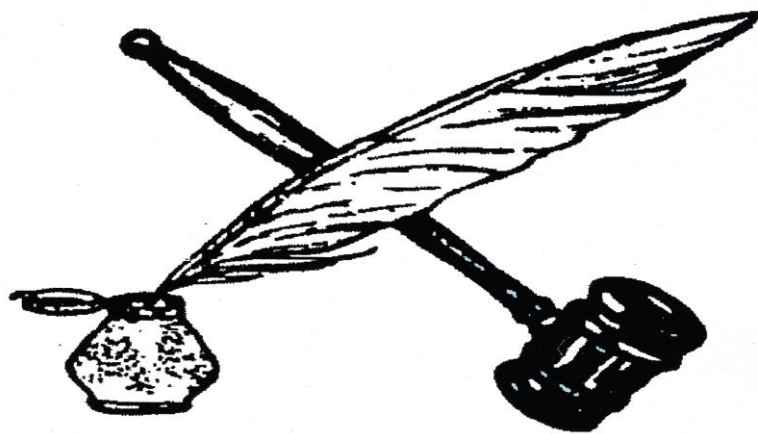


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# **.MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

## **SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BAR ASSOCIATION**

**DATE:** May 3, 2024  
**TIME:** 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
**PROGRAM:** "Overview of the Corporate Transparency Act"  
**SPEAKERS:** Dennis Huang, Esq.  
**LOCATION:** Shioda Langley and Chang LLP  
1063 E. Las Tunas Dr., San Gabriel, CA 91776  
**MCLE:** 1 Hour

\* Details on how to sign up for the webinar will be posted to the website: <https://sgvba.org/>

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## **EASTERN BAR ASSOCIATION**

**DATE:** May 16, 2024  
**TIME:** 5:30 P.M.-Social Gathering-Hosted Bar  
6:00 P.M.-Canyon City BBQ-Buffer  
6:30 P.M. To 7:30 P.M. MCLE Presentation  
**PLACE:** Rainbow Canyon Ranch  
2350 San Gabriel Canyon Road  
Azusa, CA 91702  
**PROGRAM:** "East Meets West"  
**SPEAKERS:** Hon. Peter Hernandez, Assistant Supervising Judge Pomona Superior Court  
Hon. Lisa M. Rogan, Presiding Judge San Bernardino Superior Court  
**MCLE:** 1 Hour/General

## **PASADENA BAR ASSOCIATION**

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## State Bar of California Publishes Reports Outlining Fee Increase Needs Three Interdependent Reports Form blueprint for Fiscal Stability to Maintain and Improve Public Protection

As required by the Legislature, the State Bar has published three reports detailing its funding needs to support its public protection mission in 2025 and beyond. The three interdependent reports provide lawmakers, who approve the fee bill every year, with recommendations and options to ensure that the State Bar's funding adequately supports its mission.

The State Bar has had just one fee increase in 25 years, and had the base mandatory licensing fee, currently \$404, been adjusted for inflation in that time, it would now be over \$700. While California is the most expensive state in the continental United States, the attorney licensing fee ranks 18th below states like Nevada, Arizona, and Connecticut

"Coupled with rising costs, stagnant fees have put the State Bar in a very real fiscal bind, posing a risk to public protection," said Board Chair Brandon Stallings. "We are looking forward to the productive dialog these reports will spark—with our licensees and other stakeholders as well as with our partners in the Legislature—on what funding is needed to meet the public's expectations of performance and accountability."


Justification for a Fee Increase details the need for a 2025 fee increase of \$125 per active licensee and \$31 per inactive licensee, to both maintain and increase public protection.

## THE STATE BAR NEEDS A 2025 LICENSING FEE INCREASE

Here are the elements of the \$125 fee increase request and what they would fund.

### Maintaining Public Protection

Amount needed to keep the lights on.

		Amount Needed	Per Active Licensee	Per Inactive Licensee
	<b>Lease Obligations</b> Resulting from sale of San Francisco headquarters building.	\$4.4 million	\$21.00	\$5.00
	<b>Contractual Obligations</b> Merit increases, COLAs, and IT licenses.	\$7.4 million	\$35.00	\$9.00
	<b>Funding existing staffing levels.</b> Personnel costs for staffing levels at 8% vacancy rate.	\$8.2 million	\$39.00	\$10.00
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$20 million</b>	<b>\$95.00</b>	<b>\$24.00</b>

To provide ongoing stability in future years, proposal includes a request for annual adjustment tied to California Consumer Price Index.

### Increasing Public Protection

Amount needed to protect client funds and reduce the backlog of disciplinary cases.

