



State Bar of
New Mexico
Est. 1886

2024

Board of Bar Commissioners

2024 OFFICERS



PRESIDENT

Erinna M. "Erin" Atkins

575-437-3042

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Erin Atkins is an attorney in Alamogordo, where she practices law with her father, S. Bert Atkins. Focusing primarily in a mix of criminal, family and children's law, Atkins can often be found in trial or headed into a trial. She proudly serves as the Guardian ad Litem in CYFD abuse and neglect cases. She is active in her local community and serves on the Twelfth Judicial District Pro Bono Committee, a governing board for a state-wide non-profit service organization for children, as well as the substitute Adult Drug Court Judge. Atkins was awarded the 2016 Twelfth Judicial District Young Lawyer of the Year Award and in 2023 was the recipient of the Twelfth Judicial District Don Quixote Award as the attorney that most relentlessly pursues hopeless causes in the pursuit of justice. Atkins also received the 2018 Outstanding Service Award from the Young Lawyer's Division of the State Bar of New Mexico for her many years of service to that Board. She represents the 12th Judicial District which includes Lincoln and Otero counties for the BBC. She is a 2009 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law. As President of the State Bar of New Mexico, she is the first woman from Alamogordo to hold the office. When not busy working or serving the State Bar, Atkins enjoys spending time with her family, her friends, and her dog.



PRESIDENT-ELECT

Aja N. Brooks

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Aja Nicole Brooks is a native New Mexican, born in Hobbs. She is a graduate of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in English and Spanish. She attended the University of New Mexico School of Law and graduated with her juris doctorate in 2008. She currently works as the Executive Assistant United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico, and previously worked as the Director of the Second Judicial District Court's Center

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for Self-Help and Dispute Resolution. She is involved in many legal groups and activities, including serving as the President-Elect of the State Bar of New Mexico and as a mentor in the Bridge the Gap Mentorship Program. She is the past President of the New Mexico Black Lawyers Association, a former President of the New Mexico State Bar Foundation, and a member of the Iota Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. She enjoys exploring and traveling near and far with her husband, Johnn and her son, Emerson.



SECRETARY-TREASURER

Allison H. Block-Chavez

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Allison Block-Chavez is partner and attorney at Aldridge, Hammar & Wexler, PA, in Albuquerque, where her law practice focuses on fiduciary services, adult guardianships and conservatorships, estate planning, and probate matters, real estate, and creditors' rights. Allison previously served as the Chair of the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of New Mexico and as the young lawyer delegate to the ABA House of Delegates. She graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law and served as the judicial law clerk for Chief Judge Michael E. Vigil of the New Mexico Court of Appeals. In her spare time, Allison and her husband Mo try to keep up with their twin toddlers.



