

BY-LAWS OF THE FAMILY LAW SECTION
NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
Approved by NJSBA Board of Trustees January 2024

ARTICLE I
(Name and Purpose)

1.1 This Section shall be known as the Family Law Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

1.2 The mission of the NJSBA Family Law Section is to serve as the statewide leader in the field of Family Law, protect the family (with special emphasis on the impact of divorce on children) and to serve our constituents. To accomplish this mission, we adopt the following goals, to be carried out under guidelines established by the NJSBA for the Section:

1. To be sensitive to the needs of children and to protect children from the negative impact of divorce or other involvement in the judicial system;
2. To promote and protect the concept of "family" in all of its various forms;
3. To provide a forum for the discussion and resolution of family law issues and be the pre-eminent resource to judicial, civic, governmental and public organizations in matters affecting family law;
4. To serve, educate and enhance the skills of our members in various ways including the publication of the New Jersey Family Lawyer and involvement in continuing legal education programs;
5. To review legislative and administrative proposals, rules and statutory changes and, where appropriate, initiate legislation and legal reforms in the areas of family law;
6. To improve public and professional understanding of family law issues;
7. To increase the diversity and participation of our membership and to cultivate camaraderie among family lawyers;
8. To improve professionalism of all participants in the administration of family law;
9. To promote and develop appropriate alternative dispute resolution approaches to family law issues;
10. To encourage the NJSBA to engage in dialogue with the judiciary and/or the Administrative Office of the Courts with regard to family law issues;
11. To undertake all such other activities as may be authorized, from time to time, by the Executive Committee of the Section for the purpose of accomplishing the foregoing goals.

ARTICLE II
(Membership)

2.1 The membership of this section shall consist of all members in good standing of the New Jersey State Bar Association who shall signify their desire, in writing, to become members of this section and who shall satisfy the dues obligations imposed by those by-laws.

ARTICLE III
(Officers)

3.1 The officers of this section shall be a Chair, a Chair-elect, a Vice-Chair, a Treasurer and a Secretary. No two officers at the time of election shall be from the same law firm or entity.

3.2 The officers of this Section shall be elected in a manner hereafter provided at the annual meeting of this Section, and shall hold office for a term of one year or until their successor shall have been elected.

3.3 No officer may be elected to a second consecutive term in that office, but shall again become eligible for election to said office after not having served as an officer for at least one term.

ARTICLE IV
(Nomination and Election of Officers)

4.1 The slate of officers shall be nominated by a Nominating Committee and said slate shall be circulated to Section members no later than six weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey State Bar Association. Additional nominations may be made by petition signed by twelve members of the section in good standing. Said petition shall be submitted to the Chair of the Section no later than three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

4.2 The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the immediate past Section Chair, who shall preside and four additional members who shall be appointed by the present Section Chair. If the immediate past Section Chair cannot act, the present Section Chair shall appoint someone to act in the chair's place and stead. The five members of the Nominating Committee shall be from five different firms or entities and vicinages.

4.3 Election of the officers shall be conducted by voice vote, and each office shall be filled by that person receiving the majority vote of members of the Section present at the Annual Meeting. In the event there is a petition pursuant to Section 4.1, the Chair shall appoint a three-person committee to determine the election procedure. No member of the committee shall be a member of the same firm or entity as any person running for an office.

ARTICLE V
(Duties of Officers and Immediate Past Chairs)

5.1 The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Section. The Chair shall formulate and present at each Annual meeting of the New Jersey Bar Association a report of the activities of the Section for the then past year. The Chair shall further perform such other duties as usually pertain to such office.

5.2 The Chair-elect shall, in the absence of the Chair, perform the duties of the Chair. In the event of the death, resignation or disability of the Chair, the Chair-elect shall automatically succeed to the office of the Chair.

5.3 The Vice-Chair shall perform such duties as the Chair may reasonably request.

5.4 The Treasurer shall monitor the Section's overall budget and spending, including that of the Section's Young Lawyers Subcommittee, and shall be a liaison to the New Jersey State Bar Association regarding financial issues concerning the Section.

