



Department of
Public Interest



20

26

Partnership Conference

September 23, 2026 - September 24, 2026

Strength and Resilience:
Advancing Justice in Challenging Times

2026 PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE

Welcome to Albany

The New York State Bar Association is pleased to host the 2026 Legal Assistance Partnership Conference. The Conference is co-sponsored by the Committee on Legal Aid and the Department of Public Interest of the New York State Bar Association. The theme of this year's Conference is "Strength and Resilience: Advancing Justice in Challenging Times" The conference will feature twenty-five programs – all of which are MCLE accredited – in critical areas of law affecting low-income and vulnerable populations.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all attendees for making this the premier legal services conference in New York State.



Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: NYSBA welcomes participation by individuals with disabilities. NYSBA is committed to complying with all applicable laws that prohibit discrimination against individuals on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of its goods, services, programs, activities, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations. To request auxiliary aids or services or if you have any questions regarding accessibility, please contact Eunice Bencke at ebencke@nysba.org.

MCLE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW YORK ATTORNEYS

For the most comprehensive choice of MCLE program topics and convenient locations, no other New York State organization can match the New York State Bar Association. For more than 50 years, we have been providing the finest legal educational programs in New York State.

Newly admitted attorneys must complete a minimum of 32 credit hours of accredited transitional education within the first two years after admission to the Bar. In each of the first two years, 16 accredited hours must be completed as follows: 3 hours of ethics and professionalism; 6 hours of skills; 7 hours of law practice management and areas of professional practice.

All other attorneys must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours of accredited continuing legal education each biennial reporting cycle. Of the total, at least 4 credit hours must be in ethics and professionalism, and one credit must be in diversity, inclusion and elimination of bias.



A WORD OF THANKS

This conference would not have been possible without the hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm of the legal services attorneys and pro bono professionals who took the time and energy to identify compelling topics and speakers from across the state and develop in-depth materials for all attendees to use in their everyday work.

Thank you to this year's Partnership Conference Steering Committee members, whose expert guidance was critical to the planning of this year's conference, including twenty-five programs, The Plenary on Forging Ahead: Finding Strength and Resilience in these Challenging Times, and the Denison Ray Civil Awards and Phil Dailey Award Ceremony.

Thank you to our exhibitors and sponsors, Actionstep, Colonial Surety Company, JUST-TECH, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, NYSARC, Inc. Trust Services, Paladin, The New York Bar Foundation, and to our Section sponsors, the Commercial & Federal Litigation Section, Family Law Section, the 50+ Section, and the Women in the Law Section for their generous contributions.

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Hon. Edwina Martin, Public Administrator of Richmond County

Steering Committee Members:

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Michaela K. Rossettie Azemi, Managing Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc.
Heidi Dennis, Executive Director, Rural Law Center
Tanya Douglas, Director, Disability Advocacy Project Legal Services NYC
Gretchen Gonzalez, Executive Director, ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project
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Eunice Bencke, Public Interest Program Manager

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GUEST SPEAKERS

Opening Plenary

Taa Grays, President New York State Bar Association



Taa Grays currently serves as President of the New York State Bar Association, marking both the tenth woman and the first Black woman to hold this office in the association's 150-year history.

During her tenure, Grays will focus on implementing the association's strategic plan. In addition, Grays will focus on simplifying consumer terms and conditions, improving access to justice in Family Court, providing guidance concerning renewable and sustainable energy use, building more member resources on the use of generative artificial intelligence, and developing an archive showcasing the accomplishment of the association and its members in advancing the rule of law. She also remains committed to mitigating the impact of legal deserts across the state through the Rural Ready initiative.

Grays has dedicated over two decades of service to the New York State Bar Association, contributing to areas including police reform, strategic planning, and corporate governance. Her extensive leadership experience provides a strong foundation for her current role.

