



# The State Bar *of California*

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## COUNCIL ON ACCESS AND FAIRNESS 2024 WORK PLAN

**Charge: The Council on Access and Fairness is composed of ten members appointed by the Board of Trustees. The charge of the Council is as follows:**

- Assist and advise the Board of Trustees in defining and advancing the State Bar's diversity and inclusion strategies and goals.
- Study, recommend, and help devise curricula designed to educate California attorneys on diversity and inclusion principles.
- Promote programs and strategies to improve diversity initiatives impacting the pipeline, particularly at California law schools, for the bar exam and within the legal profession.
- Evaluate the state of diversity and inclusion in the profession annually.
- Identify barriers to entry into, and retention and advancement in the legal profession, and propose solutions to address barriers.
- Explore, promote, encourage, and partner in collaborative efforts to increase diversity and inclusion in the profession and in the judiciary.
- Comment and advise, when requested by the Board of Trustees or the Executive Director, on barriers directly related to access opportunities within the profession for attorneys from diverse backgrounds.
- Facilitate communication and coordination on diversity and inclusion efforts by providing reciprocal liaisons to California Lawyers Association (CLA) Diversity Outreach Committee and California Leadership Access Workforce (LAW), and with a liaison from the Judicial Council of California Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness
- Serve as a representative of the State Bar, as requested by the Board of Trustees, on issues of diversity and inclusion.

Strategic Plan Goal	Strategy	Implementation Step	Work Plan	Deadline	To BOT (y/n)/date
Goal 1: Protect the public by Strengthening the Attorney Discipline System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Continue to address any racial or other disparities in the attorney discipline system	Identify and implement strategies to address other disparities in discipline rates and outcomes, including those related to solo and small firm practitioners.	Review State Bar outreach and education data related to outside counsel including attorneys served and outcomes; identify areas for improvements and make recommendations.	12/31/2024	No
Goal 1: Protect the public by strengthening the attorney discipline system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Continue to address any racial or other disparities in the attorney discipline system.	Identify and implement strategies to address other disparities in discipline rates and outcomes, including those related to solo and small firm practitioners.	Review data annually on violations of Rule 8.3 and Rule 8.4.1, and based on review, make recommendations of potential interventions or actions to BOT.	12/31/24	No
Goal 1: Protect the public by Strengthening the Attorney Discipline System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Continue to address any racial or other disparities in the attorney discipline system	Conduct a follow up study of racial disparities in attorney discipline, identify areas for improvement, and implement recommendations.	Provide input on the follow up study of racial disparities in the attorney discipline system, including identifying areas for improvement and potential recommendations.	12/31/2024	No

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Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Effectiveness: Increase representation through the State Bar's existing regulatory and oversight authority including special admissions and pro bono practice programs.	Revise admissions requirements to be more relevant to the practice of law in alignment with the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of the Bar Exam.	Provide input and feedback on the development of new bar exam and/or the portfolio bar exam, including questions, modality, and equitable testing practices.	12/31/2024	No
Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support the law school to profession pipeline to foster a diverse legal profession representative of California's communities, particularly as related to race, ethnicity, and socio-	Publish an annual report card on workforce diversity and retention trends in the legal profession.	Continue to review Attorney Census data.  Review data collected in My State Bar Profile and in the attorney census survey and make recommendations to include collection of data related to tribal communities.	Ongoing  12/31/24	No  No

	economic status.				
Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support the law school to profession pipeline to foster a diverse legal profession representative of California's communities, particularly as related to race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.	Increase the numbers of diverse attorneys in the legal profession through diversity pipeline programs that support aspiring attorneys in graduating from law school and passing the exam.	Recommend to Office of Admissions ongoing review and comparison of bar examinations to gauge impact of the Guiding Principles in Examination Development to Minimize Potential Bias in Bar Exam Questions, if appropriate; review data, identify any issues, and make recommendations to the Office of Admissions, as appropriate.	12/31/25	No

