



# The State Bar *of California*

## **Moral Character Planning Session**

Goals, Objectives and Work Plan for 2020

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## Moral Character Functions

- Oversee and administer policies related to moral character determinations
- Conduct administrative reviews, upon request, for applicants who receive a negative moral character determination from staff



## Changes Implemented in 2019

- AIMS
  - Determination and extension applications now submitted online
  - Questionnaires now sent electronically through AIMS
  - Elimination of hard copy files for applications submitted in AIMS
- Procedural/Policy
  - Staff began conducting informal conferences
  - CBE transitioned to new role as the administrative review body
- Other
  - Decisional Law Library created
  - Moral Character Working Group initiated



## Changes Anticipated in 2020

- Procedural/Policy
  - Final products (Statement and Guidelines, and Decisional Matrices) of the Moral Character Working Group to be reviewed and approved by the CBE and BOT
  - After approval, updated/new moral character materials to be implemented by staff
- AIMS
  - AIMS to automatically account for gaps in an applicant's residence history and activity – implemented January 9, 2020
  - Digital signature on the moral character applications in AIMS



## Training Topics for 2020

- Present seminars/training to the CBE on issues pertinent to moral character determinations.
  - Implicit bias and moral character determinations
  - Introduction to the State Bar's Ethics School
  - Introduction to the State Bar's Client Trust Accounting School
  - Expanding Access to the Legal Profession for People with Criminal Records (suggested speaker Debbie Mukamal)
  - Other Suggestions?



## Current Goals

- Present findings of the Moral Character Working Group review of the current standards for determination of moral character matters and any recommendations for change – **April 2020**
- CBE members to receive a presentation on the Unauthorized Practice of Law - **Completed**
- CBE members to receive a presentation on the dynamics of sexual assault and survivor response - **Completed**
- Receive additional trainings on topics relative to moral character determinations (e.g. Ethics School, Client Trust Accounting School) – **Ongoing**
- Conduct requested administrative reviews of adverse moral character determinations and make final determinations with respect to Applications for Determinations of Moral Character – **Ongoing**
- Other Suggestions?



## Recommendation for Work Plan

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL & OBJECTIVE	WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD COMMITTEE (Y/N) / DATE
<b>Goal 5, Objective d:</b> Improve transparency. Accountability, accessibility, and governance by increasing the availability of meeting materials and public access to meetings and records and reporting these efforts to stakeholders and the general public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moral Character Working Group (MCWG) meeting agendas are posted at least 10 days in advance</li><li>• MCWG meetings are webcasted and open to the public</li><li>• MCWG meeting materials are remediated and posted to the State Bar's website</li></ul>	January 2020 February 2020	Final Work Product to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CBE April 2020</li><li>• BOT May 2020, if approved by CBE</li></ul>