She has co-chaired several committees and task forces, including the Strategic Planning Committee, the Task Force on Racism, Social Equity and the Law, and the Task Force on Racial Injustice and Police Reform. Grays is an active member of the

Business Law, Corporate Counsel, and Women in Law sections. Additionally, she has served as vice president of the First Judicial District on the Executive Committee and chaired both the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders and the Committee on Women in the Law (now the Women in Law Section).

Previously, Grays was vice president and associate general counsel of information governance at MetLife, leading its global Information Governance Program and overseeing a team tasked with developing and executing strategic plans in this area.

Her career began with MetLife in 2003, initially in the litigation section, followed by a role as chief of staff to the general counsel from 2010 to 2015. Before joining MetLife, she served as assistant district attorney in the Bronx District Attorney's Office within the rackets bureau for five and a half years.

Grays has received numerous accolades, including the New York State Bar Association's Diversity Trailblazer Award in 2008. She was named one of Crain's New York Business's 100 Leading Women Lawyers in New York in 2017, recognized as a Visionary Leader in Litigation by Inside Counsel in 2016, included among the Most Influential Black Lawyers in 2015, and listed as Ready to Rise for general counsel roles in 2013 and 2015.

In the broader legal community, the New York City Bar Association honored Grays as a Diversity Champion in 2015, while the Metropolitan Black Bar Association presented her with its inaugural Bar Leaders of the Year Award in 2010 for her dedication and leadership.

Grays holds a Juris Doctor from Georgetown University Law Center and a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University.

Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director, UPROSE



Elizabeth Yeampierre is a Puerto Rican climate justice leader, attorney, and strategist of Black and Indigenous ancestry, born and raised in New York City. As Executive Director of UPROSE, Brooklyn's oldest Latino community-based organization, and Co-Founder and Former Co-Chair of the Climate Justice Alliance, a national frontline-led alliance, she has spent over four decades co-creating the framework for frontline communities to shape environmental and economic policy in this country and beyond.

Elizabeth's groundbreaking leadership has opened doors that had never been opened before. She became the first Latina Chair of the U.S. EPA's National Environmental Justice Advisory Council and served as the opening speaker for the first White House Council on Environmental Quality Forum on Environmental Justice under President Obama. She has advised city, state, and federal leaders on climate equity, and her voice has carried to the most significant stages in the world - Oxford, the Hague, and the Pasteur Institute in Paris.

Her work has been recognized by TIME Magazine, Vogue (as one of 13 international Climate Warriors), the New York Times (as a visionary paving the path to climate justice), People en Español, Oprah's Future Rising list, and Apolitical's Climate 100: The World's Most Influential People in Climate Policy.

At UPROSE, she has built one of the country's most respected models for community-led climate resilience and Just Transition organizing, grounded in the principle that those most impacted must lead. Whether on global stages, in the halls of power, or in the streets of Sunset Park alongside the community she loves and serves, Elizabeth brings moral clarity, strategic depth, and an unwavering commitment to justice. In 2026, as UPROSE marks 60 years in motion, her vision remains the movement's north star.

Denison Ray Civil Awards and Phil Dailey Award Dinner *Special Guest Speaker*

Hon. Edwina G. Richardson, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge, Office for Justice Initiatives



Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Edwina G. Richardson was appointed to lead the New York State Unified Court System's Office for Justice Initiatives (OJI) in 2017. OJI works diligently to promote meaningful access to justice for everyone entering a New York state court regardless of their income, background, or ability. Under Judge Richardson's leadership, OJI has grown to house seven focus areas: Access to Justice; Child Welfare & Family Justice; Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Justice in the Courts; Guardianship Matters & Elder Justice; Judiciary Civil Legal Services; Problem Solving Justice; and Youth & Emerging Adult Justice. Central to OJI's work is community engagement.

Recognizing how crucial judicial wellbeing is to this mission, Judge Richardson is developing robust coaching support systems for New York State Judges.

