



The Report of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being

and the Role of the Bar Admissions Community
in the Lawyer Well-Being Movement

BY **James C. Coyle**

Several studies in recent years have demonstrated that too many lawyers and law students experience chronic stress and high rates of depression and substance abuse. As a result of two of these studies, the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being was formed. The work of the Task Force culminated in an extensive report published in August 2017, which sets forth an ambitious road map to improve the health of law students, lawyers, and judges, calling on all stakeholders to create a movement to improve well-being in the legal profession. The report provides recommendations for all stakeholders, including specific recommendations for the bar admissions community and the role it can take to support lawyer well-being.

Recent Studies Reveal That Lawyer Well-Being Is at Risk

Three prominent studies have revealed significant problems with well-being among law students and lawyers. The 2014 Survey of Law Student Well-Being, administered to law students in 15 diverse law schools in the United States, showed that significant percentages of those students were dealing with mental health issues, including alcohol and other substance use issues. This survey also showed that law students are reluctant to seek the help that they need due to the misperception that it may cause them difficulties with bar admission or may be a potential threat to job or academic status. Likewise, many law students are

concerned with the social stigma associated with seeking help. The survey revealed that 17% of the students experienced some level of depression, 14% experienced severe anxiety, 23% had mild or moderate anxiety, and 6% reported serious suicidal thoughts in the past year. As to alcohol use, one-quarter fell into the category of being at risk of alcoholism, for which further screening was recommended.¹

In 2016, the ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP) and the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation published their study of mental health concerns and substance use disorders among lawyers. The nationwide study of nearly 13,000 practicing lawyers found that between 21% and 36% qualify as problem drinkers (i.e., demonstrating drinking patterns that are hazardous, harmful, and possibly indicative of alcohol dependence), and approximately 28%, 19%, and 23% of lawyers struggle with some level of depression, anxiety, and stress, respectively.²

A study conducted in November 2017 by Harvard Law School student government found that out of 886 Harvard law students, 24% reported anxiety, 25% reported depression, a staggering 20.5% were at heightened suicide risk, and 66% reported new mental health challenges in law school.³ Following the study, Harvard Law School student government leadership called on other law schools to survey their own student bodies each year and release the collected survey data. They also specifically advocated

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for Harvard to release the full set of survey data and to actively engage in finding solutions to student mental health challenges and reversing this mental health crisis.⁴

The results from each of these studies signal an elevated risk in the legal community for mental health

and substance use disorders that is tightly intertwined with an alcohol-based social culture. While the studies also reflect that the majority of lawyers and law students do not have a mental health or substance use disorder, this does not mean that they are thriving. Many lawyers experience a “profound ambivalence” about their work,⁵ and different sectors of the profession vary in their levels of satisfaction and well-being.⁶ A recent study concluded that the practice of law is the loneliest kind of work for members of all professional occupations, stating that the single most impactful behavior leaders can undertake to counteract loneliness is to create opportunities for building shared meaning with colleagues.⁷

Of greatest concern were the statistics involving younger lawyers. The ABA CoLAP/Hazelden study found that lawyers in the first 10 years of practice have the highest incidence of problematic drinking.

The National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being Is Formed

As a result of the 2014 Survey of Law Student Well-Being and the 2016 ABA CoLAP/Hazelden study, three organizations founded the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being. These organizations were the ABA CoLAP, the National Organization of Bar Counsel (NOBC), and the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers (APRL).

