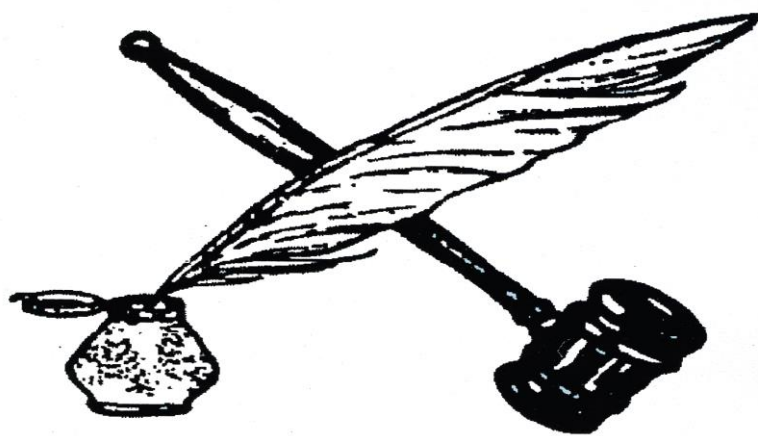


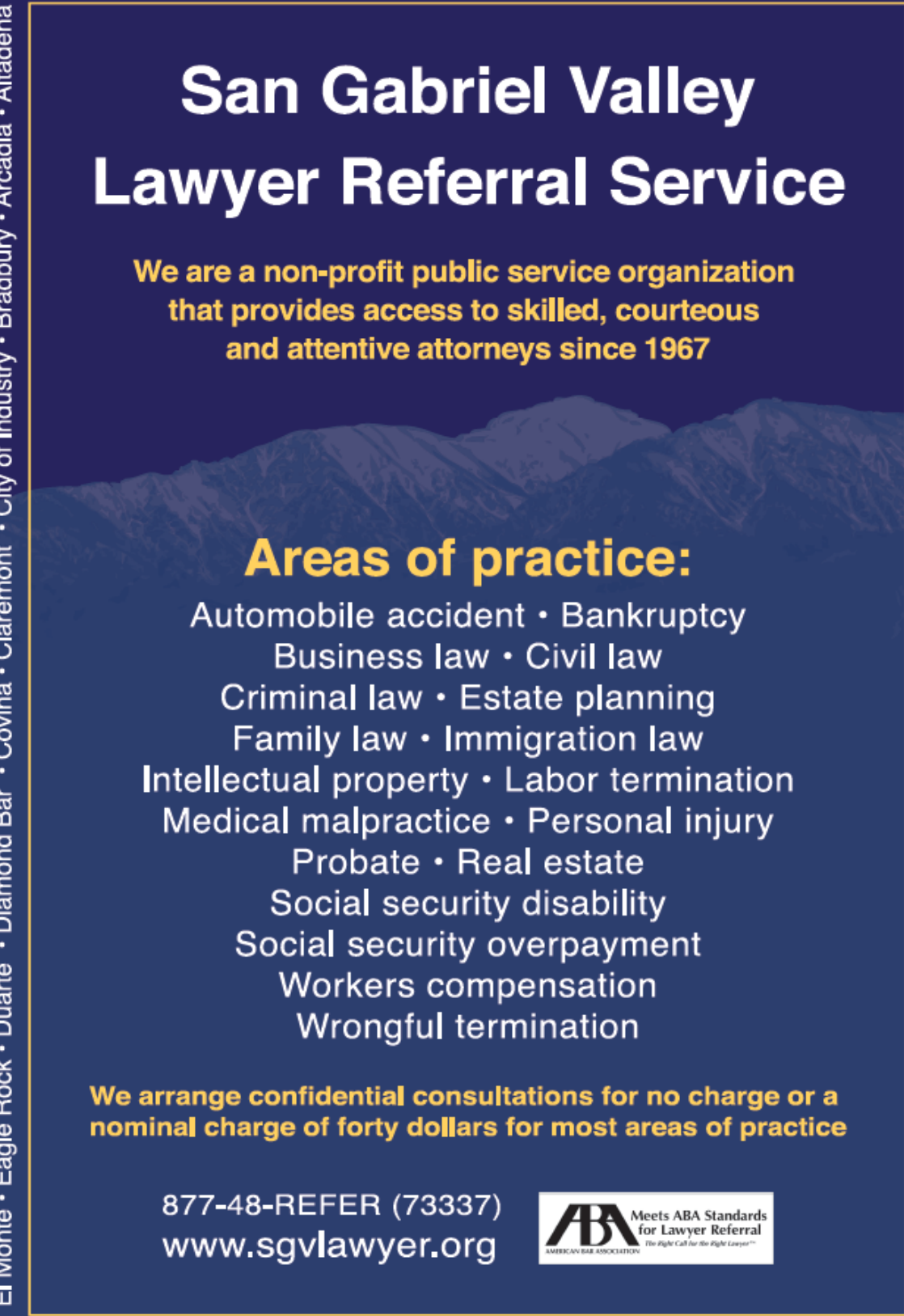
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# **.MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

