

Events

May 2006 Events

SMALL LAW FIRM LUNCHEON
The Necessities of Opening Your Own Practice

May 11, 2006 12:30 – 2 p.m.

If you are thinking about opening your own practice or have done so recently, this is a program you cannot miss. Our panel will address a number of important issues faced by young attorneys who begin their own law practices. Some of the important topics our panel will cover include; finding clients, choosing the correct area of practice, finding office space, choosing the right equipment and supplies for your practice, setting up bank accounts and effectively handling tax issues.

Speakers:

Martin J. Leahy
Law Office of Martin J. Leahy

Scott Fenstermaker
Law Offices of Scott L. Fenstermaker, P.C.

Lisa M. Bluestein
Law Offices of Lisa M. Bluestein, LLC

Mark A. Josephson
Law Offices of Mark A. Josephson

This program is aimed at recent and soon to graduate students, as well as newly admitted attorneys.

Registration by May 8 is necessary. The fee, which includes lunch, is \$20 for members, \$30 for non-members. Please register online at www.nycbar.org.

Supported by LexisNexis.

SAVE THE DATE

June 15, 2006 12:30-2 p.m.

SMALL LAW FIRM LUNCHEON
Your Client Refuses to Pay:
Now What

New Benefit for Members - ABA Books at a 15% Discount

The Small Law Firm Center is pleased to announce that members of the New York City Bar Association are now able to purchase any book published by the American Bar Association at a 15% discount off the regular price. This special discount allows even ABA members to receive additional savings (ABA members only receive 10% off) when ordering through NYC Bar.

Please note, that to take advantage of this offer you must place your book order through the NYC Bar. Books will be shipped to you directly. The NYC Bar will invoice you for the cost of the book plus any applicable shipping & handling charges and/or sales tax.

To order books online, visit www.nycbar.org, click on the Small Law Firm Center page and when you get there, click on the SLFC Bookshop Coupon on the right. If you are interested in any ABA book other than those listed on our website, you may select the book by visiting www.ababooks.net and then send an email requesting the book to aroytberg@nycbar.org.

New Benefit for Members – Westlaw Forms Free to Small Law Firm Practitioners

Small Law Firm practitioners who are members of the New York City Bar Association are now able to access the following Westlaw Forms' Databases online by using the member login button on the New York City Bar Association Home Page:

- a) American Jurisprudence Legal Forms 2d;
- b) Nichols Cyclopedia of Legal Forms;
- c) New York Forms Legal and Business;
- d) New York Transactional Forms;
- e) National Transactional Forms; and
- f) West's Legal Forms.

CLE Programs of Interest

A Primer on Probate & Administration of New York Estates
May 3, 2006 6-8 p.m.

Ethical Challenges: Current Issues & Hot Topics
May 4, 2006 6-9 p.m.

Introduction to Transactional Practice: What Every Lawyer Needs to Know About Corporate Transactions
May 9, 2006 9-12 p.m.

Client Management: Creating Loyal Clients to Increase Business
May 17, 2006 6-9 p.m.

For information on the Association's CLE programs, go to our website, www.nycbar.org.

Forms and Information

CD-ROM Forms at the Library

Just click on the desktop icon "CD-Rom Titles for Members" at any library computer terminal and you can obtain current federal tax information and forms; federal practice treatises and formbooks such as Moore's and Bender's forms; American Jurisprudence legal forms; NY Codes, Rules and Regulations; West McKinney forms; New York Supplement 2d cases; real estate transaction information and many others. Access to this online information as well as the FREE Lexis and Westlaw access will make researching a snap.

Your Comments Are Welcome

If you have any comments concerning the Small Law Firm Center facilities, the Small Law Firm Center portion of the New York City Bar Website, or suggestion on how the New York City Bar could better address the needs of Small Law Firm Practitioners, please send an email to the Small Law Firm Center Director, Alla Roytberg at aroytberg@nycbar.org.

Small Law Firm Center Facilities- A Unique Benefit to Members

The Small Law Firm Center facilities operate as a free benefit to members of the Association. They include a Conference Room in which attorneys can privately meet their clients and a separate Attorney Work Space equipped with computers, printers, copier and a fax machine. Phones are now available in both conference room and attorney workspace for outgoing local calls. Lexis has sponsored the renovation of the Conference Room, which should be completed in May of 2006. The Center is located on the third floor of the Association's House. While Attorney Work Space is available on a walk-in basis, members should contact the Library Reference Desk (212) 382-6666 to reserve the conference room. For questions about the Center, you may contact Ronald Mirvis at (212) 382-6748 or rmirvis@nycbar.org.

The New York State Report of the Commission to Examine Solo and Small Firm Practice

-It is the daily; it is the small; it is the cumulative injuries of little people that we are here to protect...
- Judge Learned Hand

In April of 2004, Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye established the Commission to Examine Solo and Small Firm Practice in New York State. The purpose of the Commission was to study unique challenges faced by solo and small law firm practitioners and to make recommendations which would improve small law firm practice in New York courts. The Commission's Report issued in February of 2006 notes various concerns and makes numerous recommendations relating to small law firm practice. Although I attempted to summarize some of the key points below, I suggest that you read the entire report, which is available on the New York State Unified Court System's website, www.NYCOURTS.gov. [click on "What's New" and scroll down to February 06].

By way of introduction, the Commission noted, that "more than 83.5% of attorneys in New York are solo practitioners. 14.7% work in offices of between two and nine attorneys, and only 1.8% of attorneys work in "large firms, defined as firms having 10 or more attorneys."

The Commission consisted of thirty solo and small firm practitioners from across the state. Its sources of data included three public hearings (in New York City, Albany and Rochester) and a survey directed to solo and small firm practitioners through bar associations and courthouses in each county of New York State.

The Commission made the following key recommendations:

1. Streamlining Court Procedures

- The goal of recommendations in this area was to bridge the divide between the large and small firm by making the court system work fairly for any sized firm.
- To allow attorneys to e-mail and/or fax consent discovery schedules to the court;
- To institute staggered calendars in Family Court and in the Supreme Court for motion, and conference calendars; and

- To create separate calendars for pro se litigants.
2. **Technology as a Tool** – to encourage Filing by Electronic Means (“FBEM”) and to allow attorneys to view court records electronically the same way as they would be viewed in a court’s record room.
 3. **The Costs of Litigation** -to adopt Non Jury Initiative and the Summary Jury Trial programs, to explore and utilize ADR programs, to create a task force to review the availability and affordability of malpractice insurance in New York State.
 4. **Regulatory Burdens on the Solo and Small Firm**
 - In view of economic costs imposed on attorneys as a result of new rules and/or regulations affecting daily law practice, to notify the bar about proposed rules and solicit comment.
 - To review existing disciplinary procedures and promulgate uniform and consistent rules concerning disciplinary action from department to department.
 5. **Strengthening the Profession**
 - To educate solo and small firm practitioners through bar association committees how to create and implement appropriate advance exit plans;
 - To examine and regulate advertising content of lawyer’s ads;
 - To encourage diversity within the court system by promoting diversity in the selecting practitioners for fiduciary and assigned counsel appointments and expanding diversity awareness for all court employees;
 - To strengthen interpreter services for non-English speaking litigants and encourage pro bono services to the poor.