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

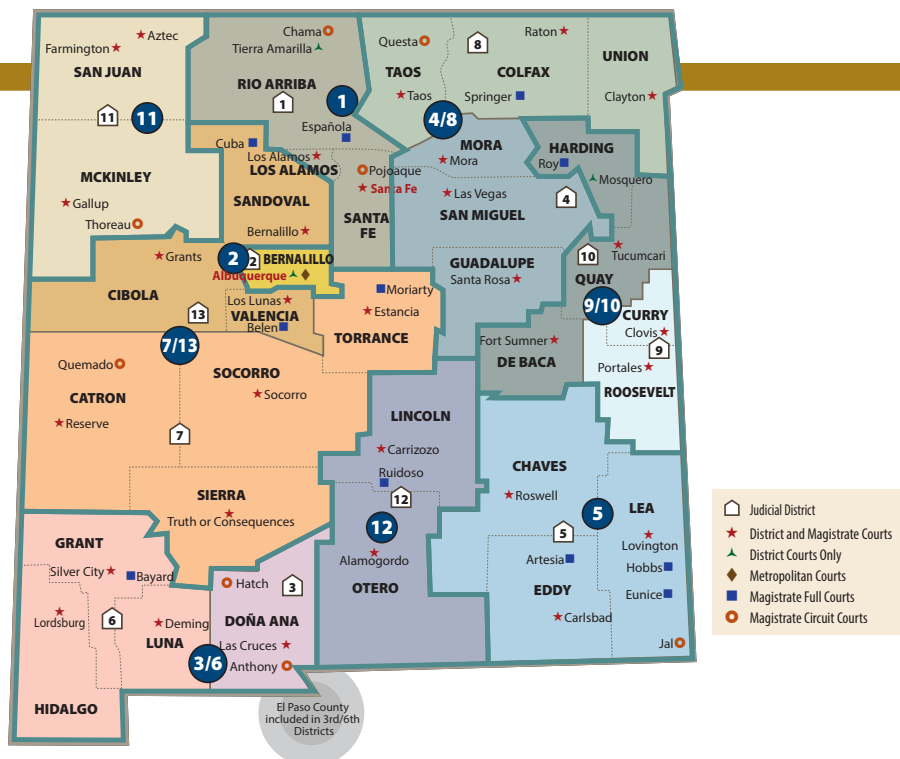
Benjamin I. Sherman

505-750-7150

ben@benshermanlaw.com

Ben Sherman is the founder of Ben Sherman Law LLC, located in Albuquerque. His practice is focused primarily on representing injured workers in workers' compensation cases. Prior to opening his own law firm in 2012, he served as a prosecutor with the 2nd Judicial District Attorney's Office and as an assistant city attorney with the City of Albuquerque's litigation department. Ben is a proud 2008 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law and has been fortunate to practice law in New Mexico for the past fifteen years. A fluent Spanish-speaker, he enjoys representing people from all communities and appreciates New Mexico's unique diversity and rich traditions. Ben is a past chair of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division and currently serves as president-elect of the Alumni Board of the University of New Mexico School of Law. He was also recently appointed to the New Mexico Board of Bar Examiners and proudly serves on the Access to Justice Fund Grant Committee of the State Bar of New Mexico. Ben represents the Second Judicial District, which includes Bernalillo County.

Board of Bar Commissioners District Map



1st Judicial District

(Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, and Santa Fe Counties)



Andréa Salazar

505-490-5542 • Andrea.Salazar@osa.nm.gov

Andréa Salazar is a native New Mexican raised in Santa Fe who attended undergraduate in Santa Cruz, CA. After working as a photographer for several years, she attended law school at UNM. She is a proud second generation UNM School of Law graduate. She is currently the Chief General Counsel for the New Mexico Office of the State Auditor. Over the past 12 ½ years she has practiced in a wide range of legal areas in both public and private practice from criminal law, local government and school law, land use, real estate, and redevelopment law. She loves hiking with her husband and dog, camping, photographing, and reading.



Olga Serafimova

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Olga Serafimova is Of Counsel in the Santa Fe office of Holland & Hart, LLP, where she is a member of the Commercial Litigation and Appellate practice group. She previously served as the Senior Civil Counsel to Attorney General Hector Balderas, the General Counsel for the Department of Information Technology, and the Tobacco Bureau Chief at the Attorney General's Office. Ms. Serafimova is a Board Member of the New Mexico Board of Bar Examiners, the State Bar liaison for the New Mexico Appellate Rules Committee, and the pro bono General Counsel of STEM Santa Fe, a non-profit organization providing free STEM programming to middle and high school aged children in Northern New Mexico. She is licensed to practice law in New Mexico, California, and Massachusetts.



Elizabeth J. Travis

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Elizabeth J. Travis is a deputy general counsel with the New Mexico Department of Transportation, serving as counsel for the Department's construction, operations and finance organizations, a practice which includes construction, environmental, procurement and contract law. Prior to working for the State, Travis served as an assistant county attorney for Santa Fe County. Travis also serves on the Supreme Court's Disciplinary Committee and on the State Bar Ethics Advisory Committee. She is an active member of the ABA, participating in the public contract law section and the construction industry forum. Travis is licensed to practice in state and federal court in New Mexico and California.

2nd Judicial District

(Bernalillo County)



Allison H. Block-Chavez

Secretary-Treasurer

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Aja N. Brooks

President-Elect

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Tomas J. Garcia

505-848-1800 • Tomas.garcia@modrall.com

Tomas J. Garcia is a shareholder at Modrall Sperling in Albuquerque, where he practices commercial, healthcare, torts/personal injury, and transportation litigation. Tomas is a past chair and board member of the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division and he is an active leader with the American Bar Association, currently serving as the New Mexico Membership Chair. Tomas also serves on the board of the New Mexico Defense Lawyers Association. An Albuquerque native, Tomas received his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center.



