

Attorney Mentoring Programs: Selected Profiles

An increasing number of jurisdictions have developed mentoring programs for new attorneys. These programs range from formal to informal, required to voluntary, one-on-one to group settings, and more. This literature review provides a survey of various mentorship programs that are particularly well developed; meaning that the program exhibits some organization and administration. Criteria used to evaluate these programs included if they had a mentoring curriculum or plan, an approach to matching mentors and mentees, an enforcement plan, an incentive system for mentors or mentees who successfully complete the program, and a defined duration for the program. This review encompasses programs that are both mandatory and voluntary, and at various levels of generality. Some programs focus generally on all newly admitted attorneys, while others (though few) do focus on mentoring new indigent defense attorneys.

Colorado

Optional Mentoring

Criminal Defense Specific Mentoring

<http://coloradomentoring.org/>

The Colorado Supreme Court established the Colorado Attorney Mentoring Program (CAMP) in 2013 to promote professional pride and identity, to promote strong relationships throughout the Colorado legal community, and to teach core values and ideals for lawyers. This general mentoring program provides resources to participating organizations such as bar associations, inns of court, law firms, agencies, and other legal organizations. These participating programs utilize the resources provided by CAMP such as sample mentoring plans and curriculum, mentoring literature, training videos, and more to implement a specific program to the needs of their attorneys. The Colorado Defense Lawyers Association is one such participating program. The Colorado Defense Lawyers Association tailors a CAMP mentoring program to meet the needs of criminal defense attorneys by arranging one-on-one mentoring relationships between new and experienced criminal defense attorneys.

To qualify as a mentee, an attorney need not be a member of a Bar association, but must be within his first three years of practice after admission to practice law in Colorado or within his first year of practice in Colorado if admitted to practice and have practiced for three or more years in another jurisdiction. CAMP maintains the Colorado Supreme Court Registry of pre-approved mentors, from which they assign mentors and mentees within the Colorado Defense Lawyers Association program.

Once admitted to be a participant, mentees meet with their assigned mentors and tailor a curriculum plan based upon the topics provided by CAMP. Though the specific plan is developed by the pair, certain subject areas must be covered, including an initial planning meeting; personal and professional development; information on the Colorado Bar and legal community; history and importance of the legal profession; and professionalism and civility. The Mentor Plans typically involve 1-2 hour monthly in-person meetings between the mentor and mentee over the 12 month period. The flexibility in developing the mentoring plan allows the attorneys to better suit their needs, interests, schedules, and the specific needs of an attorney practicing criminal defense.

The Chief Justice Commission on the Legal Profession and the Colorado Bar Association have both endorsed this mentorship plan, thus each mentee and mentor are able to receive 15 free CLE credits upon successful completion of the program. These 15 credits include 2 ethics CLE credits at no charge.

Gideon's Promise

Optional Mentoring

Indigent Defender Specific Mentoring

<https://gideonspromise.org>

In 2007 Jon Rapping created the Southern Public Defender Training Center, now known as Gideon's Promise. Gideon's Promise is a values based approach to new lawyer mentoring, which focuses exclusively on mentoring for new public defenders. The idea behind Gideon's Promise is that it is insufficient to teach attorneys law and skills alone, mentors must also teach values to new lawyers. Gideon's Promise was created to combat a philosophy in the indigent defense community; broken criminal justice systems are broken because well-intentioned people who work within them have abandoned certain values fundamental to justice and values central to client-centered representation. The core of Gideon's Promise is to provide training, mentorship, to support public defenders, and to assist them in becoming a community of change agents.

The "Core 101" program is the flagship mentoring program of Gideon's Promise, designed by Jon Rapping. This program is a three year commitment for mentees. First, the entire mentee class attends a preliminary 14 day training program called the "Summer Institute". During this training program mentors usually come to three or four days in order to work sessions as faculty members for the new lawyers. The curriculum over this two-week long "boot camp" is taught in three segments: 1) the ethics and professionalism of public defense; 2) pre-trial practice and trial preparation; and 3) trial advocacy and persuasion. This intensive foundational training session takes place in Oxford, Mississippi at the University Of Mississippi School Of Law. Each mentee is paired with on Gideon's Promise mentor who also serves as faculty during training sessions.