When word spread, other entities within and outside the ABA quickly joined. Current membership on the

Task Force in addition to the three founding organizations includes representatives from the following organizations: the ABA Standing Committee on Professionalism, the ABA Center for Professional Responsibility, the ABA Young Lawyers Division, the ABA Law Practice Division Attorney Well-Being Committee, the National Client Protection Organization, the National Conference of Chief Justices, the National Conference of Bar Examiners, and the National Continuing Legal and Judicial Education Regulators. Additionally, one of the authors of the 2014 Survey of Law Student Well-Being and two of the authors of the 2016 ABA CoLAP/Hazelden study are also on the Task Force.⁸

The Task Force Report: A Call for Action

The Task Force went into overdrive, and in August 2017 issued a report titled *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change*. The report sets out three reasons to take action in addressing the lack of well-being in the profession:

1. Organizational effectiveness (it’s good for business).
2. Ethical integrity (it’s good for clients and professionalism).
3. Humanitarianism (it’s the right thing to do for our colleagues and friends).⁹

The report provides a definition of lawyer well-being, defined more broadly than the simple absence

of impairment. The report instead defines lawyer well-being as “a continuous process in which we strive for thriving and improving in each dimension of our lives,”—intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and occupational. The graphic on page 11 details the criteria for thriving in each of these six life dimensions. The report exhorts all stakeholders—including judges, regulators, legal employers, law schools, bar associations, professional liability carriers, and lawyer assistance programs—to work toward the goal of helping lawyers achieve and maintain well-being.¹⁰

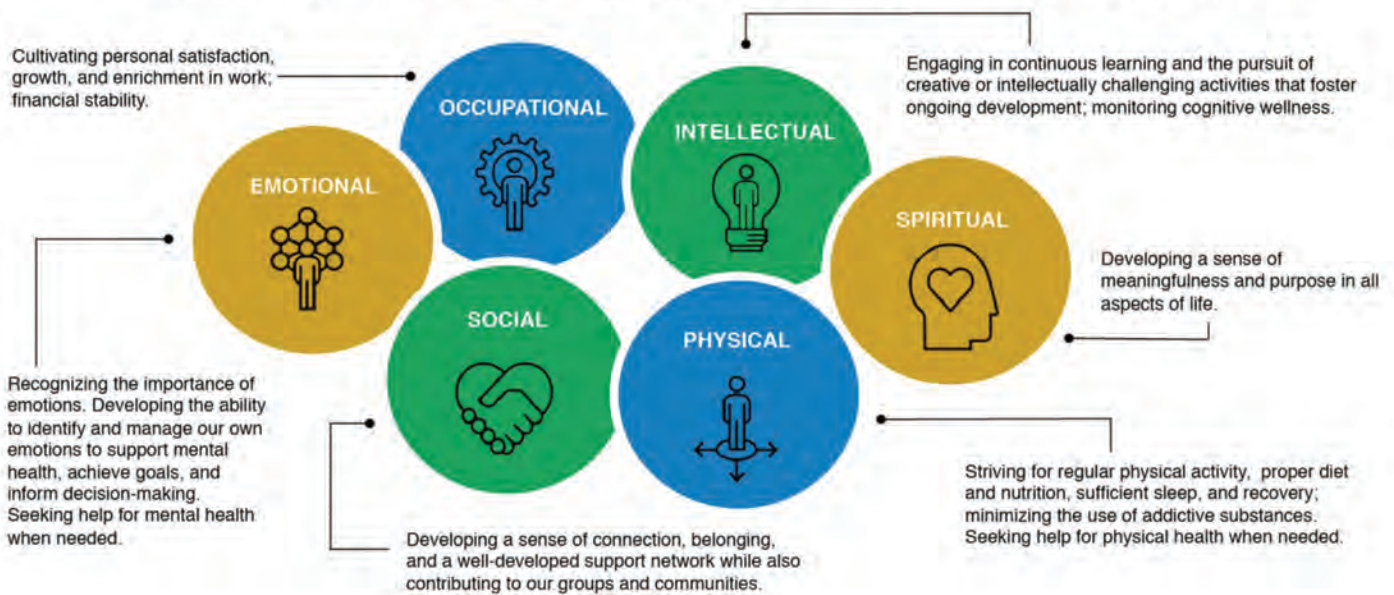
The report also lays out the five essential components of the process of building a sustainable culture of well-being:

1. Identify the stakeholders to engage.
2. End the stigma around seeking help.
3. Emphasize that well-being is integral to competence.
4. Expand education and outreach.
5. Change the tone of the profession one step at a time.¹¹

The report provides 44 detailed recommendations—recommendations for all stakeholders in the legal community as well as recommendations for the specific stakeholders previously mentioned. It provides resources and information for acting on specific recommendations in the report.

