



Licensed Legal Paraprofessional Program

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The “Colorado” Supreme Court has approved [new rules](#) to implement a new program to license legal paraprofessionals, such as paralegals, for a limited scope practice in certain types of family law matters. In doing so, Colorado joins states such as Arizona, Minnesota, Oregon, Utah and Washington to allow certain non-lawyer professionals to offer limited domestic relations legal services. The program is slated to launch in 2024.

The authorized scope of practice for licensed legal paraprofessionals – known as LLPs – is set forth in C.R.C.P. 207.1. While the final rule does not include any asset or income caps for taking on a client matter, it expands the list of matters that an LLP would not be authorized for practice. For example, LLPs would not be permitted to draft documents relating to the disposition of commercial assets in a marital dissolution or draft pre- or post-nuptial agreements. The rule also explains that while LLPs can appear in court, they cannot examine witnesses. These limitations on an LLP’s legal services help ensure that LLPs serve clients within the scope of an LLP’s competency.

LLPs must satisfy the admissions requirements set forth in the rules, including those in C.R.C.P. 207.8. That rule provides for a degree-plus-experience track or a longer experience track, but either way an LLP must take a legal ethics class and pass both an ethics exam and a family law exam. The Advisory Committee on the Practice of Law and Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel (“OARC”) are starting the process of assembling the infrastructure for those exams.

Tips & Tricks

To view various days side by side in outlook, especially if not in the same week.

Open your outlook calendar.

- 1) Click on the date in the small calendar;
- 2) Then With the control key pressed select other dates.

The calendar dates selected will appear side by side. Particularly helpful when trying to schedule something and discussing various days.

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Calendar of Events for 2023

"DO MORE THAN
BELONG:
PARTICIPATE.
DO MORE THAN CARE:
HELP.
DO MORE THAN BELIEVE:
PRACTICE.
DO MORE THAN BE FAIR:
BE KIND.
DO MORE THAN
FORGIVE: FORGET.
DO MORE THAN DREAM:
WORK." — WILLIAM
ARTHUR WARD

	Date and Location
Lunch and Learn CLE 12:00	Wednesday, April 19, 2023
Law Day CLE 9:00 am-12:00 pm	Saturday, May 6, 2023 State Bar of New Mexico
Lunch and Learn CLE 12:00	Wednesday, June 21, 2023
Lunch and Learn CLE 12:00	Wednesday, July 19, 2023
11:00 am Board Meeting 12:30 pm Lunch (Provided by the Division)	Saturday, July 8, 2023 State Bar of New Mexico
State Bar Annual Meeting Bench and Bar Conference	July 27-29, 2023 Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort
Paralegal Division Annual Meeting Luncheon	Friday, July 28, 2023 Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort
Paralegal Day	Friday, August 25, 2023
Paralegal Day Luncheon	Saturday, August 26, 2023 El Pinto Restaurant
3rd Annual Paralegal Symposium	September 29-October 1,, 2023 Santa Fe, NM
Lunch and Learn CLE 12:00	Wednesday, October 18, 2023
Lunch and Learn CLE 12:00	Wednesday, November 15, 2023
The Institute CLE 8:30 am– 4:30 pm	Friday, December 1, 2023 State Bar of New Mexico
Holiday Dinner 6:00 -8:00 pm	Friday, December 1, 2023 State Bar of New Mexico

State Bar of New
Mexico Website
[State Bar New Mexico
\(sbnm.org\)](http://StateBarNewMexico.org)

[State Bar of New Mexico >
Leadership > Divisions > Paralegal \(sbnm.org\)](#)

Legal Paraprofessionals... continued

The LLP program is the culmination of years of studying the issue of unrepresented litigants in family law cases – around 75 percent of the parties in such cases – and the programs in other states that have authorized non-lawyers to provide certain services. These licensed paralegals/paraprofessionals often charge hourly rates roughly one-quarter to one-half

MEMBER BENEFITS

Did You Know . . .

The Board recently approved revisions to the Standing Rules providing additional benefits to members who qualify including waiver of fees for attending a Division-sponsored CLE and reimbursement of funds required to sit for a national paralegal certification examination. To take advantage of these benefits see Standing Rule I.H. (page 6) for qualification criteria. [Microsoft Word - Standing Rules Rev. 10.03.22 \(sbnm.org\)](https://www.sbnm.org/standing-rules-revision-10-03-22)

Personal Development and Growth– Combating Computer Eye Strain

As a busy paralegal, most days as spent staring into the computer screen. In addition to taking a break every hour to give your eyes a break, below are several tips to help prevent eye strain.

