

Assistance Resources

Lawyer Assistance Programs

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| Patricia Spataro, Director NYSBA LAP | 1-800-255-0569 or 518-487-5685 |
| Sharon Adler, Coordinator NYSBA LAP, Second Department | 1-800-255-0569 |
| Paul Curtin, Coordinator NYSBA LAP, Fourth Department | 1-800-255-0569 |
| Eileen Travis, Director New York City LAP | 212-302-5787 |
| Peter J. Schweitzer, Director Nassau County LAP | 888-408-6222 |

Lawyer Assistance Committees

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| Sallie Krauss, Chair NYSBA Committee | 718-637-7561 |
| John Urban, Kings County | 718-624-4001 |
| Katherine S. Bifaro, Erie County | 716-852-8687 |
| John Crowe, Monroe County | 585-234-1950 |
| Carol Hoffman, Nassau County | 516-393-8270 |
| Timothy D. Foley, Oneida County | 315-369-3544 |
| William R. Morgan, Onondaga County | 315-476-2945 |
| Jacqueline Torchin, Queens County | 718-545-1433 |
| Benjamin Selig, Rockland County | 845-942-2222 |
| Hon. Vincent Reilly, Schenectady County | 518-285-8425 |
| Richard Wallace, Tompkins County | 607-272-2102 |
| Anne Cahill, Westchester County | 914-831-5082 |

Judiciary Law

Section 499. Lawyer Assistance Committees Chapter 327 of the Laws of 1993

1. Confidential information privileged. The confidential relations and communications between a member or authorized agent of a lawyer assistance committee sponsored by a state or local bar association and any person, firm or corporation communicating with such a committee, its members or authorized agents shall be deemed to be privileged on the same basis as those provided by law between attorney and client. Such privileges may be waived only by the person, firm or corporation which has furnished information to the committee.

2. Immunity from liability. Any person, firm or corporation in good faith providing information to, or in any other way participating in the affairs of any of the committees referred to in subdivision one of this section shall be immune from civil liability that might otherwise result by reason of such conduct. For the purpose of any proceeding, the good faith of any such person, firm or corporation shall be presumed.

Section 499 of the Judiciary Law waives Disciplinary Rule DR1-103 "snitch rule" for the purpose of assisting attorneys suffering from substance abuse.



NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

One Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207
1.800.255.0569 or 518.487.5685 fax 518.487.5699
lap@nysba.org



Lawyer Assistance Program

Confidential Helpline

1-800-255-0569
518-487-5685

email: lap@nysba.org

All LAP services are confidential and protected under Section 499 of the Judiciary Law as amended by Chapter 327 of the Laws of 1993



The Lawyer Assistance Program (LAP) of the New York State Bar Association was established in 1990 to assist attorneys, judges, and law school students who are affected by alcoholism, drug abuse, debilitating stress, depression, and other mental health issues and to provide collateral services to family members. The goal is to prevent health, family and work-related problems that can occur as a result of a mental health issue.

LAP Services

- Early identification of impairment
- Intervention and motivation to seek help
- Assessment, evaluation and development of an appropriate treatment plan
- Referral to community resources, self-help groups, inpatient treatment, outpatient counseling, and rehabilitation services
- Referral to a trained peer assistant – attorneys who have faced their own difficulties and volunteer to assist a struggling colleague by providing support, understanding, guidance, and good listening
- Information and consultation for those (family, firm, and judges) concerned about an attorney
- Training programs on recognizing, preventing, and dealing with addiction, stress, depression, and other mental health issues

Access to LAP is voluntary.

LAP is guided by the New York State Bar Association Lawyer Assistance Committee.

LAP is available to all attorneys in New York State and their immediate family members, whether or not the attorney is a member of the New York State Bar Association.

All LAP services are confidential and protected under Section 499 of the Judiciary Law as amended by Chapter 327 of the Laws of 1993.

Facts about Addiction, Depression and Stress

Addiction:

- Alcoholism and drug abuse are treatable illnesses.
- Substance abuse is characterized by a preoccupation with alcohol or other drugs, coupled with a loss of control over consumption.
- Addiction is a progressive disease; without treatment it only gets worse, never better.
- Statistics indicate that 30% of male lawyers and 20% of female lawyers regularly exceed moderate drinking levels and 15-18% of lawyers become addicted.
- Marijuana impairs memory and concentration.
- The risk of addiction to prescription drugs increases when drugs are used in ways other than prescribed. Approximately 20% of the U.S. populations have used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons.
- Driven by an uncontrollable urge to gamble, the compulsive gambler loses everything - home, family, livelihood, and often, their lives.

Depression:

- Depression affects mood, thought, body, and behavior.
- Symptoms include sadness, irritability, loss of concentration, unexplained physical pain and problems, inability to enjoy life.
- Depression is a treatable illness. However, most people with a depressive illness do not seek treatment.
- The great majority, even those whose depression is extremely severe, can be helped.
- According to a John Hopkins study, attorneys suffer from depression at much higher rates than the general public.

Stress:

- Stress creates mental, social, and physical problems.
- Symptoms can include exhaustion, decreased or increased appetite, headaches, crying, sleeplessness, and oversleeping.
- Unmanaged stress can be deadly.
- The use of alcohol and drugs or other compulsive behaviors, although common, are destructive ways to cope with stress.
- There are many positive ways to manage stress.

Personal Inventory

Personal problems such as alcoholism, substance abuse, depression and stress affect one's ability to practice law. Take time to review the following questions and consider whether you or a colleague would benefit from the available Lawyer Assistance Program services. If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, you may need help.

1. Are my associates, clients or family saying that my behavior has changed or that I don't seem myself?
2. Is it difficult for me to maintain a routine and stay on top of responsibilities?
3. Have I experienced memory problems or an inability to concentrate?
4. Am I having difficulty managing emotions such as anger and sadness?
5. Have I missed appointments or appearances or failed to return phone calls? Am I keeping up with correspondence?
6. Have my sleeping and eating habits changed?
7. Am I experiencing a pattern of relationship problems with significant people in my life (spouse/parent, children, partners/associates)?
8. Does my family have a history of alcoholism, substance abuse or depression?
9. Do I drink or take drugs to deal with my problems?
10. In the last few months, have I had more drinks or drugs than I intended, or felt that I should cut back or quit, but could not?
11. Is gambling making me careless of my financial responsibilities?
12. Do I feel so stressed, burned out and depressed that I have thoughts of suicide?

There Is Hope

**Contact LAP today for free
confidential help and support!**

1.800.255.0569

www.nysba.org/lap