

Affordable Legal Services – Standing Committee

Jurisdiction:

Support the State Bar of Michigan’s access to justice and member services goals by:

- Reviewing, developing, and recommend innovative practices to provide low-cost legal services and evaluate efforts to expand access to affordable legal services for persons of modest means, including low bono services; non-profit law firms and sliding scale civil legal services; online dispute resolution and alternative dispute resolution services; lean process analysis, both at law practice and court administrative levels; alternative fee agreements; and fixed fee packages.
- Identifying possible **collaborations** to support the committee’s jurisdiction
- Identifying the need for any workgroups to support the jurisdiction of the committee
- Conferring and coordinating regularly at least annually with the Access to Justice and Online Legal Resources and Referral Center committees
- Identifying possible collaborations to support the committee’s jurisdiction
- Reviewing and evaluating **metrics** measuring the effectiveness of the State Bar’s public outreach and education efforts

Committee Chairs: Erika Butler and Thomas Rombach

Staff Liaisons: Candace Crowley and Darin Day

Meetings: In-person: 5; Electronic or phone: 18

Committee Activities

1. Implement limited scope representation (lsr) rules through creation of an lsr tool kit with practice and court forms, marketing materials, flow charts, links to national resources; scheduling of approximately 20 education events and training directed to lawyers, judges, and court staff throughout the state; establishing evaluations for those events; publishing a podcast; writing and publishing articles; establishing a peer-to-peer Connect online discussion group; working with Lawyer Referral Service to include lsr panels within the service; and publishing notice to members on how to help the public find lsr practitioners.

Goal 1: Strategy 3: Engaging members in learning about and implementing innovative delivery methods

2. Work with ICLE to create an on-demand three-lesson limited scope practice webinar with materials, assessments, and certificates of completion available for free to all Michigan lawyers.

Goal 1: Strategy 2: Supporting each active member’s professional competence and continuing professional development

3. Support amendments to MCR 5.117 regarding probate court limited scope work adopted by the Board of Commissioners and sent for publication and comment to the Michigan Supreme Court.

Goal 3: Strategy 3: Reviewing ethical rules and regulation, and adapting them to eliminate barriers to innovation

4. Expand Modest Means areas of practice within the State Bar's Lawyer Referral Service by identifying seven main topics and 20 sub practice areas; increase income qualification to 250% of poverty level.

Goal 1: Strategy 3: Engaging members in learning about and implementing innovative delivery methods

5. Establish independent work groups to monitor developments in online dispute resolution, lean business processes, malpractice concerns regarding limited scope practice, connections to law schools, and sliding scale and non-profit law firms.

Goal 1: Strategy 4: Promoting greater member engagement to connect members with the bar, its resources and each other

Additional Comments

This report includes activities from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. It describes the fast-paced work of the many work groups established through the Implementation and Innovation/Affordable Legal Services structure of the past bar year.

Special Characteristics

This committee may have more than 15 members.