- 1) Computer glasses- trust me. These ARE a game changer, if you currently have progressive lenses.
- 2) Adjust your lighting so it doesn't shine directly into your eyes and adjust your monitor so it doesn't have glare from windows etc.
- 3) The use of artificial tears can help prevent and alleviate dry eyes caused by infrequently blinking, which typically results when someone is looking at the screen for too long. Preservative-free lubricating eye drops can be used as often as needed.
- 4) Analyze your computer set up to ensure that your monitor is approximately 2 feet in front of you. The top of the monitor should be just slightly below eye level.
- 5) Be mindful of the a/c and heating vents, as well as fans, to avoid the air blowing directly at your eyes.
- 6) Utilize a desktop humidifier to add more moisture to the dry New Mexico air.

Depending on the type of monitor, you might want to adjust the brightness or viewing size to 150%

Pro Bono Events

The Paralegal Division provides opportunities for you, our members, to volunteer at various pro bono events sponsored by the State Bar and other programs throughout the state. Sponsors of these events rely on our members to provide paralegal services to attorney volunteers. Volunteering is a great way to give back to the community and earn CLE credits at the same time. Volunteers can earn up to 5 hours of CLE credit per year by volunteering with Pro Bono Committee Events. The Pro Bono Committee will email volunteer opportunities to Division members.

Upcoming events:

New Mexico Legal Aid Volunteer Attorney Program Statewide Teleclinics (volunteer opportunities for interpretation services)

April 20, 2023 1-4 pm (telephonically)

July 20, 2023 1-4 pm (telephonically)

September 21, 2023 1-4 pm (telephonically)

November 16, 2023 1-4 pm (telephonically)

SBNM Veterans Legal Clinics (volunteer opportunities to process intakes, and place clients with volunteer attorneys per their legal issue.

Next date TBD (the Pro Bono Committee will notify the Division when the next date is set)

The Young Lawyers Division & SBNM Ask-a-Lawyer Call-in Program (Volunteers will be needed to answer the phones and route clients to the correct attorney regarding their civil legal issue)

Saturday, April 29 9am-12pm (State Bar of New Mexico)

The Young Lawyers Division & SBNM Wills for Heroes (Volunteers will be needed to witness and notarize Wills, POA's, and Advanced Healthcare Directives for clients)

Next date TBD (the Pro Bono Committee will notify the Division when the next date is set) The next event will not be held in Albuquerque.

2nd Judicial District Court & the NMLA Volunteer Attorney Program (Volunteers will be needed for interpretation, intake, and attorney placement regarding clients civil legal issues)

This event will be held in August (TBD), and will be located in Albuquerque on a Saturday Next date TBD (the Pro Bono Committee will notify the Division when the next date is set)

Pro Bono Month Statewide Legal Fairs

October is Pro Bono Month. The Volunteer Attorney Program of New Mexico Legal Aid works with each of the 13 Judicial Districts to sponsor in person legal fairs. The months of September, October, and November will have several legal fairs in different Judicial Districts. The VAP Pro Bono Coordinator will start scheduling these events in May. The Pro Bono Committee will notify the Division as these events start being scheduled.



Committee Spotlight– Meryl Sutton

When I am not working, or volunteering for my community, I enjoy cooking and anything outdoors. I love animals, and am a proud owner of a spunky rescue dog who rules my world. My mother is a photographer, and takes many summer photo trips, which I accompany her. I love exploring the outdoors, and going on adventures with my momma.

Tell us about your job: I am a Paralegal Advocate for the Volunteer Attorney Program of New Mexico Legal Aid. Low-income clients are referred to my program statewide. Once eligibility is assessed, I perform legal research and collect supporting documentation from my clients. I then recruit private attorneys to represent my clients pro bono. In 2023 volunteer attorneys provided over 1,000 hours of pro bono representation for VAP direct representation clients.

How long have you been a member of the Paralegal Division? Why did you join? This is my second year as a member of the Paralegal Division. I joined to network with paralegals, build stronger relationships with members of the judicial system, and give back to my community.

How long have you been on the Board of Directors? Why did you want to have a leadership position? I was a Director from 2022-2023, and am currently Chair-Elect. I wanted to be involved in a leadership role because I have always been a motivator. Leaders are motivators. Leadership roles bring innovation, create strong relationships built on communication and trust, and are essential to a high functioning organization. The Paralegal Division is built up of paralegals that have goals and visions for the Division, and work hard to bring the Divisions goals to fruition. I am excited to be amongst like-minded members and am excited to support and expand the Division to

showcase its full potential and impact we can have in our community.

Explain to our members the purpose of the Pro Bono/Community Service Committee: The Pro Bono Committee focuses on providing volunteer opportunities to Division Members. Many of the volunteer opportunities open to the Division are sponsored by legal service non-profits, and provide access to justice for low-income New Mexicans that otherwise would not have legal access. Without volunteers, these events would not be possible. Volunteering is a great way to provide support and resources for the community in which we live. Volunteers can also earn up to 5 hours of CLE credit by volunteering, which is an added incentive to volunteer!