## **SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BAR ASSOCIATION**

**DATE:** April 5, 2024  
**TIME:** 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
**PROGRAM:** "Hidden bias, hidden dangers: Recognizing and combatting implicit bias"  
**SPEAKERS:** Paige Adamczyk, 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:** April 18, 2024  
**TIME:** 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** ZOOM/ Participatory  
**PROGRAM:** "New and Cool Legal Technology and Related Ethics Issues"  
**SPEAKERS:** Douglas Lusk, J.D. Prof. at Mt. San Antonio College;  
President of National Society for Legal Technology  
  
Abby Wood, Esq. Prof. at Mt. San Antonio College  
  
**MCLE:** 1 Hour  
**DESCRIPTION:** The presentation will cover ethical obligations for attorneys within the  
Context of emerging legal technology.

## **PASADENA BAR ASSOCIATION**

**FOR CURRENT EVENTS VISIT**

**THE PASADENA BAR ASSOCIATION (PBA)**

**WEBSITE:** [www.pasadenabar.org](http://www.pasadenabar.org) **Phone:** 626-793-1422 **Fax:** 626-793-2370

## *Board of Trustees Approves 2024 Budget; Discusses Fee Increase Request Plans for 2025*

At a special meeting February 26, the State Bar of California Board of Trustees approved a 2024 budget that relies on last year's building sale proceeds as a stopgap measure to stave off the impact of an ongoing structural deficit. The Board also reviewed and discussed plans for an April 1 set of reports to the Legislature that will articulate the State Bar's needs for a fee increase in 2025.

"The 2024 budget makes clear that, with only a single fee increase in nearly a quarter century, the State Bar is facing an impending fiscal cliff deferred only by the sale of the San Francisco headquarters building last year," said Board Chair Brandon Stallings. "Selling a capital asset was a necessary step, but it masks the reality that a lack of sustainable funding can put in jeopardy the reform progress we have made and are making. As with any organization, costs for labor, technology, and other necessities keep rising. We cannot cut expenses without eliminating programming that supports our public protection mission and legislative mandates. We must make clear to our stakeholders and partners in the Legislature that the State Bar needs a financial reset."

Bar-wide revenue is budgeted at \$428.9 million, with expenses at \$400.9 million. Grant funding, almost all of which is pass-through, distributed to legal aid organizations, accounts for a significant portion—65.5 percent—of bar-wide revenue. The outsize impact of grant revenue contributes to a bar-wide overall budget surplus.

In contrast, the State Bar's General Fund revenue, on which the agency relies for its disciplinary functions and most other operations, is budgeted at \$96.3 million, with expenses at \$118.4 million, resulting in a deficit of \$22.1 million. The State Bar General Fund ended 2023 with operating reserves of approximately \$36 million, of which \$30 million was proceeds from the sale of the San Francisco building. By the end of 2024, the reserve is projected to drop to approximately \$14 million, falling below the 17 percent reserve threshold set by Board policy. Without a fee increase, in 2025, the General Fund will become insolvent, as all remaining reserves will be depleted.

The State Bar's annual attorney licensing fee is set by the Legislature. The total in 2024 for active licensees, \$404, includes a base fee set in statute and mandatory add-ons defined by the Legislature. The licensing fee has increased only once since 1998. Here are more facts about the State Bar's licensing fees.

The Board began to discuss plans for a significant fee increase request and will continue that discussion on March 1 in anticipation of the April 1 reports required by the Legislature.