Judge Richardson and OJI lead the court system's equal justice initiatives, including implementation of the recommendations from the October 2020 Report from the Special Adviser on Equal Justice to combat racism in the courts, from the 2020 Honorable Betty Weinberg Ellerin commission on Women in the Courts' 2020 Report to promote gender fairness, and efforts to ensure courts are fair and inclusive for LGBTQ+ individuals. Judge Richardson also oversees statewide reform of Mental Health Law Article 81 Guardianship cases. In this role, Judge Richardson advises and provides guidance to judicial leadership and the courts on

(Continued on page 7)

Annual CONFERENCE

THE NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Save the Dates!

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2027

Tuesday, January 19 - Friday, January 22, 2027
New York Hilton Midtown

Enjoy four days of exceptional CLE programming, thought-provoking discussions, and valuable networking opportunities with colleagues.

This year's conference also introduces exciting new experiences

NYSBA Tech Summit

Explore the latest developments in legal technology

Wellness Expo

Offering resources and activities that support attorney well-being

Civics Convocation

Highlighting the vital role of civic education and engagement

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GUEST SPEAKERS

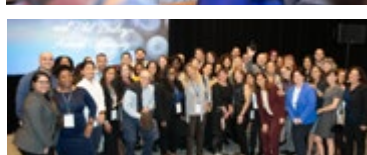
matters related to the needs of vulnerable populations and older adults with diminished capacity. Additionally, Judge Richardson and OJI provide programmatic oversight of the multi-million-dollar Judiciary Civil Legal Services grant, which supports access to civil legal representation in essentials-of-life areas such as housing, family matters, healthcare, education, subsistence income, and immigration. Judge Richardson and OJI also oversee major youth and family justice initiatives such as the Child Welfare

Court Improvement Project, emerging adult justice programs, and ongoing implementation of New York's Raise the Age law.

Under Judge Richardson's guidance, the Problem-Solving Justice Division supports nearly 350 problem-solving and accountability courts throughout New York, including community, drug, family treatment, human trafficking, mental health, opioid, veterans' treatment, domestic violence, and integrated domestic violence courts. These courts employ innovative, treatment-focused approaches that help judges and court staff respond to underlying issues leading to court involvement. The Division also supports foreclosure and elder justice matters.

In addition to leading OJI, Judge Richardson is an active judge on the Court of Claims. Judge Richardson was appointed to the Court of Claims in 2017. Previously, she presided over New York County Supreme Court's Youth Part, hearing cases of youth charged as adults. Judge Richardson first joined the court system as a Court Attorney-Referee in Queens County Family Court, after representing clients in New York City Housing Court, Family Court, and Supreme Court. She later became a Family Court Judge in 2003, the Queens County Supervising Family Court Judge in 2008, and a year later, was elevated to Administrative Judge of all New York City Family Courts.

Judge Richardson is a proud graduate of CUNY Law School, whose motto is "Law in the Service of Human Needs." She also holds a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from the City University of New York Graduate Center and has been an adjunct professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Hofstra Law School. She maintains active membership and leadership positions in various bar associations and court committees advancing professional development and system improvement in the delivery and quality of justice services, and lectures nationally and internationally to share New York's access to and equal justice initiatives.



2026 PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

Task Force Meetings being held at the New York State Bar Association.

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Legal Services Coalition Meeting
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	DV & Family Task Force Meeting
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Legal Content Review
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Legal Services Access Alliance Meeting
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	DAP Meeting
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Pro Bono Coordinator's Network Meeting & Reception

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Sign In – Registration
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Opening Plenary Forging Ahead: Finding Strength and Resilience in These Challenging Times

Credit: 1.0 MCLE Credit in Skills

Program Description: Practicing in 2026 and beyond requires a unique set of skills to address the cascade of additional challenges that our clients face due to enormous cuts to public benefits, high inflation, and inhumane immigration policies. Expertise in the law only takes you so far when the systems are stacked against both us and our clients. New and experienced legal services professionals are feeling the burdens of policies and venues.