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Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support the law school to profession pipeline to foster a diverse legal profession representative of California's communities, particularly as related to race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.	Increase the numbers of diverse attorneys in the legal profession through diversity pipeline programs that support aspiring attorneys in graduating from law school and passing the bar exam.	Invite researchers or other experts to make presentations to COAF, at minimal cost to the State Bar, to assist COAF in identifying issues in the pipeline to the profession and make recommendations on how to address pipeline to the profession issues	Ongoing	No
			Support presentations to underrepresented high school, community college, and university students on how to prepare for becoming a lawyer at programs convened by non-profits and other appropriate entities	Ongoing	No
			Discuss partnering with CLA on one-day Pipeline Summit to obtain a status report on the state of diversity in the legal profession.	12/31/24	No

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			Continue to partner with diverse General Counsels for professional sports team (e.g., the Golden State Warriors), the entertainment industry, or similar groups, to jointly produce engaging content, at minimal cost to the State Bar, reflecting diverse lawyers in nontraditional legal roles, with a view toward posting links to those videos on the State Bar website, and report back to the State Bar on any recommended next steps	12/31/24	No
			Distribute and publicize via social media and other outlets the State Bar's "Be a Lawyer: Make a Difference" brochure; review "Be a Lawyer: Make a Difference" brochure for potential updates and revisions	12/31/2024	No
Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support the law school to profession pipeline to foster a diverse legal	Identify data-supported practices that promote retention and advancement of a diverse and inclusive legal profession and share those practices	Participate in the Law School Assembly	Ongoing	No
			Review <i>Profile of California Law Schools: Student Diversity, Attrition, Degrees Awarded, and California Bar Exam Performance</i> , and provide feedback and	12/31/2024	No

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	profession representative of California's communities, particularly as related to race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.	through toolkits and other resources.	recommendations as appropriate		

Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support the law school to profession pipeline to foster a diverse legal profession representative of California's communities, particularly as related to race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Identify data-supported practices that promote retention and advancement of a diverse and inclusive legal profession and share those practices through toolkits and other resources.</li> <li>o Engage DEI leaders and other stakeholders to encourage legal employers to set and publicly commit to measurable diversity, equity, and inclusion goals through the State Bar Diversity Leadership Seal Program.</li> </ul>	Monitor Leadership Seal program participation. Identify and suggest adjustments to action items for future program iterations.	Ongoing	No
			Identify and study innovative DEI practices in other industries that may be adaptable to the legal profession.	12/31/2024	No
			Plan and participate in State Bar Diversity Summits	12/31/24	No



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Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support the law school to profession pipeline to foster a diverse legal profession representative of California's communities, particularly as related to race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.	Continue the Mindsets in Legal Education Initiative and evaluate the merits of expanding the program.	Continue to monitor Mindsets in Legal Education Initiative and review findings.	12/31/24	No
Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Policy and Systems Change: Identify and advocate for innovative policy and regulatory reforms needed to increase access to legal services, particularly by disenfranchised, underserved, and rural communities.	Collaborate with legislative and other stakeholders to establish a law school student loan forgiveness program to make legal aid an attractive and sustainable career goal.	Provide input and feedback on recruitment and retention initiatives, including monitoring loan repayment assistance programs	12/31/24	No

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Goal 2: Protect the public by enhancing access to and inclusion in the legal system	Policy and Systems Change: Identify and advocate for innovative policy and regulatory reforms needed to increase access to legal services, particularly by disenfranchised, underserved, and rural communities.	Collaborate with stakeholders and law schools to improve the law school accreditation process.	Work with the Office of Admissions to provide feedback on the law school accreditation process.	12/31/2024	No
Goal 3: Protect the public by regulating the legal profession	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Support retention, development, and advancement of a diverse legal profession, with a focus on preventative measures to address disproportionate complaint and discipline rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Provide effective support for attorneys experiencing practice management and other challenges that affect competency.</li> <li>o Support attorneys from disenfranchised and underserved communities who may experience unique practice management and other challenges.</li> </ul>	Review feedback on the <i>Disrupting Implicit Bias</i> online module and consider additional online EOB training modules to develop (e.g. discuss the possibility of incorporating anti-racism component into EOB curriculum, microaggressions, objective performance evaluation, imposter syndrome, moving beyond EOB training)	03/30/25	No