

Bar Association Committee – VT Commission on the Well-being of the Legal Profession

Minutes – June 14, 2018 Telephone Conference

Present: Samara Anderson, Teri Corsones, Andrew Delaney, Jennifer Emens-Butler, Kyle Landis-Marinello, Michael Kiey and Rachel Strecker. Micaela Tucker was also present. The May 21, 2018 minutes were approved as written.

Review of Survey Materials: Recommendation 37 recommends including questions in member surveys connected with well-being topics. For example, survey questions can gauge awareness of support networks either in law firms or through lawyer assistance programs. The questions can also survey lawyers on well-being topics they would like to see addressed in bar journal articles, at bar association events, or through CLE courses. Lastly, the data gathered can inform bar associations' outreach and educational efforts.

Jen explained that she plans to create a membership survey in the Fall of 2018. The last time that a membership survey was done was in 2014. Jen distributed two potential well-being related questions for discussion:

1. Please check all that apply for you, someone in your firm, or your firm policy: bring a pet to work on a regular basis, bring a child to work on a regular basis, flexible/non-regular hours, work from home, bike or walk to work on a regular basis, dress casually on a regular basis, maternity leave, paternity leave, office exercise or wellness program, office LAP programs or outreach, office private lounge...
2. What are the three most significant challenges you personally face as an attorney (check up to THREE): High stress, work-life balance, time management, keeping up with technology, lack of business, client expectations, net revenue, collection, retirement planning, billable hours, interaction with other attorneys, frivolous lawsuits, interaction with the judiciary.

Other questions that were suggested include whether the respondent does mindfulness practices during the work day, and/or after hours; whether their office provides mindfulness practices opportunities; how many times per week does the person exercise; how does the person handle stress at the end of the day; how their firm responds to wellness issues or problems; and how the person self-qualifies his or her level of stress.

Micaela Tucker kindly joined the call after expressing an interest in the committee's work. She is familiar with similar surveys done at other institutions, and will send Jennifer some additional sample questions for consideration. Teri noted that the different commissioners will be meeting on July 12, and she will ask them if they have specific survey questions that would be helpful to their committee work.

Lawyer Well-Being Committee: Samara will lead the discussion during the next committee call that will focus on a Lawyer Well-Being Committee. Samara and Micaela discussed co-chairing the committee. Samara will send an agenda for the meeting in advance of the meeting, and asked that anyone with ideas about what such a committee should do and what it should provide to please send her their thoughts before July 12, if possible.

Committee Recommendations: Members recommend that the VBA include wellness-related questions in the upcoming membership survey, and thereafter in any future membership surveys. Jennifer will review the suggested survey questions, as well as any submitted by the other committees, and inform the committee of the final questions selected.

The next telephone conference meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 23 at 3:00 p.m. The call-in number is 1-877-27-420 and the conference room is 566-656-878. The topic will be "Lawyer Well-Being Committee". Samara will send materials in advance of the meeting.

Teri Corsones