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## **UNABLE TO HELP YOUR CLIENT?**

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ASSIST A CLIENT,  
THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE CAN HELP. WE ARE A  
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## Public Trust Liaison Urges Consumers to Check California Attorney Profiles Before Hiring

As this week marks National Consumer Protection Week (March 3-March 9), the State Bar of California's Public Trust Liaison (PTL) Enrique Zuniga advises consumers to take one simple step to avoid becoming a victim of fraud: use the State Bar's [Look Up a Lawyer](#) search feature before signing agreements with anyone offering legal services.

"With legal scams and frauds becoming more sophisticated with AI, deepfakes, and advanced technology, the first step California consumers seeking legal assistance should always take before hiring anyone remains the same: do a simple attorney search on the State Bar's website," said Zuniga.

The [PTL office was launched in 2023](#). Its duties include ensuring that members of the public, legal consumers, and applicants for admission can meaningfully voice their complaints about State Bar action or inaction and receive assistance in having those concerns addressed.

Zuniga and the Public Trust Representatives in his office also assist the public by sharing information about steps they can take to avoid legal fraud and scams.

Beyond scammers engaged in the unauthorized practice of law—such as "notarios" who prey on Spanish-speakers—thieves can use social media and editing technology to set up fake accounts and websites, utilizing licensed attorneys' names and bar numbers. Thieves can easily create videos or edit legitimate attorney content and change the contact information to entice victims to send them money in advance before cutting off contact.

Consumers should also be wary of attorneys who approach them in person, by telephone, or by direct messages on social media to offer legal services, as direct solicitation is generally prohibited.

Consumers can use the search feature to check that the contact information they may have for an attorney matches what is on the State Bar profile. Consumers can also use the attorney search feature to check that a California attorney is in good standing, active, and not suspended or disbarred. No record of a person as an attorney, or a different State Bar number, phone, email, website, or address, are all red flags for possible fraud.

What can you do to protect yourself from fraudulent actors posing as attorneys?

- Ask for the attorney's State Bar number.
- Look them up on the [State Bar website](#) to see if their license is active and whether they have any history of discipline.
- Check that the address, phone number, email, and website listed in correspondence matches what appears on the attorney's profile on the State Bar website.
- Call the phone number listed on the attorney's State Bar profile to make sure you are dealing with the correct attorney.
- Make sure to get your agreement in writing, as well as receipts for payments you make.
- Be wary if someone requires cash payments.
- Keep a paper trail. If you don't have a bank account, use another monetary option, like a money order or cashier's check, but be aware that you cannot stop payment on a cashier's check or money order.
- If you have already made a payment, a California attorney must provide you with an accounting of your bills. Anyone who refuses or neglects to do this is suspect.
- If you believe you have been defrauded by someone posing as an attorney, you may also want to file a complaint with local law enforcement authorities, or with federal authorities, such as the [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#), [U.S. Postal Inspection Service](#), or [Federal Trade Commission](#).

If you are having problems with a licensed attorney, who, for example, is not responding to your inquiries, missing court deadlines, not providing you an accounting of your case, or not providing funds won in court in a timely manner, among other potential violations, you may [fill out a complaint form](#), which is available in multiple languages. You may also call the State Bar at 1-800-843-9053 for assistance.

Public Trust Liaison Urges Consumers to Check California Attorney Profiles Before Hiring (Continued)

The State Bar website provides free information for consumers on finding legal help and working with attorneys. Legal help pamphlets are available in seven languages.

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## *SAVE THE DATE*

**The Eastern Bar Association of Los Angeles County  
Jointly with  
The Western San Bernardino County Bar Association  
Present**

### *"East Meets West - Local Practice Update"*

**Date: Thursday, May 16, 2024**

**Time: 5:30 PM Social – Hosted Bar**

**6:00 PM Dinner – Canyon City BBQ**

**Speakers: Judges from San Bernardino County  
and Los Angeles County**

**MCLE Credit: 1 Hour/General**

**Place: Rainbow Canyon Ranch Academy  
2350 San Gabriel Canyon Road  
Azusa, CA 91702**

**Register at [www.ebalac.org](http://www.ebalac.org)**



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## What's Happening

April 2024



### PUBLIC CLASSES

**LIVE ZOOM: Introduction to Legal Research: Types & Sources of Law**

**Thursday, April 4** 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Dealing with Debt: Where You Begin**

**Friday, April 12** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Probate & Inheritance: Where You Begin**

**Friday, April 26** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm



### BUSINESS SERIES

**LIVE ZOOM: From Seed Money to Serious Investment: Raising Money for Your Business**

**Tuesday, April 2** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Commercial Leasing Basics for Small Business Owners**