5.5 The Secretary shall be the custodian of all books, papers, documents, and other records which are the property of the Section, and shall keep a true record of all proceedings.

5.6 The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as the liaison between this Section and the other sections and committees of the New Jersey State Bar Association and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the chair.

ARTICLE VI
(Vacancies)

6.1 (a) In the event of a vacancy in office, the remaining officers below the vacant office shall ascend to the next highest office.

(b) The position of Secretary for the remainder of the one-year term shall be appointed by majority vote of all the officers of the Executive Committee. If there is a tie, the Chair will make the decision. This appointment will be for the office of Secretary regardless of which office has become vacant.

(c) Such appointment shall not be a prohibition against eligibility for office as provided in Article III, Section 3.3.

ARTICLE VII
(Meetings)

7.1 Meetings of this Section shall be held at the same time and place as the Mid-Year and Annual Meetings of the New Jersey State Bar Association, and special meetings at such other times and places as the Chair may deem necessary.

7.2 The annual meeting of the Section shall be held at the time and place of the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

7.3 Action by the Section shall be by the majority vote of members of the Section present and entitled to vote, and such action shall be binding upon the Section.

7.4 All activities of this Section shall be subject to the By-Laws of the New Jersey State Bar Association, and no action of the Section or its officers shall be deemed the action of the Association unless authorized by the New Jersey State Bar Association Board of Trustees.

7.5 Meeting notices shall be published in the New Jersey Family Lawyer or such other publication of the New Jersey State Bar Association as the Chair of the Section shall designate.

ARTICLE VIII
(Committees)

8.1 The sole standing Committee of the Section shall be the Executive Committee (which shall be chaired by the Section Chair).

8.2 A quorum for any meeting of the Executive Committee shall require the attendance of at least 30% of the entire membership of the Executive Committee. A quorum is necessary only for any vote by the Executive Committee.

8.3 At the time of original appointment, the Executive Committee shall not have more than three members from the same firm or entity in any year, which three members shall include Emeritus Members. The members of the Executive Committee who are appointed by the Chair shall be chosen after consideration of all appropriate factors, including but not limited to, past service to the Family Law Section, past service to County and/or Specialty Bar Associations, geographical balance, diversity of practice, diversity of gender, race, and ethnicity, and the goal of broad and diverse representation of all segments of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

8.4 (a) The members of the Executive Committee shall consist of the five (5) officers of the section, the three (3) previous section chairs and thirty-two (32) additional persons appointed by the Chair, including at least one (1) representative from each of the twenty-one (21) counties, if possible, and the two (2) co-chairs of the Family Law Section, Young Lawyer Subcommittee, one representative from each group designated as trustees at large by the New Jersey State Bar Association By-laws, which representative shall be a practitioner of family law and shall be a member of the Family Law Section, and an additional twenty (20) discretionary members.

(b) The Chair may appoint to the executive committee an unlimited number of members from the judiciary – either active or retired, solely in the Chair’s discretion.

All members of the Executive Committee shall be voting members with the exception of sitting judges.

8.5 The Executive Committee shall meet no less than six (6) times per year at a time and place designated by the Section Chair. Members of the Executive Committee are expected to attend regular meetings of the Committee, as well as other section events, including, but not limited to, the annual holiday party, the annual Family Law Retreat and the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey State Bar Association. If a member of the Executive Committee misses more than three regularly scheduled business meetings, they shall automatically be removed from the Executive Committee unless failure to attend is due to a serious illness or other good cause as determined by the Chair. This attendance provision shall not apply to members of the judiciary, either active or retired.

8.6 (a) Such additional committees as shall be deemed appropriate may be appointed by the Chair, which shall include the Tischler Committee the Serpentelli Committee and the Young Lawyers Committee. The Tischler Committee shall be comprised of 5 members from different firms or entities and different vicinages. The Tischler Committee shall nominate, by majority vote, the person to be honored at the Family Law Section Annual Dinner for outstanding contribution to Family Law in the State of New Jersey, in accordance with the Tischler standards which are attached hereto as Schedule "A". The Serpentelli Committee shall consist of the executive officers of the Family Law Section. The Serpentelli Committee shall nominate, by majority vote, the person to be honored at the NJSBA Annual Meeting for outstanding contribution to Family Law in the State of New Jersey by a retired judge, in accordance with the Serpentelli standards which are attached hereto as Schedule "B".