Defining Lawyer Well-Being

A continuous process in which we strive for thriving and improving in each dimension of our lives.



Finally, the report recommends that the Chief Justice of each jurisdiction create a Commission on Lawyer Well-Being and appoint a representative from each stakeholder group to the commission. It provides a State Action Plan and Checklist for moving forward with the Task Force's recommendations, suggesting the following steps:

1. Gather all the stakeholders.
2. Review the National Task Force report.
3. Do an inventory of recommendations.
4. Create priorities.
5. Develop an action plan.¹²

The report acknowledges that changing a culture that has been ingrained over decades or centuries

will not be a quick or easy endeavor but emphasizes that the profession must act. The legal profession is at a crossroads. As stated in the cover letter sent to stakeholders with the report, "To maintain public confidence in the profession, to meet the need for innovation in how we deliver legal services, to increase access to justice, and to reduce the level of toxicity that has allowed mental health and substance use disorders to fester among our colleagues, we have to act now."¹³

A Strong and Positive Response to the Task Force Report

In August 2017, the Conference of Chief Justices adopted Resolution 6, Recommending Consideration of the Report of the National Task

Force on Lawyer Well-Being, fully supporting the concept of lawyer well-being as a critical component of lawyer competence.¹⁴ The Resolution reinforced the critical role of the highest Court in each jurisdiction in overseeing the legal profession and recognized that each such Court must take an active role in developing effective mechanisms to regulate the profession, which includes convening the relevant stakeholders in each jurisdiction to improve lawyer well-being. Thus, the Conference of Chief Justices recommended that each jurisdiction closely consider the recommendations contained in the Task Force report.

As of the date this article was written, 15 jurisdictions have actively responded to the report's recommendations and are now in the

process of establishing their own task forces or are in the exploratory phase. The jurisdictions taking an active role so far include Colorado,¹⁵ Connecticut,¹⁶ Florida,¹⁷ Georgia,¹⁸ Illinois,¹⁹ Massachusetts,²⁰ Minnesota,²¹ Nebraska,²² New Mexico,²³ Texas,²⁴ Utah,²⁵ Vermont,²⁶ Virginia,²⁷ West Virginia,²⁸ and Wisconsin.²⁹ In addition, Rhode Island has expressed an interest in going forward with a task force.³⁰

ABA President Hilarie Bass has made lawyer well-being a priority of her administration. In September 2017, at her request, the ABA Board of Governors created the ABA Presidential Working Group to Advance Well-Being in the Legal Profession.³¹ This group, made up of members representing law firm management, professional liability carriers, and lawyer assistance and wellness professionals, will work to develop policies that law firms can use to help their lawyers with substance abuse and mental health problems, as well as policies to promote well-being in law firms.

In February 2018, the ABA House of Delegates issued Resolution 105, urging all courts (federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal), bar associations, lawyer regulatory entities, institutions of legal education, lawyer assistance programs, professional liability carriers, law firms, and other entities employing lawyers to consider the recommendations set forth in the Task Force report.³² In addition, President Bass sponsored a National Workshop on the Advancement of Attorney Well-Being in the Law Firm Setting, which took place on April 25, 2018,

in Washington, D.C. This interactive workshop gathered members of major law firms, professional liability insurance carriers, and lawyer assistance programs to create practical and workable law firm policies to reinforce lawyer well-being as a core component of ethics and professionalism.

Finally, NCBE President Judy Gundersen has agreed to be the NCBE liaison on the National Task Force. The Task Force is interested in working with NCBE to provide opportunities for the bar admissions community to discuss its role in improving law student and lawyer well-being, and to continue to provide creative education and guidance to the jurisdictions on this matter.

Where Does the Bar Admissions Community Fit in the Lawyer Well-Being Movement?