Steven S. Scholl

505-244-3890 • sscholl@dsc-law.com

Steven Scholl is a founding member of Dixon Scholl [Bailey] Carrillo, P.A. He does civil trials, but occasionally helps-out behind the scenes with criminal trials. He is a past president of the UNMSOL Alumni Board and the Albuquerque Bar Association. Serving on the Board of Bar Commissioners is another and different way that Steve serves the members of the Bar. Since graduating from UNMSOL in 1989, he spent a lot of free time “paying it forward” by teaching trial practice, evidence and deposition skills classes and coaching mock trial teams. Steve and Chris raised their two kids here, and they are raising theirs here as well. In addition to doing law stuff, they restored and use two vintage ‘50s camp trailers, drive a 1929 Model A Roadster and boat-camp. Life is Good.



Benjamin I. Sherman

Immediate Past President

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Lucy H. Sinkular

505-883-3070 • lhs@atkinsonkelsey.com

Lucy H. Sinkular is a shareholder at Atkinson & Kelsey, P.A., in Albuquerque, where she limits her practice to family law matters. Admitted in 1994, Lucy comes from a family of lawyers and loves the law. Lucy is passionate about New Mexicans' access to justice and maintains an active pro bono case load in addition to her regular practice. Lucy's immediate family includes her husband Scott who is a scientist at NNSA, their daughter who is finishing graduate studies and their son who is an auditor in Denver. Lucy is also "mom" to one very spoiled pandemic puppy, Labrador retriever and his older sister, the rescued greyhound/Lab mix. Lucy serves as the Senior Warden for her Episcopal Church in Albuquerque. When not practicing law or volunteering for the Bar, Lucy can frequently be found with her husband pursuing outdoor hobbies of camping, running, cycling and hiking.

3rd and 6th Judicial Districts

(Dona Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, and Luna Counties)



Rosenda Chavez-Lara

575-635-9441 • chavez.r.law@gmail.com

Rosenda Chavez-Lara is a private attorney that has worked as a Guardian ad Litem, Youth Attorney, and Eligible Adult Attorney in Children's Court in the Third Judicial District for over five (5) years. Mrs. Chavez-Lara has a law practice focused on representing children and their families in Abuse and Neglect cases and Domestic Relations matters. Before her practitioner work, she was a legal intern at the United States Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas. Additionally, Ms. Chavez-Lara was a legal volunteer with the Personal Protection Office/End the Violent Encounters (EVE) Inc. in Lansing, Michigan. She managed the US-Mexico Foundation for Science (FUMEC), in Washington, D.C., before attending law school in 2011. Additionally, Mrs. Chavez-Lara is a licensed Elementary School Teacher in the state of Texas.



Connie J. Flores

575-303-9999 • cflores@floresmendez.com

Connie J. Flores is partner at Flores Mendez, P. C., specializing in cases involving personal injury to include on the semi-truck accidents, on the job injuries, premises liability, Dram Shop, nursing home and representing victims of sexual abuse in civil lawsuits. Her mission is to help injured people that have been treated unjustly by insurance companies. As a fluent Spanish speaker, Ms. Flores enjoys representing individuals who otherwise would not be able to effectively communicate their issue to an attorney. Ms. Flores attended the University of Denver and graduated in 2003. She attended UNMSOL graduating in 2008. She was admitted to practice law in New Mexico in September 2008, Texas in May 2009 and Arizona 2022. Ms. Flores, who became a teenage mother at the age of 15, has been asked on numerous occasions to be a keynote speaker at local area high schools addressing the issues surrounding teenage pregnancy, in an effort to encourage teenage parents to continue their education and attend college.



David P. Lutz

575-526-2449 • dplutz@qwestoffice.net

David P. Lutz is a Las Cruces attorney at Martin & Lutz, P.C. He practices law with his father and focuses primarily on civil and domestic relations matters. He has been with the firm since 2004. He was born in Las Cruces, New Mexico and graduated from Ocate High School. He attended Claremont McKenna College (B.A. 1997) and Cornell Law School (J.D. 2000). He has appeared and practices regularly in the Third, Sixth, and Seventh Judicial Districts. He served on the Young Lawyers Division Board as a Regional Director from 2007 through 2011. When he is not working, he enjoys playing soccer and going with his family to cultural and/or sporting events at New Mexico State University.