(b) In order to be eligible for the Young Lawyers’ Committee, a person must be under the age of 36 or practicing for less than 10 years. Each year there shall be two co-Chairs of The Young Lawyers Committee, appointed by the Chair of the Family Law Executive Committee. The co-Chairs shall be voting members of the Family Law Executive Committee for a one-year term. The aforementioned co-Chairs shall not automatically serve on the Family Law Executive Committee the year after they have

served as co-Chairs of The Young Lawyers Section but they should be given consideration by the Chair of the Family Law Executive Committee when making appointments.

8.7 The Executive Committee shall establish policy for the Section and resolutions adopted by the Executive Committee shall be considered adopted by the Section.

8.8 The Family Law Section Chair shall select one member of the Editorial Board of NJFL for a two-year term. The Editorial Board shall have the authority to appoint the Editor-in-Chief and the Executive Editor by majority vote. The editors and other staff appointments need not be members of the Executive Committee. The remainder of the Board shall be selected by the Editor-in-Chief and the Executive Editor. All Editorial Board members shall be members in good standing of the Family Law Section. The Chair, or the Chair's designee, shall serve as an ex officio member of the Board. Any concerns that the Chair may have with the operation of the Editorial Board may be presented to the Executive Committee for appropriate action.

ARTICLE IX
(Section Dues)

9.1 Annual dues for this section shall be designated by the Executive Committee subject to approval by the Trustees of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

ARTICLE X
(Amendments)

10.1 Upon fourteen (14) days' notice, the By-Laws may be amended at any meeting of the Section by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote, subject to approval by the Trustees of New Jersey State Bar Association.

ARTICLE XI
("Member Emeritus" Of the Executive Committee)

11.1 There shall be established a special designation as "Member Emeritus" for Past Chairs of the Family Law Section Executive Committee, Past Presidents of the New Jersey State Bar Association and Past Recipients of the Tischler Award.

11.2 The period the designation as "Member Emeritus" of the Executive Committee shall be given to each past Chair of the Executive Committee three (3) years after their term as Chairperson has expired.

11.3 Upon appointment as the "Member Emeritus" of the Executive Committee, said individual shall be entitled to participate as a voting member of the Executive Committee; each appointment will be for one (1) year and a maximum number of members for "Member Emeritus" status shall be twenty (20) members.

Schedule "A" -- STANDARDS FOR THE TISCHLER AWARD

The Tischler Award shall be given to an individual who is or has been actively engaged in the practice of family law, and shall reflect outstanding lifetime achievement. The Committee shall consider the following standards in regard to a potential recipient:

- A. Public service in advancing the development of family law.
- B. Contribution to the positive development of family law by publishing articles, participating in seminars and service on committees.
- C. Promoting and advancing the goals of the legal profession including service and contributions to the Family Law Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association.
- D. Membership on committees appointed by the Supreme Court of New Jersey or other committees which address family law issues.
- E. Participation on early settlement panels and participation in other complimentary dispute resolution alternatives.
- F. Membership, and participation, in groups that advance family law and the positive image of matrimonial lawyers.
- G. Active participation in family law activities on a county and local bar association level.

SCHEDULE "B" - STANDARDS FOR THE SERPENTELLI AWARD

The Committee shall consider the following standards regarding a potential recipient:

- A. Extraordinary contributions to the development of family law in the State of New Jersey through service to the public as a sitting Judge in the Family Part, appellate judge, or Supreme Court Justice.
- B. Contributions to the positive development of family law by publishing opinions and articles and by participating in seminars.
- C. Participation on committees appointed by the Supreme Court of New Jersey or other committees which address family law issues.
- D. Membership and participation in groups that advance family law and the positive image of matrimonial law.
- E. Active participation in family law activities on a county, state and local level.

Approved June, 2020