Bar admission representatives have a unique perspective and vital role in helping to change the culture of the legal profession and increase lawyer well-being. The Task Force report specifically suggests that in the creation of a Commission on Lawyer Well-Being, each Chief Justice appoint a bar admission or bar examiner representative to that jurisdiction's commission.³³

The Task Force Report's Recommendations for the Admissions Process

Among the Task Force report's recommendations for the regulator stakeholder group is to adjust the

admissions process to support law student well-being so that regulations governing admission to the practice of law facilitate the treatment and rehabilitation of students with impairments. This includes

1. re-evaluating bar application inquiries about mental health history so that any such questions focus on conduct or behavior (rather than on diagnosis or treatment history, which may deter applicants in need of help from seeking it);³⁴
2. adopting essential eligibility admission requirements that affirmatively state the abilities needed to become a licensed lawyer, thereby providing a framework for determining whether or not an individual, including one with a mental or physical impairment, has the required abilities, with or without reasonable accommodations;³⁵
3. adopting a conditional admission rule with specific requirements and conditions to avoid deterring law students and lawyers from seeking help for substance use and mental health disorders due to overly rigid admission requirements;³⁶ and
4. publishing data reflecting low rates of denied admissions due to conduct involving mental health disorders and substance abuse (a fact that is known from informal Task Force member discussions with regulators but for which no data are currently published), thereby alleviating law students' fears that seeking help for such disorders will block them from admission.³⁷

Participating in the Well-Being Discussion

But bar admission representatives should not limit their role in the lawyer well-being movement to the Task Force report's four recommendations. Rather, they must recognize their ability to take on an even greater role in the overall discussion on well-being in the legal profession. This greater role may include any of the following.

Finding solutions to address law student misperceptions regarding the admissions process and the use of professional mental health services. Bar admission representatives are in a position to debunk the misperception that was highlighted in the 2014 Survey of Law Student Well-Being: that a person's chances for admission into the practice of law are decreased if that person seeks professional help for a substance use or mental health disorder while in law school. This may involve better and earlier written and verbal communications with law students regarding the admissions process, including communicating the views of the jurisdiction's Court and Board of Law Examiners on seeking professional help for mental health issues, to emphasize that it is best to address mental health issues while in law school.

Evaluating ways to partner with law schools on well-being issues. This may include providing the schools with anonymized data on what substance use and mental health concerns are evidenced in the application and hearing processes, as well as in conditional admission

programs. Such data may prompt law schools to educate both faculty and students on proactive and help-seeking measures to address substance use and mental health concerns and to devote greater resources to promoting well-being.

Partnering with lawyer assistance programs and other lawyer regulators to educate law students about the admissions process. Offering regular presentations at law schools with these other professionals is an effective way to promote early screening, evaluation, and counseling for substance abuse and mental health problems and to talk candidly about impairment and well-being, while also reinforcing the strict confidentiality that lawyer assistance programs must maintain.

Reinforcing the message that law student well-being improves law student competence, and thus the chances for admission into the practice of law. Law students should understand that their well-being while in law school improves not only their chances for admission but also their chances for a longer and more fulfilling legal career.

Fostering collegiality and respectful engagement, including increasing diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. The Task Force report, supported by extensive, reputable research, directly connects collegiality and respect to well-being. The report cites several studies showing that civility appears to be declining in the legal profession, and that women and young lawyers are more frequent targets


of incivility and harassment. The bar admissions community must continue to model professionalism and civility and devise strategies to promote widespread observance of these standards.³⁸ This includes prioritizing diversity and inclusion in daily activities. As stated by the Task Force:

Research reflects that organizational diversity and inclusion initiatives are associated with employee well-being, including, for example, general mental and physical health, perceived stress level, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, work engagement, perceptions of organizational fairness, and intentions to remain on the job. A significant contributor to well-being is a sense of organizational belongingness, which has been defined as feeling personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others. A weak sense of belonging is strongly associated with depressive symptoms. Unfortunately, however, a lack of diversity and inclusion is an entrenched problem in the legal profession. The issue is pronounced for women and minorities in larger law firms.³⁹

Bar admission representatives can play an especially influential role in advocating for initiatives involving diversity and inclusion, including bar exam grants for qualified applicants, pipeline programming for low-income high school and college students, studies and reports on

the state of diversity in the admissions process, and formal mentoring programs.