In this keynote, the presenters will discuss what makes the systems we work within so challenging and why traditional discussions of self-care fall short. Presenters will also discuss how lived experiences and intersectional identities impact our experiences of this work.

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Lunch
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12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	WEDNESDAY SESSION ONE
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***Immigration Track:* Beyond Standby Guardianship: Delivering Effective Family Preparedness Services for Immigrant Families**

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit Skills/Areas of Practice

Program Description: In response to heightened immigration enforcement and growing uncertainty for undocumented families, this workshop equips legal services providers with practical tools to support immigrant parents in planning for potential family separation.

DAP Track DAP 1: How to Effectively Present Mental Limitations in an SSI/Social Security Disability Appeal

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This Disability Advocacy Program (DAP) session will focus on building a strong residual functional capacity (RFC) assessment – a key part of the disability analysis – for claimants with common mental impairments in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability appeals. It will cover practical strategies for identifying impairments, reviewing the record for evidence of functional limitations, and translating mental health symptoms and findings into concrete work-related restrictions under SSA's framework.

Misc. Track: Learning from the Learners: Supervising Legal Writing in a New Era

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Ethics & Professionalism

Program Description: Focusing on the “new wave” of attorneys who are graduating law school with classroom exposure to AI, this training will seek to understand what incoming attorneys are learning in school and how it differs from the way seasoned professionals were taught. These attorneys and supervisors do not have the same levels of fluency and comfort with these new tools. So, the question is how do we train legal services attorneys in the process and systems necessary for excellent - and ethical - client representation and advocacy, with a particular emphasis on writing? This training aims to bridge the gap in educational experiences while emphasizing the need for new attorneys to learn the critical thinking skills that are learned through the process of practicing law.

NON-CLE Program: Partnerships & Technology for Eviction Legal Help

Break

WEDNESDAY SESSION TWO

DAP Track DAP 2: More Than Distracted: Effective SSA Advocacy for Clients with ADHD Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This session provides a practical framework for developing and presenting Social Security disability claims based on ADHD. Presenters will cover the clinical profile of ADHD (including subtypes, co-occurring conditions, and documented underdiagnosis among girls, women, and BIPOC youth) alongside the SSA standards for Listings arguments and RFC assessments. The session gives particular attention to young adult clients, who often face treatment gaps, late diagnosis, and limited work history, and closes with concrete strategies for pre-hearing briefs and ALJ hearings.

Benefits Track: Fair Hearings in Practice: Tools, Strategies, and Due Process

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This program will bring together Medicaid advocates and public benefits advocates to review and discuss changes in telephonic fair hearings. It will cover current telephonic procedures at the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (“OTDA”) and the proposed “call in” changes, the division of Medicaid appeal jurisdiction between NY State of Health (“NYSOH”) and OTDA, and the structure of the NYSOH appeals system, which is new to many advocates.

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

AGENDA

DV & Family Track: Litigating Cases Involving Cybercrimes and Technology Abuse: A Victim Centered Approach

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Skills

Program Description: In OPDV and Sanctuary for Families' Litigating Cases Involving Cybercrimes and Technology Abuse: A Victim Centered Approach to' participants will learn to:

- Interpret and apply existing laws and statutes relevant to technology-facilitated gender based violence in New York State.
- Evaluate evidentiary standards and admissibility criteria for digital evidence in court proceedings.
- Develop case-building strategies that prioritize victim safety and incorporate survivor centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive approaches.
- Enhance courtroom advocacy skills to effectively present technology-related evidence and arguments
- Collaborate with state and federal law enforcement agencies and providers to ensure comprehensive support for survivors throughout the legal process.