4th and 8th Judicial Districts

(Guadalupe, Mora, San Miguel, Colfax, Taos, and Union Counties)



Brett Phelps

505-425-5129 • phelpslawoffice@gmail.com

Brett Phelps is a sole practitioner and owner of the Phelps Law Office in Las Vegas. He became a lawyer to help end the disastrous war on drugs, and today his practice focuses primarily on criminal defense and cannabis law. He serves on the State Bar Cannabis Law Section Board of Directors and as the Northeast Regional Director of the New Mexico Criminal Defense Lawyer's Association. He also advocates for criminal law reform at the New Mexico State Legislature. He attended the University of New Mexico School of Law (J.D., 2017, magna cum laude), New Mexico Highlands University (M.A., English), and the University of Nevada, Reno (B.B.A.)

5th Judicial District

(Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties)



Parker B. Folsie

575-622-6510 • pfolsie@hinklelawfirm.com

Parker Folsie is a partner in the Roswell office of Hinkle Shanor LLP. He is a graduate of University of Texas at Dallas, B.A. Political Science, and the University of Oklahoma School of Law, J.D. Parker primarily assists commercial clients in litigation matters in both State and Federal Courts at both the district and appellate levels. Parker was admitted to practice law in New Mexico in 2011 and is a member of the New Mexico State Bar Trial Practice Group, the Chaves County Bar Association, the New Mexico Defense Lawyer's Association, and the Defense Research Institute. Parker enjoys exploring the outdoors by camping and hiking in New Mexico's mountains with his wife, Robin, and daughter, Evelyn.

7th and 13th Judicial Districts

(Catron, Cibola, Sandoval, Sierra, Socorro, Torrance, and Valencia Counties)



Jessica A. Perez

505-771-7400 • jperez2@da.state.nm.us

Jessica Perez is an Assistant District Attorney in the 13th Judicial District within Sandoval County. There, she works primarily as a senior felony trial attorney handling a variety of cases including juvenile delinquency, expungements, and extraditions. In addition to her work as a prosecutor, Jessica likes to be involved with the legal community through volunteer work. She currently serves on the Prosecutors Section and previously served on the Young Lawyer's Division board. In 2019 she was awarded as Community Service Prosecutor of the Year by the New Mexico District Attorneys' Association and by the Prosecutors Section in 2020 for prosecutorial excellence. On the rare occasion she is not working, Jessica enjoys reading, going on hikes with her dog, and she's a big fan of sleeping.



Simone M. Seiler

505-865-2400 Ext. 2122 • berdsms@nmcourts.gov

Simone M. Seiler is staff attorney at the Thirteenth Judicial District Court. She is a 2006 graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law. In 2007, she passed the patent bar and began representing clients before the United States Patent & Trademark Office. Simone spent the first half of her legal career working for a private civil and intellectual property law firm, and the second half working for the Human Services Department and the Thirteenth Judicial District Court. She is past chair of the State Bar of New Mexico Intellectual Property Section and served on the boards of the Animal Law Section and the New Mexico Women's Bar Association.

9th and 10th Judicial Districts

(Curry, Roosevelt, DeBaca, Harding, and Quay Counties)



Mitchell L. Mender

575-265-5333 • Mitch@larsenandmender.com

Mitchell L. Mender is a founding partner of The Law Offices of Larsen and Mender P.C., located in Clovis, NM. His practice focuses primarily on criminal law, family law, and personal injury. Mitch is a graduate of Brigham Young University. He graduated from Vermont Law School in their accelerated Juris Doctorate program. He started his career as a prosecutor with the Ninth Judicial District Attorney's Office, where he was awarded prosecutor of the year for the District in 2018 and 2019. Subsequently, he worked at the New Mexico Law Offices of the Public Defender where he represented indigent clients. Additionally, he sits on the Board of Directors for the Hartley House, the local domestic violence shelter. He and his wife, Robyn, enjoy traveling and spending time with their three children.