Conclusion

The bar admissions community is a critical stakeholder in the movement toward greater well-being in the legal profession. But collective action is not enough. The Task Force report encourages each person in every stakeholder group to come on board individually and take an active role in the well-being movement. Assuming an active individual role can take the form of serving as a role model by making a personal commitment to well-being, personally striving to reduce the stigma associated with mental health and substance use disorders, encouraging help-seeking behaviors in others, and changing workplace culture to support employee well-being.⁴⁰ The Task Force encourages everyone to join the movement toward greater health and well-being in the legal profession. The time for change is now. 

Notes

1. Jerome M. Organ, David B. Jaffe, and Kathryn M. Bender, "Suffering in Silence: The Survey of Law Student Well-Being and the Reluctance of Law Students to Seek Help for Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns," 66 *J. Legal Educ.* 116 (2016). See also Jerome M. Organ, David B. Jaffe, and Kathryn M. Bender, "Helping Law Students Get the Help They Need: An Analysis of Data Regarding Law Students' Reluctance to Seek Help in Policy Recommendations for a Variety of Stakeholders," 84(4) *The Bar Examiner* 9 (Dec. 2015).
2. Patrick R. Krill, Ryan Johnson, and Linda Albert, "The Prevalence of Substance Use and Other Mental Health Concerns Among American Attorneys," 10 *J. Addiction Med.* 46 (2016). See also Linda Albert and Patrick Krill, "Wellness and the Legal Profession: Implications of the 2016 Landmark Study on the Prevalence of Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns Among U.S. Attorneys," 85(1) *The Bar Examiner* 50 (Mar. 2016).
3. Amanda Chan, Amanda Lee, and Adam Savitt, "Wellness at the Law School: Promises to Keep and Miles to Go Before We Sleep," *Harv. Crimson*, Mar. 28, 2018; Jamie Halper, "Law Student Leadership Plans Mental Health Initiatives," *Harv. Crimson*, Oct. 19, 2017.
4. *Id.*
5. See David L. Chambers, "Overstating the Satisfaction of Lawyers," 39 *Law & Soc. Inquiry* 1 (2013).
6. Jerome M. Organ, "What Do We Know About the Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction of Lawyers? A Meta-Analysis of Research on Lawyer Satisfaction and Well-Being," 8 *U. St. Thomas L. J.* 225 (2011); Larry S. Krieger and Karen M. Sheldon, "What Makes Lawyers Happy? Transcending the Anecdotes with Data from 6200 Lawyers," 83 *Geo. Wash. L. Rev.* 554 (2015).
7. The results of a study of 1,600 full-time employees published in the *Harvard Business Review* in spring 2018 and conducted by BetterUp, a San Francisco workplace consulting firm, found that 61% of lawyers fell above average on the UCLA Loneliness Scale. This was the highest level of loneliness reported among all professional occupations. Debra Cassens Weiss, "Lawyers Rank Highest on 'Loneliness Scale,' Study Finds," *ABA J.*, April 3, 2018; Danielle Paquette, "American Workers Are Already Lonely. Here Come the Robots," *Wash. Post*, March 30, 2018; Shawn Achor, Gabriella Rosen Kellerman, Andrew Reece, and Alexi Robichaux, "America's Loneliest Workers, According to Research," *Harv. Bus. Rev.*, Mar. 18, 2018.
8. Past and current members include: Bree Buchanan, co-chair (Director, Texas Lawyers Assistance Program; President, ABA CoLAP); James C. Coyle, co-chair (Attorney Regulation Counsel, Colorado Supreme Court); Anne Brafford (Aspire Legal, ABA Law Practice Division's Attorney Well-Being Committee); Josh Camson (Camson Rigby, LLC, ABA Standing Committee on Professionalism); Lindsey Draper (Special Advisor to the ABA Standing Committee on Client Protection); Charles Gruber, Esq. (Solo Practice, APRL representative); Judith Gundersen (President and CEO, National Conference of Bar Examiners); Terry Harrell (Executive Director, Indiana Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program; Past-President, ABA CoLAP); David Jaffe (Associate Dean of Students, American University Washington College of Law, co-author of the nationwide law student survey); Tracy Kepler (Director, ABA Center for Professional Responsibility); Patrick Krill (Krill Strategies, co-author of the nationwide lawyer study); Chief Justice Donald W. Lemons (Supreme Court of Virginia); Douglas Leonard (Chair, Pennsylvania Disciplinary Board); Sarah Myers (Clinical Director, Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program); Chris Newbold, co-chair (Executive Vice President, ALPS Corp., a direct writer of lawyers' malpractice insurance); Shannon Nordstrom (Nordstrom Law Office); Jayne Reardon (Executive Director, Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism; ABA Standing Committee on Professionalism); Hon. David A. Shaheed (ABA CoLAP and judicial representative); Lynda Shely (The Shely Firm, PC, APRL representative); William Slease, co-chair (Chief Disciplinary Counsel, Disciplinary Board of the New Mexico Supreme Court); Kathleen Uston (Assistant Bar Counsel, Virginia State Bar); and Courtney Wylie (Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP). Liaisons: Linda Albert (The Psychology Center, co-author of the nationwide lawyer study); Donald Campbell (Collins, Einhorn, Farrell & Ulanoff, P.C., APRL President); and Erica Moeser (former president, National Conference of Bar Examiners). Staff Attorney: Jonathan P. White (Professional Development Counsel, Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel, Colorado Supreme Court).