NON-CLE Program: Growing Pro Bono Capacity: Aligning Recruitment Strategy, Outreach, and Technology

Program Description: As legal aid organizations engage volunteers across an increasing number of channels, coordinating outreach efforts, reducing duplicative work, and understanding which recruitment approaches are most effective have become growing priorities. As experienced volunteers retire, organizations are also seeking new ways to engage attorneys and law students and build sustainable volunteer pipelines. This session will explore how to effectively design opportunities that resonate with different audiences and manage recruitment across multiple channels.

Drawing on case studies from New York legal aid organizations, participants will explore how audience-targeted messaging and centralized pro bono management can support broader volunteer engagement while minimizing administrative burden. The session will include a live demonstration of Paladin and dedicated workshop time for participants to create an account and post a pro bono opportunity. Participants will learn how organizations can manage and distribute opportunities across multiple channels, including the New York Pro Bono Portal, law firm and law school networks, and their own websites. The session will also briefly address integrations with LegalServer and JusticeServer and how they can support more coordinated workflows.

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Break

3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY SESSION THREE

Pro Bono Track: Community Legal Help Project and Lessons Learned from Pro Bono Management

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This presentation will draw on the presenters' experience managing legal services programs staffed by pro bono attorneys to offer practical strategies for attracting, supporting, and retaining private attorney volunteers. The session will begin with a broad discussion of program structures that make pro bono participation easier and more rewarding, including the use of technology, agency administrative support, accessible clinic locations, remote participation options, and clear role expectations.

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Wage & Employment Track: Home care by friends or family: the advantages and pitfalls of this Medicaid program.

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This program will explore the New York State Medicaid Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (“CDPAP”), a New York State Medicaid program that allows Medicaid recipients who are eligible for home care services (“Consumers”) to choose their own caregivers (usually family or friends). We will explain the difference between this program and the traditional home care program where an agency assigns a PA.

The program will also cover Q&As on a wide range of topics from how to apply for the program, how eligibility and hours are determined, how to challenge these determinations or later terminations, and how personal assistants are paid. We will discuss the problematic transition in April 2025 from hundreds of fiscal intermediaries to one, Public Partnerships, LLC (“PPL”), and what advocates are doing to improve CDPAP.

Health Track: Hot Topics in Medicaid Advocacy and Eligibility

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: New York’s Medicaid program is undergoing rapid and complex transformation, with significant implications for eligibility, access to services, and advocacy strategy. For legal advocates supporting low-income New Yorkers, older adults, and people with disabilities, staying current is critical to ensuring clients can secure and maintain essential health coverage and community-based care.

This practical, advocacy-focused training will guide participants through the most recent Medicaid and Medicare developments and how they are playing out on the ground. We will begin with key policy updates, including emerging Medicaid work requirements, changes to financial eligibility rules, updates to the Nursing Home Transition & Diversion (NHTD) Waiver, evolving immigrant eligibility following HR1, and available pathways for uninsured individuals.

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Denison Ray Reception

6:00pm – 8:00pm

Denison Ray Civil Award Ceremony and Dinner

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2026

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Breakfast

9:00 am – 10:15 am

THURSDAY SESSION ONE

Housing Track: Good Cause Eviction Law

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This training reviews the Good Cause Eviction Law (GCEL) passed in 2024. The law was effective in New York City immediately. Since April 2024, twenty-two other jurisdictions have opted into the law. Under the new Good Cause Eviction law, New Yorkers have the right to continue living in their homes without fear of unreasonable eviction or extreme rent increases. In many situations, tenants of market-rate housing are now covered by more expansive protections. In this training, participants will learn about the text and structure of the law, case law that has developed in last two years, and any unresolved questions about the law.

Immigration Track: Immigration Basics for Non-immigration lawyers

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This panel will be geared towards non-immigration lawyers and will discuss immigration basics, recent policy changes and steps practitioners can take if a client is detained by DHS.