11th Judicial District

(McKinley and San Juan Counties)



Joseph F. Sawyer

505-334-4297 • jsawyer@sjcounty.net

Joseph F. Sawyer serves as the County Attorney for San Juan County. A Farmington native, he attended the University of New Mexico (B.A., 1995) and Notre Dame Law School (J.D., 1999). Prior to working for San Juan County, Joe spent several years in private practice and worked for the 11th Judicial District Attorney's Office in Farmington. He served as president of the San Juan County Bar Association in 2011 and was on the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors from 2006 to 2007. Joe and his wife Ana enjoy backpacking, mountain biking, traveling and spending time with their two daughters.

12th Judicial District

(Lincoln and Otero Counties)



Erinna M. "Erin" Atkins

President
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Out-of-State District



Sean M. FitzPatrick

505-400-0420 • sfitzpatrick@fitzpatricklawllc.com

After working for a few years as a prosecutor litigating felony and misdemeanor cases, **Sean FitzPatrick** started his firm FitzPatrick Law, LLC in 2016. FitzPatrick's current practice area is civil litigation focusing on insurance and injury law. FitzPatrick served on the Young Lawyers Division board for years as director and chair prior to his current term on the BBC. FitzPatrick is also the current Co-Chair of the New Mexico State Bar Well Being committee. He believes a healthy work life balance makes better lawyers and you can find FitzPatrick running, biking, or participating in other type 2 fun activities with his wife Eva and their son Liam when not practicing law.

Young Lawyers Division Chair



Randy Taylor

505-768-7232 • rtaylor@rodey.com

Randy Taylor is a Director in the Albuquerque office of the Rodey Law Firm, practicing in a broad range of areas including medical, legal and other professional malpractice, insurance coverage and bad faith, commercial litigation, and real property disputes. Randy graduated cum laude from the UNM School of Law in 2016. While in law school, he served as the Managing Editor of the New Mexico Law Review and competed on the ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition team, which achieved a regional Best Brief Award. Following law school, Randy returned to his hometown of Las Cruces to clerk for a United States Magistrate Judge. Back in Albuquerque, Randy enjoys trying new restaurants, breweries, and cafes, card and board games, and road tripping around New Mexico.

Senior Lawyers Division Delegate



Daniel J. Behles

505-433-3097 • dbehles@askewlawfirm.com

Dan Behles is of Counsel to the Albuquerque bankruptcy firm of Askew Law Firm, LLC. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame, and received his J.D. degree from the University of New Mexico. He has practiced in New Mexico for over 50 years, concentrating in bankruptcy. He has represented debtors, creditors, trustees and committees, and has been a Chapter 7 and Chapter 11 Trustee. He is a member of the Subchapter V panel of trustees for small business reorganizations. He sits on the board of directors of the Senior Lawyers Division, and has been a Southwest Superlawyers for over 10 years.

Paralegal Division Liaison



Meryl Sutton

505-545-8554 • meryls@nmlegalaid.org

Meryl Sutton is a New Mexico native and graduated from the Paralegal Studies Program in January 2019. Following graduation, she accepted an internship with New Mexico Legal Aid and then accepted the position of Interim Pro Bono Coordinator. In June of 2020, Meryl transitioned into the position of VAP Paralegal. Meryl's work focuses on providing access to justice to low-income New Mexican's by recruiting private attorneys to represent her clients pro bono in various capacities. Meryl joined the State Bar Paralegal Division in 2021 and was elected Chair Elect in November 2022. Meryl also Chairs the Divisions Pro Bono Committee as it ties in with her work. In her free time, Meryl enjoys spending time with friends and family, watching documentaries, cooking and going to the opera.

Get involved with the State Bar of New Mexico! Are you looking for a way to be more involved with the State Bar and gain leadership experience?

Consider applying for an appointment to serve on one of the many N.M. Supreme Court boards, committees and commissions to which the Board of Bar Commissioners makes appointments. Look for notices regarding vacancies in the *Bar Bulletin* and in *ENews* throughout the year. In the fall, look for information about the commissioner elections. For more information about the Board, contact your district bar commissioner or the State Bar.

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