What do you think the Division could do to better inform the legal community about the use of paralegals? Everything starts with a conversation and builds from there. It is important for the Division to continue to build relationships in the legal community, to gain exposure, and be heard! Paralegals are the backbone of the legal community, and we need to continue to have conversations to educate the legal community on the important roles a paralegal plays. The more conversations we begin, the more exposure we gain.

What changes have you seen in the legal community that may impact paralegals? Paralegals need to continue to educate attorneys on the differences between paralegals and legal assistants. When I graduated and started applying for paralegal positions, there were many legal assistant postings that had included paralegal duties, but were paid less than the paralegal postings. Paralegals complete more education for their roles, and that should be reflective in the legal community.

A reminder that effective January 1, 2023, the CLE tracking Committee will no longer accept individual CLE submissions throughout the year. Members will be required to track their own MCLE credits to qualify for annual membership renewal. The compliance form below will assist you to track and submit your proof of compliance.

NOTE: Certificates of attendance must be attached to the certificate of compliance for non-Division-sponsored CLE courses



CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION (CLE) CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Member Name: _____

Bar ID: _____

A minimum of twelve (12) CLE hours, including one-hour of ethics, is required for annual renewal of your membership in the Paralegal Division. **ALL Division-sponsored and non-Division-sponsored CLE courses that comply with the MCLE Guidelines should be included in this form.** Please keep certificates of attendance for non-Division sponsored CLEs together with this form for submission with your annual renewal. You do not need a certificate for Division-sponsored CLE courses (the sign-in sheets for Division-sponsored CLEs are kept by the CLE Tracking Committee for proof of attendance in the event of an audit of your records) but you must still list them below. NOTE: If you have a problem meeting the CLE requirement for a particular renewal period or have questions regarding whether a particular CLE complies with the MCLE Guidelines, please submit a written explanatory statement/inquiry to the CLE Tracking Committee at pd-CLEcredits@sbnm.org. An extension may be granted if you are unable to meet your MCLE requirement due to extenuating circumstances.

Date of CLE	Sponsored By	Title of Program	Pro Bono	Self-Study	General Hours	Ethics Hours
-----	-----	TOTAL HOURS FROM CONTINUATION SHEET (if applicable)				
		CARRY OVER CREDITS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR*				
-----	----- = -----	TOTAL HOURS FOR PERIOD				

* You may carry over a maximum of twelve (12) hours including one hour of ethics from the previous year, excluding pro bono and self-study hours.

Member Name: _____

Bar ID: _____

Date of CLE	Sponsored By	Title of Program	Pro Bono	Self-Study	General Hours	Ethics Hours
-----	-----	TOTAL HOURS FOR PERIOD				

I certify that the information contained in this Certificate of Compliance is true and accurate. Further, I certify that I attended each hour of the General CLE and Ethics programs identified in this Certificate of Compliance and have attached my certificates of attendance for non-Division sponsored CLEs. My CLE hours for the renewal period beginning on January 1, 20__ and ending December 31, 20__ total _____ hours, with a minimum of _____ hour of Ethics.

Signature of Member

Date Signed

The State Bar of New
Mexico
Paralegal Division
Post Office Box 92860
Albuquerque, NM 87199-
2860

WWW.SBNM.ORG

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Devany Whipple

Ad Hoc: Oral History Project

A Message from the Chair Linda Sanders

Here we are in April already! A full ¼ of the year is complete and we are at the time of year I like to think of as Spring Cleaning vs. Spring Break. It's the time of year when my New Year resolutions, which typically include improved organization and dedication, are blown. So, do I tackle the organization issue in the form of Spring cleaning? Or do I take a Spring break? I have fond memories from high school and college of Spring break. I also have an innate need for Spring cleaning. No, I am not going to spend Spring break doing Spring cleaning. As with all issues of life, balance is called for. And now that I think about it, balance is also on my list of resolutions. So, for the first time in several years, I am going to take a Spring break and completely get away from work. I expect I will return ready to tackle the Spring cleaning and get my resolutions back on track. I'm told that taking time for myself will actually help me be more productive in my professional life. Which is strange because I distinctly recall knowing this as a truth in high school and college. I knew a week away from the pressures of school would help me make the final push to the end of the semester. Why did I lose this perspective as a professional? There isn't just one answer. I am definitely an overachiever in terms of job performance. Commitments to family are also a factor as are commitments to the professional and social organizations in which I choose to be involved. I allowed myself to believe that being an adult meant giving up Spring break. This is the ultimate answer. I (slowly over the course of years) changed my belief system to prioritize work and other commitments over myself. It's time to reclaim previously held beliefs. So, balance and Spring break it is! I'll keep you posted on the results. Happy Spring everyone.