9. *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change* (2017), pp. 8–9, available at www.lawyerwellbeing.net.
10. *Id.* at pp. 9–10.
11. *Id.* at pp. 10–11.
12. *Id.* at App. A., “State Action Plan & Checklist, Chief Justice (or Designee) ‘To Do List.’”
13. *Id.*, cover letter page 1.
14. *Conf. of Chief Justices Resol. 6* (Recommending Consideration of the Report of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being) (Aug. 9, 2017).
15. **Colorado:** The Colorado Supreme Court Lawyer Well-Being Task Force will be led by Justice Monica Márquez. Its first meeting will take place in the summer of 2018. Stakeholders will include leaders from law firms, the state’s two law schools, the bench, and specialty/local bar associations. Wyoming State Bar Executive Director Sharon Wilkinson and Bar Counsel Mark Gifford, along with University of Wyoming College of Law Dean Klint Alexander, will participate on the Colorado task force in order to evaluate and discuss a possible action plan for Wyoming.
16. **Connecticut:** The Connecticut Bar Association has established a lawyer well-being task force. The task force will use the report of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being as a “blueprint for moving lawyer well-being forward.” The Connecticut task force held its first meeting in April 2018. See Conn. Bar Ass’n, Lawyer Well-Being Task Force, 4/9/2018, http://www.ctbar.org/m/event_details.asp?id=1086879.
17. **Florida:** The Florida Bar created a special commission to address the issue of lawyer well-being. Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Jorge Labarga wrote in *The Florida Bar News* in May 2018 that “[l]awyers who are afraid to get help will not get help. They will suffer alone until their health gives way, causing problems that could have been avoided for their clients and themselves. No more. The entire profession shares this problem and must find solutions. The attitudes of the past that allowed this problem to continue must change.” He lauded the efforts of the Florida Bar to combat stigma associated with getting help. C.J. Jorge Labarga, “When Lawyers Need Help, Let’s Make Sure They Don’t Fear Getting It,” *The Fla. Bar News*, May 1, 2018.
18. **Georgia:** The State Bar of Georgia has an Attorney Wellness Task Force looking at a range of issues. This group focuses on healthy lifestyles and mental health issues lawyers confront. See Georgia Lawyers Living Well, <https://www.gabar.org/wellness/>.
19. **Illinois:** The Illinois Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being first met in February 2018. It is considering a number of innovations including an app and a program for lawyers in career transitions. Erika Kubik, “LAP Forms Illinois Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being,” 2*Civility*, Ill. Sup. Ct. Comm’n on Professionalism blog, Mar. 16, 2018.
20. **Massachusetts:** Massachusetts convened a group of interested parties to study the National Task Force report and recommendations. The first meeting of this group occurred on March 16, 2018. See, e.g., email from Constance Vecchione, Bar Counsel, Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers, to the author (Mar. 15, 2018) (on file with author).