Going forward, mentees meet with their mentors and the larger Gideon's Promise community one weekend every six months throughout the remainder of the three year period. Throughout these meetings six specific goals are promoted: building a community; reinforcing client centered values; inspiring public defender pride; mastering storytelling & persuasion techniques; developing pre-trial litigation skills and developing trial skills. These bi-annual meetings a selection of training programs are offered that build upon the foundational topics introduced at the Summer Institute, as well as introduce new topics (such as sentencing advocacy, immigration consequences, mental health, and forensic science). During these meetings current members of Core 101 also have the opportunity to meet and network with peers from previous classes, members of the Gideon's Promise Graduate Program, Chief Public Defenders participating in the organization's Leadership Summit, and Gideon's Promise faculty members.

Gideon's Promise is unique not only in its curriculum, but also in the way mentors are chosen. In order to be a Gideon's Promise mentor an individual must either be a Gideon's Promise faculty member,

or be a graduate of the 201 Graduate program (open to current and former public defenders). The mentors are trained to provide support and teaching to young attorneys in both practical legal skills, and the values necessary to be an agent of change.

Massachusetts

Mandatory Mentoring

Criminal Justice Specific Mentorship

<http://www.mad.uscourts.gov/attorneys/cja-info.htm>

The Criminal Justice Act Board (CJA) in Massachusetts provides new attorneys mentorship and training opportunities through their Resource Attorney Program. In this program experienced attorneys, called Resource Attorneys, are assigned to assist all new attorneys who are not certified for Superior Court of Youthful Offender on their case assignments. CJA named the mentor participants in this program Resource Attorneys, rather than mentors, to combat a stigma surrounding utilizing a mentor. Bar advocate program leaders requested this name change after perceiving this stigma around mentoring, in part, because assigning a mentor has often been used as a remedy for poor performance.

Participation in this mentorship program may be waived if new attorneys possess sufficient jury trial experience, and consult the Committee. For attorneys who do not waive this requirement, the CJA Board must assure that each new attorney on the panel is assigned a resource attorney before being assigned any case. These Resource Attorneys are assigned in order to supplement in individual case preparation by providing advice and assistance. Each Resource Attorney may not be assigned to more than 20 participating attorneys or 1/5 of the participating attorney panel, whichever is less.

Resource Attorneys must meet with their assigned new panel attorneys before that attorney's first duty day, and again one month after their first duty day. In these meetings the attorney pair must review the files of their first assigned cases. Additionally, for any new panel attorney who does not have any prior jury trial experience, the Resource Attorney must meet with that attorney at least one week before their first scheduled trial.

To qualify as a participating Resource Attorney, an attorney must have sufficient jury trial experience to qualify for Superior Court or Youthful Offender case assignments. Additionally, the attorney must accept at least 50 case assignments per year from the district court. However, this 50 case requirement may be waived by the Resource Attorney or applicant if approved by the Committee. The Committee may additionally approve district court certified attorneys with substantial recent jury trial experience to serve as Resource Attorneys. In this program, Resource Attorneys are compensated for their time at a rate of \$60/hour. Each Resource Attorney bills the Committee by specific case and attorney for which assistance was provided.

The program takes some direction for a well-developed mentoring program used by the Committee for Public Counsel Services, Children and Family Law Division (CAFL) in Massachusetts. This program focuses on teaching legal skills and professional development through a program in which mentors assign and review substantive work exercises such as briefs and pre-trial preparations. The CAFL program is a rather open ended commitment in which mentees are required to participate until

their mentor recommends that they are proficient in handling CAFL matters. The time commitment is approximately 5 hours per month, but the duration is completely dependent upon mentee skill and commitment. CAFL compels engagement in the program for an undetermined duration by leveraging provisional certification/. Mentees are given provisional certification to practice in the CAFL division, which may be taken away at any time. The division may also graduate an attorney and give them full certification at any time based upon their mentor's recommendation.

The CJA Board has hopes of emulating this CAFL mentor training, but for now the Board has been using oversight resources to implement periodic recertification (every five years attorneys must reapply to be on the panel). This has had a similar effect to the provisional certification of the CAFL mentees, and has had a strong positive impact on performance measures.