		Amount Needed	Per Active Licensee	Per Inactive Licensee
	<b>Office of Chief Trial Counsel Case Processing</b> Increase staff to improve case processing times and reduce backlogs.	\$3.2 million	\$15.25	\$3.75
	<b>Diversion Program</b> Fund efforts to more efficiently and fairly handle low-level matters, allowing OCTC to focus on cases posing greater risk.	\$1.2 million	\$5.50	\$1.25
	<b>Complaint Review Unit</b> Add resources to reduce a growing backlog and shorten processing time in the unit that reviews OCTC's decisions to close complaints.	\$0.7 million	\$3.50	\$0.75
	<b>Client Trust Account Protection Program</b> Expand the reach and impact of CTAPP to include compliance reviews and audits.	\$1.2 million	\$5.75	\$1.25
	<b>Modern and Safe IT Infrastructure</b>	TBD	TBD	TBD
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$6.3 million</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>	<b>\$7.00</b>

The report recommends that to stabilize funding for the State Bar and increase predictability for California attorneys, the Legislature approve an annual adjustment to account for inflation in future years. It also proposes a new progressive structure to assess fees scaled according to practice sectors. Under this structure, solo practitioners, nonprofit attorneys, and actively licensed retirees would see little to no change next year, while the largest increases would go to attorneys in large firms and corporations. A funding request for IT infrastructure will be finalized at a later date.

**Recommendations for Codifying a Formal Disciplinary Diversion**

**Program** describes a proactive, three-pronged program that would enable the State Bar to handle low-level matters more efficiently and fairly so that the Office of Chief Trial Counsel (OCTC) can focus on matters posing the greatest risks to public protection. Fully funding diversion is expected to reduce disciplinary case volume by up to 20 percent, so the program would pay for itself by 2026.

**Progress Report on Discipline System Case Processing Standards and Analysis of Office of Chief Trial Counsel Staffing Needs** highlights the dozens of changes OCTC has made in recent years intended to improve its effectiveness and streamline case processing times. While these changes are showing an impact, there is insufficient staffing to process cases as quickly as they come in, and the backlog remains an intractable issue. To meet its recommended case processing standards and reduce the backlog, OCTC needs additional staff. The fee increase request includes an element for OCTC staffing that if funded would add a total of 57 positions—hired in equal increments of 19 positions per year over three years—to OCTC’s current headcount of approximately 300 full-time employees. The reports are interdependent. For example, if the Diversion Program is not funded, the OCTC case processing need would increase substantially.



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## **IN MEMORY OF JOHN PECK**

**It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of our esteemed colleague, John Peck, on April 7, 2024.**

**John was a dedicated and long-serving board member of the San Gabriel Valley Lawyer Referral Service. His commitment to the organization and his unwavering dedication to the legal community were invaluable, and his presence will be deeply missed by all who know and worked with him. Our thoughts are with his family and friends during this difficult time.**

**He will always be remembered for his dedication and service. His legacy will continue to inspire us all.**

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## What's Happening

May 2024

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### PUBLIC CLASSES

\***LAW DAY 2024** - LIVE ZOOM: Sankofa: Recalling our History to Advance Social Justice through Mediation  
**Wednesday, May 1** 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

\***LAW DAY 2024** - LIVE ZOOM: Writs: How to Challenge Government Agency Decisions & Ask a Lawyer  
**Wednesday, May 1** 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Introduction to Thomson Reuters Westlaw  
**Thursday, May 2** 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Civil Rights: Where You Begin  
**Friday, May 10** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Introduction to Lexis Advance  
**Thursday, May 16** 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Small Claims: Where You Begin  
**Friday, May 24** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Citators: Expand Your Research & Cite Good Law  
**Thursday, May 30** 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

### BUSINESS SERIES

LIVE ZOOM: Branding and Marketing 101  
**Tuesday, May 7** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Keeping the Books: Business Accounting Basics  
**Tuesday, May 14** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Protecting Your Intellectual Property: Trademarks & Patents  
**Tuesday, May 21** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: On Solid Ground: Financial Planning for Business Owners  
**Tuesday, May 28** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

### CIVIL LAWSUIT BASICS

LIVE ZOOM: How to Correct Mistakes and Defaults  
**Thursday, May 9** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

IN PERSON: How to Make and Oppose Motions  
**Thursday, May 23** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

### WORKSHOPS & ONE-ON-ONE HELP

LIVE ZOOM: Ask a Lawyer: Pre-Trial and Trial Preparation for Civil Cases  
**Thursday, May 2** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

IN-PERSON: Eviction Defense: Help Using Tenant Power Toolkit to Answer Eviction Complaints  
**Friday, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31** 9:30 am - 12:30 pm  
Register here: [bit.ly/answerworkshop](https://bit.ly/answerworkshop)