Consumer Bankruptcy Track: Get That House Back: Navigating Tax Foreclosure and Strategies to Protect domestic violence survivors who are facing foreclosure

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: When designing a tax foreclosure strategy, keep this question in focus: do our clients deserve the highest and best offers, or the worst and the least?

Our clients are vulnerable. If we stop pushing for the highest and best market values then we are a part of a system that is making them indigent - giving them the worst and least options to make their governments whole.

Non- CLE: Legal Content Review

Program Description: Are you a legal expert in housing, family, consumer, benefits, or other area of nonprofit legal practice? Stop by the LawHelpNY table and sign up for on-the-spot legal review of a plain-language community education article. LHNY will have (small) gift certificates for a local beverage, a raffle to win more, and snacks. Join the party to help ensure the site is correct and up to date.

10:15 am – 10:30 am

Break

10:30 am – 11:45 am

THURSDAY SESSION TWO

DEI Track: Greener Where You Water It: Data-Driven Strategies to Combat White Supremacy Legal Services Organizations

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Diversity, Inclusion, and Elimination Bias

Program Description: White supremacy is deeply embedded in all our systems, including civil legal services, and all organizations bear responsibility for proactively addressing it. In this interactive session, we will present benchmark data from several nonprofit legal services organizations that pursued anti-racism initiatives between 2020–2024. Participants will explore common challenges, pitfalls, and successes across the sector and receive concrete recommendations for improving their own organizational “green thumb” for racial equity work. Participants will receive copies of the benchmark report, worksheets and handouts to guide creation of actionable racial equity plans, and an introduction to the 6 D’s of organizational anti-racism leadership as a framework to strengthen the racial equity efforts within their own organizations and across the entire sector.

Health Track: Work Requirements in SNAP and Medicaid: Federal Changes, New York Impact, Advocacy Tools

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: H.R. 1 (Federal Public Law 119-21) makes unprecedented changes to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), creating a federal work requirement in Medicaid for the first time and vastly expanding SNAP work requirements. These requirements threaten millions of New Yorkers with loss of access to basic health care and nutrition. This training will discuss the implications of H.R. 1's changes in work rules and explore with participants how they can assist their clients and the broader community to maintain these critical benefits. The program will describe the expanded work requirements for SNAP and the new "community engagement requirements" for Medicaid. We will provide participants with clear tools to determine who is subject to the requirements and who is exempt, and how individuals subject to the requirements can comply. The program will also anticipate problems and barriers in the implementation of work requirements and how they can be addressed.

Misc. Track: Artificial Intelligence & Public Interest Law: Do The Risks Outweigh The Reward?

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Ethics & Professionalism/Cybersecurity, Privacy & Data Protection

Program Description: NYS civil legal service providers are increasingly using Artificial intelligence ("AI") tools, often informally, unevenly, and without clear guidance. While these tools promise efficiency, they also introduce significant legal, ethical, and governance risks that can undermine attorney-client privilege, create discoverable material, compromise accuracy, and expose organizations to consent-related issues.

This program examines four consequential risks of AI use in legal services: (1) erosion of attorney-client privilege through third-party platforms and data retention; (2) creation of discoverable material, including prompts, drafts, and digital exhaust; (3) accuracy and reliability risks, such as "hallucinated" or misapplied legal precedent; and (4) ethical and legal risks related to AI-assisted notetaking, recording, and transcription without clear disclosure or consent.

CAPITAL ROOM Non-CLE Program: Erie County Landlord-Tenant HUB Court. Experiences with centralized county wide eviction proceedings

Lunch

THURSDAY SESSION THREE

Education Track: Civil Rights and Special Education Enforcement in Schools in Light of Federal Uncertainties

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: In the wake of changes in civil rights and special education enforcement at the federal level, families and students in New York State are facing many uncertainties. This program will discuss the federal changes and offer solutions at the state level to help practitioners effectively advocate for clients facing civil rights and/or special education issues in school.