21. **Minnesota:** Minnesota has no formal commission but has already several recommendations in place and is currently studying others: (1) Minnesota allows CLE credit for well-being topics; (2) Minnesota has adopted essential eligibility requirements; (3) Minnesota has a conditional admission program; (4) the Minnesota Board of Law Examiners is evaluating bar application inquiries concerning an applicant’s mental health; (5) Minnesota is reviewing whether to publish data revealing the rate of denied admissions due to mental health disorders; (6) Minnesota is reviewing proactive management-based initiatives as part of strategic planning; and (7) the state is studying modification of procedural rules to allow one-way sharing of information from regulators to the lawyer assistance program. See Susan Humiston, “Lawyer Well-Being and Lawyer Regulation,” *Bench & Bar of Minn.* (Dec. 2017).
22. **Nebraska:** Chief Justice Michael Heavican of the Nebraska Supreme Court reported to the author on April 30, 2018, that Nebraska is in the initial stages of planning for a state task force on lawyer well-being. See also email from Mark Weber, Nebraska Supreme Court Counsel for Discipline, to the author (Jan. 2, 2018) (on file with author). In addition, Nebraska adopted essential eligibility requirements. *The Nebraska Lawyer* devoted an entire issue to lawyer well-being in 2017.
23. **New Mexico:** New Mexico has a Proactive Attorney Regulation Committee (PARC) chaired by William Slease, Chief Disciplinary Counsel. Mr. Slease intends to have the PARC study and take steps to implement the Report of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being. New Mexico also has a Professionalism Commission. Mr. Slease plans to work with the New Mexico Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program Director, Pamela Moore, and the State Bar General Counsel, to engage this commission on the national task force’s recommendations. See, e.g., email from William Slease, Chief Disciplinary Counsel, Disciplinary Board of the New Mexico Supreme Court, to the author (Jan. 2, 2018) (on file with author).
24. **Texas:** The Texas Roundtable on Well-Being in the Legal Profession was formed through the Texas State Bar with the support of the Texas Supreme Court. This roundtable is currently (as of May 2018) identifying stakeholders and will study the Task Force report. It will assess what recommendations can be implemented in Texas and what other activities would be useful for promoting lawyer well-being. Its first meeting was on June 7, 2018. See, e.g., email from Bree Buchanan, Director, Texas Lawyers Assistance Program, and co-chair, National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being, to Jonathan White, staff attorney, National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being (April 26, 2018) (on file with author).
25. **Utah:** Chief Justice Matthew Durrant from the Utah Supreme Court informed the author on May 1, 2018, that Utah will convene a task force to review the Task Force report, inventory recommendations, and develop a state