**Tuesday, April 9** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Government Contracts: Steady Income for Your Business**

**Tuesday, April 16** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Know Before You Sign on the Dotted Line: Reading & Negotiating Business Contracts**

**Tuesday, April 23** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Protecting Your Intellectual Property: Copyrights**

**Tuesday, April 30** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm



### CIVIL LAWSUIT BASICS

**IN PERSON: Enforcing Judgments**

**Thursday, April 11** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

**IN PERSON: Civil Lawsuit Basics: How to File and Respond to a Complaint**

**Thursday, April 25** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

FOR CLASSES HELD VIA ZOOM, ZOOM INFORMATION WILL BE EMAILED TO REGISTRANTS PRIOR TO CLASS START TIME



### WORKSHOPS & ONE-ON-ONE HELP

**IN-PERSON: Eviction Defense: Help Answering Unlawful Detainer Complaints**

**Thursday, April 4** 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm

*By appointment only. To register, call: 213-896-6536*

**LIVE ZOOM: Ask a Lawyer: Employment Law**

**Thursday, April 4** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

**IN-PERSON: Eviction Defense: Help Using Tenant Power Toolkit to Answer Eviction Complaints**

**Friday, April 5, 12, 26** 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

*Register here: [bit.ly/answerworkshop](https://bit.ly/answerworkshop)*

**LIVE ZOOM: Adult Name Change Workshop**

**Wednesday, April 10** 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

**LIVE ZOOM: Ask a Lawyer: Landlord-Tenant Law & Evictions**

**Thursday, April 11** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

**LIVE ZOOM & IN PERSON:**

**California Probate Conservatorships & Alternatives**

**Friday, April 12** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm \*English Only

**viernes, 26 de abril** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

\*Español y solo en persona

**LIVE ZOOM: Ask a Lawyer: How Property Transfers After Death and How to Plan Ahead**

**Thursday, April 25** 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

**Lawyers in the Library**

**IN PERSON: Friday, April 26** 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)*



### BOOK DISCUSSION

**LIVE ZOOM: The Great Escape: A True Story of Forced Labor & Immigrant Dreams in America, by Saket Soni** **Tuesday, April 23** 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

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

or call: 213.785.2529 | 301 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012





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Learn about your rights interacting with police, and about release and bail reduction services if you're facing charges.

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Learn about your rights and benefits as an employee or employer, including new rights created by law during COVID-19.

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Get the basics of divorce, custody, and child support, plus information on domestic violence restraining orders.

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Learn about options for getting help from a lawyer, plus information on how to talk to a lawyer, tell your story, and the importance of gathering the facts in your case.

## HOUSING RIGHTS

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.

## LEGAL RESEARCH & ACCESSING COURT RECORDS

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

## PROBATE & PLANNING FOR END OF LIFE, ILLNESS OR DISABILITY

Get basic information on planning for end of life, illness and disability, including wills, trusts, and advanced health care directives. Plus, learn about the process for transferring property after death.

## STARTING & GROWING A BUSINESS

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

## REPRESENTING YOURSELF IN CIVIL COURT

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

## UNEMPLOYMENT, DISABILITY & SICK LEAVE

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

## CLASES LEGALES EN ESPAÑOL

Vea algunos de nuestros videos populares de clases en línea para ayudarlo en sus problemas legales.



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The State Bar requires attorneys to complete 25 hours of approved continuing legal education credit every three years. LA Law Library is an approved provider of online, participatory MCLE. For more information on our new and fee based MCLE classes, please visit: [www.lalawlibrary.org/MCLE-classes](http://www.lalawlibrary.org/MCLE-classes)

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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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**The Gavel and Quill** is a monthly publication of the San Gabriel Valley Lawyer Referral Service, the Pasadena Bar Association, the San Gabriel Valley Bar Association and the Eastern Bar Association of Los Angeles County. Its Purpose is to inform members of the sponsoring bar associations of matters of interest to them. We welcome and encourage articles and comments from the membership.

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