11:45am – 1:00 pm

1:00 pm – 2:15 pm

AGENDA

LGBTQ Track: Inclusive Advocacy: Excelling in LGBTQ+ Legal Representation and Working with LGBTQ+ Survivors

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Diversity, Inclusion & Elimination of Bias

Program Description: This interactive program equips legal practitioners with the tools needed to provide culturally competent, inclusive, and effective representation to LGBTQ+ clients, and specifically to LGBTQ+ clients who are survivors of violence. The presentation is structured to provide a holistic perspective and will ground practitioners in why a trauma-informed, LGBTQ+ competent approach is essential to effective representation. Designed for attorneys of all experience levels, this session offers both foundational knowledge and practical strategies that can be immediately applied in legal practice.

Pro Bono Track: New Energy for Justice: Partnerships Between Legal Service Organizations and Law Schools to Meet New York's Legal Needs

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: New York communities face significant unmet legal needs across areas such as housing, immigration, consumer debt, family law, and access to public benefits. Simultaneously, law students seeking public interest experience and client skill development opportunities represent a tremendous resource in strengthening the state's pro bono and public interest ecosystem. This session brings together New York law schools and legal service organizations to explore how partnerships can expand capacity, respond to community needs, and help prepare future lawyers for service. Panelists will highlight innovative short- and long-term models, demystify how academic structures and pro bono requirements operate in practice, and discuss what students look for in a placement, fostering an important conversation about collaboration, sustainability, and access to justice using law student placements as a mechanism for expanded responses to New Yorker's unmet legal needs.

2:15 pm – 2:30 pm

Break

2:30 pm – 3:45 pm

THURSDAY SESSION FOUR

DEI Track: Building Inclusive Workspaces

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Diversity, Inclusion, and Elimination of Bias

Program Description: The legal profession is seeing more openly transgender, non-binary, Two Spirit, and gender-expansive professionals than ever before. In today's political climate, which often frames gender diversity as "ideology extremism," organizations need concrete strategies to ensure these employees can thrive. This interactive session shares the top 20 practices that civil legal services organizations can implement to competently and confidently welcome, respect, affirm, and celebrate employees of all gender identities and expressions. Participants will leave equipped to assess their organization's current readiness, identify gaps, and take practical steps toward a safer, more inclusive workplace.

DV & Family Track: ABC's of QDRO's

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Skills

Program Description: Our presentation, “ABC's of QDROs”, will provide a nuts-and-bolts training for divorce practitioners who have not handled QDROs before. The training will explain the different types of retirement plans and retirement systems, as well as providing a step-by-step walk-through of how to approach a QDRO. The main takeaway is that the divorce settlement and QDRO go hand-in-hand, in order to protect important rights. The training will include a live drafting demonstration using online tools. Participants will receive model stipulation paragraphs and model QDROs for different types of plans.

Benefits Track: Non-Citizen Eligibility for SNAP, Medicaid; Public Charge and Related Concerns

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This session provides training on immigrant access to public benefits, giving practitioners up-to-date guidance on eligibility rules for Cash Assistance, SNAP, and Medicaid, including changes that have been made are expected pursuant to H.R.1, as well as practical instruction on the anticipated new Department of Homeland Security public charge rule and its implications. Participants will leave with an understanding of how immigration status affects eligibility, resources for tracking ongoing rule changes, and clarity on which benefits may be considered in public charge determinations so they can help clients make informed choices while reducing the chilling effect caused by recent policy shifts.

Non-CLE: You're Not the Only One Googling That

Program Description: If you've ever been the only person at your org trying to figure out AI, a breach policy, or why the shared drive is such a mess, this one's for you. New York legal aid organizations have been tackling exactly those headaches together through a statewide peer-learning community. We'll show how it works, what's coming next, and how nobody has to sort this out alone. Informal, interactive, and yes, worth staying to the end for.