action plan. Justice Paige Petersen will chair this task force.

26. **Vermont:** The Vermont Supreme Court established the Vermont Commission on the Well-Being of the Legal Profession. The Commission's Charge and Designation provides that it will create an "action plan" by December 31, 2018, with proposals for the Vermont Supreme Court and its committees to consider concerning lawyer, judge, and law student well-being. The Charge and Designation states: "The Vermont Supreme Court fully supports the concept of lawyer, judge, and law student well-being as a critical component of lawyer and judicial competence and access to justice for Vermonters . . ." See, e.g., Vt. Sup. Ct., *Charge & Designation, Vt. Comm'n on the Well-Being of the Legal Prof.* (Jan. 2, 2018). Further, the *Vermont Bar Journal's* spring 2018 issue featured a column by Vermont Bar Association President Daniel Maguire on lawyer well-being, as well as an article by Therese Corsones, Executive Director of the Vermont Bar Association, on the Vermont Commission on the Well-Being of the Legal Profession. Michael Kennedy, Vermont Bar Counsel, has also discussed the issue of lawyer well-being in blog posts. See, e.g., Michael Kennedy, *Five for Friday #108, Ethical Grounds, The Unofficial Blog of Vermont's Bar Counsel*, Mar. 2, 2018, <https://vtbarcounsel.wordpress.com/2018/03/02/five-for-friday-108/>.
27. **Virginia:** Virginia established the Committee on Lawyer Well-Being in late 2017. Justice William Mims of the Virginia Supreme Court chairs the Committee. Several discrete subcommittees are studying well-being as it pertains to various sectors of the legal profession in the Commonwealth. These include law firms, law schools, the judiciary, and public sector employers. See, e.g., email from Kathleen Uston, Assistant Bar Counsel, Virginia State Bar, to Jonathan White, staff attorney, National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being (April 27, 2018) (on file with author).
28. **West Virginia:** On March 21, 2018, Chief Justice Margaret Workman issued an order establishing the West Virginia

Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being. The order identified stakeholders, including regulators, judges, lawyers, and Chris Newbold, Executive Vice President of ALPS Corp., a direct writer of lawyers' malpractice insurance. The Task Force's first meeting occurred on May 11, 2018, and it will make recommendations to the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals by December 31, 2018. See Lacie Pierson, "WV Supreme Court Establishes Task Force for Lawyer Well-Being," *Charleston Gazette-Mail*, Mar. 22, 2018.

29. **Wisconsin:** As of April 2018, the State Bar of Wisconsin is moving forward with the creation of a task force to study the recommendations of the national task force report. See, e.g., email from Mary Spranger, WisLAP Manager, to Bree Buchanan, Director, Texas Lawyers Assistance Program, and co-chair, National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being (Mar. 30, 2018) (on file with author).
30. See, e.g., email from Dave Curtin, Chief Disciplinary Counsel, Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, to Jonathan White, staff attorney, National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being (April 30, 2018) (on file with author). The author apologizes to the members of any jurisdiction that is also in the process of forming a task force but whose identity was not known as of May 1, 2018.
31. Am. Bar Ass'n Comm'n on L. Assistance Programs, *Working Group to Advance Well-Being in the Legal Profession*, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/working-group_to_advance_well-being_in_legal_profession.html (last visited Apr. 27, 2018).
32. *Am. Bar Ass'n Resol. 105* (Feb. 2018), https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/lawyer_assistance/ls_colap_2018_hod_midyear_105.authcheckdam.pdf.
33. See *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change*, supra note 9, App. A., "State Action Plan & Checklist, Chief Justice (or Designee) 'To Do List'" and "State Action Plan & Checklist, Checklist for Gathering the Stakeholders."

34. See *id.* at Recommendation 21.1.
35. See *id.* at Recommendation 21.2.
36. See *id.* at Recommendation 21.3.
37. See *id.* at Recommendation 21.4.
38. See also Brittany Kauffman, Inst. for the Advancement of the Am. L. Sys., *Change the Culture, Change the System* (2015) (arguing that reforming the civil justice system requires, among other things, a return to greater collegiality among lawyers).
39. See *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change*, supra note 9, pp. 15–16.
40. There are many resources available for employers to consult in changing workplace culture to support employee well-being. These include the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation's Guidelines for promoting well-being in the legal profession, available at <http://www.tjmf.org.au/the-guidelines/> as well as Anne Brafford's *Positive Professionals: Creating High-Performing Profitable Firms Through the Science of Engagement* (Am. Bar Ass'n L. Practice Div. 2017).



James C. Coyle was Attorney Regulation Counsel for the Colorado Supreme Court from March 2013 until his retirement at the end of June 2018.

Coyle had been with the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel since 1990, serving in various roles, which included oversight of attorney admissions. Coyle was co-chair of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being from its inception and until his retirement.