Georgia

Mandatory Mentoring

General New Attorney Mentorship

<http://www.gabar.org/membership/tilpp/>

The Georgia mentoring program is called Transition into Law Practice Program (TILPP) and is a required continuing legal education program for lawyers newly admitted to the State Bar of Georgia. This program utilizes both group and individual mentoring and is designed to provide new lawyers meaningful access to experienced lawyers. The goal of the mentoring is for experienced lawyers to teach new attorneys the practical tools, judgment skills, ethical and professional values that are necessary to practice law in a highly competent manner.

This program is overseen, administrated, and enforced by the State Bar of Georgia Commission on Continuing Lawyer Competency, particularly the subcommittee called the Standards of the Profession Committee. Compliance with the program earns mentees the requisite 12 Continuing Legal Education (CLE) hours they need to begin practicing in Georgia. Mentors participate on a volunteer basis, but can also earn three CLE credits through completing the mentoring program. This mentorship program lasts slightly over one year; newly admitted attorneys are required to participate in TILPP during the remainder of the calendar year in which they are admitted to practice in Georgia, and then the next calendar year as well.

This program is for all newly admitted attorneys to the Georgia bar, so mentorship pairing is done based upon a number of factors. Mentors may request a particular mentee. This happens most often when the mentor and mentee are employed at the same firm. When this is the case, the firm or other employer may send in a recommendation for the mentor and mentee to be paired so long as the mentor is qualified and approved by the Mentor Subcommittee. Otherwise, the Mentor Subcommittee will look to match based primarily on geographic proximity. The Subcommittee may look at, but does not guarantee to match based upon, other criteria such as similarity of practice area.

Illinois

Optional Mentoring

General New Attorney Mentoring

http://www.phrd.com/docs/mentor/ilscpp_lawyer_to_lawyer_mentoring.PDF

The Illinois State Bar Association (ISBA) supports the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism Mentoring Program to offer an optional, year-long mentoring and training program for newly admitted attorneys. This Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program is a year-long mentoring program, which pairs ISBA lawyers with new attorneys to provide guidance during their first year of practice. In this program experienced attorney mentors provide practical knowledge and professional guidance to new lawyers.

This program is voluntary, but young lawyers are incentivized to participate because they can use the mentoring program to fulfill their minimum continuing legal education (MCLE) requirements. Through completion of the program, new attorneys can receive 6 credit hours to use towards their ongoing legal education requirements. In order to successfully complete the program, and to earn the credits, mentees must complete and attest to completing the program.

Mentors participate in the program on a volunteer basis but are able to receive some compensation, in the form of 6 hours of CLE credit. In order to qualify as a mentor, an attorney must be registered active and in good standing in Illinois; be admitted to practice law in Illinois for at least six years; be respected among judges and peers in the local legal community for ethical and professional conduct; and have never been sanctioned, suspended or disbarred from the practice of law in any state of jurisdiction.

After volunteering to participate in the program and having your application approved, mentors are paired with mentees by the ISBA. The ISBA puts together the matches by first matching mentor-mentee pairs who have requested each other. To request a mentor, new lawyers are able to view completed mentor applications and then rank the top 5-10 mentors with whom they would like to be paired subject to the commission's approval. Alternatively, the ISBA matches mentees with mentors based upon practice area and interest. The ISBA does not guarantee that everyone who applies to the program will be matched, and focus first on mentees who work within geographic areas without other commission-approved mentoring programs.

The program organizes, through local circuit or local bar organization, both mentor and mentee orientations before the pair begins their substantive work. The purpose of these orientations are to provide the attorneys with an overview of the program, what is expected of them, and information and strategies about effective mentoring relationships. Then the mentor-mentee pair meets to develop a mentoring plan based on templates provided by the program. This plan will then be completed through a minimum of 8 in-person meetings between the pair over the course of the one-year mentoring term.

New Mexico

Mandatory Mentoring

General New Attorney Mentoring

https://www.nmbar.org/nmstatebar/Membership/Mentorship_Program/Nmstatebar/For_Members/Bridge_the_Gap_Mentorship_Program.aspx

The New Mexico Bridge the Gap Mentorship Program is a mandatory mentorship program for all newly admitted attorneys to the New Mexico Bar. Each new attorney must successfully complete the requirements of the Bridge the Gap program in order to receive the necessary minimum continuing legal education (MCLE). The Bridge the Gap Mentoring Program began as the Bill Kitts Society, a volunteer mentoring program. It was then approved by the New Mexico Supreme Court, and adopted as a mandatory measure. This program pairs new attorneys on a one-on-one basis with experience mentors for a yearlong program. The goal of the program is to bring together new and more experienced attorneys, thus enhancing professionalism, ethics, civility, relationships, and practical skills in the legal profession.