3:45 pm – 4:00 pm

Break



NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

VOLUNTEER FOR FREE LEGAL ANSWERS™

Free Legal Answers™ is an online version of the pro bono walk-in clinic model where clients request brief advice and counsel about a specific civil legal issue from a volunteer lawyer. Lawyers provide information and basic legal advice without any expectation of long-term representation. The purpose of the website is to increase access to advice and information about non-criminal legal matters to those who cannot afford it. There is no fee for the use of the system or for the advice and information provided by the lawyer. Sign up to be a volunteer today at NY.freelegalanswers.org!



Sign up to be a volunteer
Learn more | www.NY.freelegalanswers.org



4:00 pm – 5:15 pm

THURSDAY SESSION FIVE

Consumer Bankruptcy Track: New York Foreclosure Process and Divorce Intersections: Common Issues and Mitigation

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Program Description: This program explores the practical and procedural intersection of New York judicial mortgage foreclosure and matrimonial practice when the marital residence is in or near default. Using common case scenarios, presenters will walk through the foreclosure timeline and key statutory requirements (including RPAPL pre-foreclosure notices and CPLR 3408 settlement conferences) and then connect those issues to equitable distribution under DRL § 236(B), pendente lite motion practice, and settlement drafting. Attendees will leave with strategies to protect equity, minimize avoidable default/credit harm, and coordinate parallel proceedings to achieve durable outcomes for clients.

Housing Track: Litigating Source of Income Discrimination Cases

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Skills

Program Description: This training provides a practical overview of litigating Source of Income (SOI) discrimination cases under local, New York City, New York State, and applicable federal law. Participants will examine the legal framework governing SOI discrimination, including available enforcement mechanisms through administrative agencies and the courts, as well as the remedies available to clients.

The program will focus on identifying and investigating SOI discrimination claims, developing evidence, and effectively collaborating with testers and fair housing organizations to strengthen cases. Presenters will also discuss strategic considerations in selecting the appropriate forum for enforcement and pursuing litigation.

Emphasizing practical advocacy, the training will highlight strategies for obtaining immediate injunctive relief, including temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions to prevent voucher loss, unlawful housing denials, and evictions. Through a case study and interactive discussion, participants will gain practical tools to effectively represent clients facing Source of Income discrimination and protect their access to stable housing.

Wage & Employment Track: Leveraging Generative AI in the Delivery of Legal Services: Practical Lessons from Reclamo AI in the Field of Workers' Rights

Credit: 1.5 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

Wage theft is a national epidemic, costing workers an estimated \$50 billion annually and disproportionately affecting low-wage workers, immigrants, women, and communities of color. This workshop will examine key trends in wage theft and explore how Reclamo AI—developed by Justicia Lab in partnership with the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)—leverages expert-driven legal knowledge and generative artificial intelligence to help workers prevent, assess and document workplace violations in New York State. Participants will learn how this mobile-first, multilingual digital assistant helps New York workers understand their workplace rights, assess whether harmful practices may be unlawful, and connect with trusted sources of assistance, offering an innovative and impactful model for expanding access to timely and accurate legal education. Presenters will discuss why and how Reclamo AI was developed, results to date, and practical insights for other access-to-justice technology initiatives seeking to responsibly leverage generative AI.



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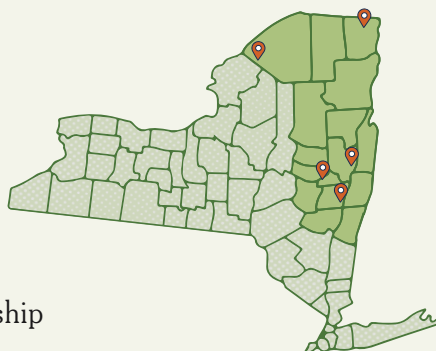


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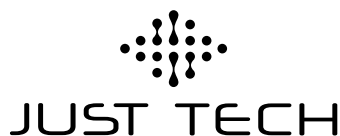


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