LIVE ZOOM & IN PERSON:  
California Probate Conservatorships & Alternatives  
**Friday, May 10** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm \*English Only  
**viernes, 24 de mayo** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
\*Español y solo en persona

LIVE ZOOM & IN PERSON:  
California's CARE Court: What You Need to Know!  
**Friday, May 10** 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Manage Your Stress So You Can Manage Your Legal Issues Too  
**Wednesday, May 15** 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Ask an Expert: HACLA Section 8  
**Wednesday, May 15** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

IN-PERSON: Eviction Defense: Help Answering Unlawful Detainer Complaints  
**Thursday, May 16** 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: Ask a Lawyer: Landlord-Tenant Law & Evictions  
**Thursday, May 16** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Lawyers in the Library  
**IN PERSON: Friday, May 17** 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm  
Free 10-20 minute consultations with volunteer attorneys.  
**By appointment only.** To register, visit: [www.lalawlibrary.org/LITL](http://www.lalawlibrary.org/LITL)

LIVE ZOOM: Ask a Lawyer: How Property Transfers After Death and How to Plan Ahead  
**Thursday, May 23** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

LIVE ZOOM: **MCLE**: Deferred Action for Immigrant Workers  
**Wednesday, May 29** 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

For more information or to register, visit: [www.lalawlibrary.org/CLASSES](http://www.lalawlibrary.org/CLASSES)

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Get the basics of landlord-tenant law, including evictions. Plus, learn about housing protections for victims of domestic violence, those with mental disabilities, and more.

## LANDLORD/TENANT LAW

Learn about the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords, including the basics of the eviction process.

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Receive information on how to find the answers to legal questions, and how to access records from different types of courts.

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## STARTING & GROWING A BUSINESS

Learn how to set up a business for growth and success, protect your rights, and access funding for your business.

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Learn about the civil court process from complaints through appeals, and how to represent yourself without an attorney.

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Learn about important benefits, including unemployment and disability insurance, and sick time and sick leave, including new rights created by law during COVID-19.

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## **MANDATORY FEE ARBITRATION BULLETIN**

If you have uncollected legal fees, the San Gabriel Valley Lawyer Referral Mandatory Fee Arbitration Program can help. We all know that before an attorney may sue a client for fees, the B&P Code requires that the attorney advise the client of the right to fee arbitration. But did you know that under California law, the attorney cannot initiate the arbitration or compel the client to participate in the process?

The only way an attorney can compel a client to arbitrate a fee dispute is if the parties have so provided in the retainer agreement. If your agreement does provide an arbitration clause, update it now! (A suggested fee arbitration clause for your retainer agreements may be found below)

The San Gabriel Valley Lawyer Referral Service Mandatory Fee Arbitration Program offers fee arbitration services for all Los Angeles County attorneys. In 2006 the SGVLRS adopted comprehensive new rules for arbitration of attorney fee disputes. These rules expanded the fee arbitration program and made the resolution of the fee disputes uniform, user friendly and timely. Under the rules (depending on the amount in dispute) the parties may have a one or three person panel of experienced arbitrators. Wherever possible, the SGVLRS tries to provide arbitrators with experience in the area of practice of the attorney(s) whose fees are subject to the dispute. It promises prompt and expeditious handling of each dispute by a knowledgeable and available staff.

### **FEE ARBITRATION CLAUSE**

The dispute resolution provision of Attorney-Client Agreement may take various forms: One possible form is set forth below. Certain governing principles should be considered with regard to a fee arbitration provision for an Attorney-Client Fee agreement. They are:

- Before a dispute over legal fees arises, the parties may agree, in the Fee Agreement or otherwise that all fee disputes will be submitted to arbitration under Business and Professions Code Sections 6200 through 6202, but they cannot agree at the time that the arbitration will be binding.
- Before a dispute over legal fees arises, the parties may not agree that they will mediate a fee dispute.
- After a dispute over legal fees arises, the client and the attorney may agree to non-binding and/or binding fee arbitration.
- For any disputes that do not involve attorneys' fees (e.g., malpractice), the parties may agree at any time, including in the Fee Agreement, and without waiting for a dispute, to begin arbitration proceedings.

### **SAMPLE FEE ARBITRATION CLAUSE**

In the event of a dispute between you and our firm regarding our firm's fees, upon the request of either party, the dispute shall be resolved by arbitration under Business and Professions Code Section 6200 through 6206 with the San Gabriel Valley Lawyer Referral Service or another State Bar of California approved Fee Arbitration Program reasonably acceptable to you and our firm. The arbitrator(s) shall apply the law of the State of California. Unless we agree to binding arbitration after a dispute arises, any arbitration award is not binding on our firm or you, and to the extent permitted by law, our firm and you have the right to pursue any other available remedy within 30 days after the mailing of a non-binding arbitration award.

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