Mentees meet with their mentors, at a minimum, 12 times over the course of the year. Seven of these meetings must be in person. In these meetings, the pair discusses practical issues each attorney is facing, as well as complete activities chosen from the provided mentoring curriculum. This mentoring curriculum includes a variety of issues young lawyers will face, from "Introduction to the Local Jail", to "Managing Law School Debt". The pair has access to an online compilation of 40 different curriculums, from which they can structure their training meetings.

Mentors volunteer for the program but, similar to the mentee participants, do receive CLE credit for their time spent as a mentor. To enter into the program potential mentors must submit a completed Mentor Application and be approved first by a committee of attorneys, judges and law students, and finally by the Supreme Court. Once approved, mentors become available on a list of pre-approved mentors. Mentees are given access to this pre-approved mentor list almost immediately after they are sworn in. The mentees then begin calling pre-approved mentors to try and find a mentor they would like to work with. After meeting in person or conversing over the telephone the attorneys may agree to work together. After agreeing to work together, the pair creates an individualized curriculum plan based upon the topics and programs the mentee is interested in learning from.

Ohio

Optional Mentoring

General New Attorney Mentoring

<http://www.sconet.state.oh.us/AttySvcs/mentoring/default.asp>

The Supreme Court of Ohio oversees a year-long, one-on-one mentoring program open to young attorneys in Ohio. This program is focused on elevating competence, professionalism, and success for newly admitted attorneys, and is one way for the mentees to fulfill their new lawyer training credit requirements. Over the course of one year, mentees meet with their mentors to discuss various topics and to engage in various activities. The pair selects which topics and activities they will focus on

throughout the year from a list provided in a sample mentoring plan. Mentors volunteer to participate in the program and are compensated for their mentoring services with 12 CLE credit hours including one hour of professionalism, one hour of ethics, and one half-hour of substance abuse credit.

In this program, mentees have a more active role than most in the mentor matching process. Mentees may be paired with mentors in three ways. First, new lawyers may view a Pre-Approved list of mentors and submit a list of his top three mentor nominations to the Commission on Professionalism to consider. Alternatively, mentors may approach an attorney or judge who is not on the pre-approved list of mentors, but meets the requirements to be a mentor, and ask the potential mentor to apply and request to be his mentor. The third option matches mentees with mentors based upon a proposed list of mentors supplied by a law firm or other legal employer.

Utah

Mandatory Mentoring

General New Attorney Mentoring

<http://www.utahbar.org/members/mentor-program/>

The Utah State Bar's New Lawyer Training Program (NLTP) is a mandatory, year-long mentoring program for new, active bar members. The program was created in 2008, in response to a 2005 discussion paper on legal training and accreditation written by Justice Antonin Scalia; the Honorable Deanell R. Tacha, then Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit; and Allan Sullivan, managing partner of the Salt Lake City office of Snell and Wilmer. The Utah Bar Commission and Supreme Court consulted with other states, especially Georgia, to design the NLTP.

Mentors must be approved by the NLTP. In order to qualify, they must have at least seven years of active practice experience and no disciplinary history. In addition, mentors are required to attend training sessions about the NLTP. Mentors, as well as mentees, receive CLE credit for their participation in the program. The goals of the NLTP program include not just training new lawyers, but imparting the importance of networking and organizational mentoring to all Utah lawyers.

New lawyers must meet one-on-one with their mentors at for at least two hours each month. Meetings are guided by a Mentoring Plan, which is developed together by the mentee and mentor and is approved by an NLTP coordinator. The Mentoring Plan includes required and elective meetings – or “experiences” – in which the mentor introduces the mentee to the rules, procedures, people, and places that he or she will encounter in practice. Required experiences, which are more generally applicable to new lawyers, concern ethics, professionalism, client interaction, and office management. Elective experiences draw from more specialized fields, including criminal defense.

