and Future  
Perspectives on Recent Changes and Updates in the Open Public Records Act, Common Law Right of Access, Caselaw, and GRC Regulations  
At the Altar of the Appellate Gods—Arguing Before the United States Supreme Court  
Hot Topics in Insurance Defense 2023  
Unconventional Custody Issues  
Residential Real Estate Transactions from A to Z  
First Generation Lawyers and Multi-Generations in the Law Firm—Making This Additional Kind of Diversity a Competitive Advantage  
Voi Dire Changes—Attorney vs. Judge Led  
Ethics in Municipal Court  
Even More Reasons Why People and Jurors Don't Like You  
The Use of Technology and AI in Consumer Class Actions  
So, You Want To Be a Trial Attorney  
ADR in Civil Cases Including 4:21A Arbitration  
Estate, Gift Tax and Fiduciary Litigation Update  
Real Life Lessons from a Fictional Lawyer—The Next Chapter  
Scaling from Solo to Small Firm: How to Organize Your Cases  
Recent Developments in Legal Ethics—An Essential Update  
Appellate Practice Master Class  
Sign on the Dotted Line—What Should...and Shouldn't...Be in Employment, Severance and Settlement Agreements  
New Jersey Civil Rights Act—Issues and Developments  
Managing the Practice of Law in a (Hopefully) Post-Pandemic World—2023 Update  
Attorney Competency in Representing Diverse Immigrant Groups: Understanding Our Own Implicit Bias With Respect To Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age and Disability  
How to Represent Clients with Complex Issues in Arbitration  
Chancery 2023  
Hot Tips in White Collar Defense and Government Investigations  
Hot Topics in Land Use  
The Art of Plea Negotiations  
How Paralegals and Attorneys Can Work Together to Efficiently Represent Clients in Estate Administration, Estate Planning and Real Estate  
The Supreme Court Year in Review  
Level the Playing Field! Name, Image, and Likeness Issues for Amateur Athletes  
How to Achieve Sales of Businesses and Properties Free and Clear of Liens Through Bankruptcy or Assignments for the Benefit of Creditors

Hot Topics at the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General—Civil Enforcement Actions and Priorities Under AG Platkin  
Ethical Considerations for In-House Counsel  
Municipal Court Practice 101  
What's New With LLCs?  
Understanding the Impact of Racial Trauma: Supporting the Mental Health of Minority Attorneys  
Technology in Family Law  
Lessons from Women Litigators and Judges  
Criminal Justice Reform: Exploring Its Past, Understanding Its Present, and Anticipating Its Future  
NJ Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Law—All You Need to Know  
Surprise! NJ Tax Rules That Catch Clients and Counsel Off-Guard  
Recent Trends in Class Actions  
Perfecting Your Application for Retirement  
The New Jersey Supreme Court—A Guide to Practice and Procedure  
Municipal Courts Emerging from the Pandemic—What to Expect Next  
Moving Cases During Challenging Times  
*State v Scott* and What It May Mean to Your Labor and Employment Practice  
Navigating the Court of Law and the Court of Public Opinion  
Landlord Tenant-Practice and Procedure in a Post-Pandemic Paradigm  
Out of Sight, Out of Mind and Other Pitfalls for Women Who Work Remotely  
Tales from the Front Lines: A Fireside Chat With a US Secret Service Agent about Cyber Security Threats for Attorneys  
Psychedelics: Law, Legislation, and Litigation in 2023

### FRIDAY, MAY 19

Nonprofit Basics and Things to Watch Out For  
Government Benefits Issues for Immigrants  
The Future of Affirmative Action in Higher Education and Beyond  
Civil Trial Bench Bar Conference  
Family Law Bench Bar Conference  
Workers' Compensation Bench Bar Conference

*\*All programs are subject to change*

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