

Mentorship Program Guidelines

Thank you for participating in the Elder Law Section's mentoring program. The term is for one year, commencing May 1, 2020 and ending April 30, 2021. The purpose of this program is to provide newer attorneys (0-5 years in practice of elder law) the opportunity to build one-on-one relationships with seasoned practitioners (5 years and more in the practice of elder law) for the purpose of providing a new avenue for professional development.

*** It is strongly encouraged that Mentors and Mentees attend the Section's UnProgram, held April 30-May 1 in Albany, New York. This is a terrific opportunity to get to know each other, begin the relationship, and participate in this innovative learning opportunity.*

WE ASK THAT THE MENTOR CONTACT HIS/HER MENTEE WITHIN A WEEK OF RECEIVING YOUR "PAIRING" SO THAT YOUR FORMAL RELATIONSHIP MAY BEGIN.

Below are some tips for creating a successful mentoring relationship:

- **Schedule set times to speak/meet.** Having a regularly scheduled time to discuss matters (e.g. 10am the first Wednesday of each month) ensures ongoing availability and communication with your Mentee. We encourage the Mentor to set guidelines at the outset of the pairing regarding the frequency and manner in which future communications should take place.
- **Set goals.** The mentor and mentee pairs are encouraged to discuss individual expectations and goals at the outset and should work to develop action steps toward achieving any identified goals. Possible topics may include brainstorming about planning options for fact patterns presented by the Mentee, work/home balance, networking opportunities, assistance with time management, and discussion of ethical issues.
- **Be considerate of each other's time.** Like most attorneys, the mentors involved in this program have significant demands on their time. Mentees can expect quality time from them, but, in return, mentees need to be considerate of their time. Return phone calls and emails promptly and be on time. Be sure to ask how much time your mentor has to spend with you and abide by that request. Let your mentor suggest taking extra time if needed. We hope that there will be at least one communication per month, whether in person, by telephone or email, to keep continuity and maximize the value to the participants.
- **Independent Legal Opinions.** Information received by the mentee from the mentor should not be relied upon by the mentee as a substitute for his or her own judgment or opinion. Furthermore, the mentor's opinions and statements are not a substitute for the mentee's independent research. Furthermore, the mentor is not expected to furnish the mentee with sample documents or any other work product.

We hope this program is mutually beneficial to the mentors and mentees. If any participants have issues or questions along the way you can contact JulieAnn Calareso (julie@shevylaw.com), Neil T. Rimsky (nrimsky@cuddyfeder.com), Deborah A. Slezak (dslezak@cswlawfirm.com)