

North Carolina Bar Association Mentorship Program Guidelines for Mentors and Students

1. The role of the mentor is to give the student a window on the profession and to show the student how a professional acts.
2. The goal of the Mentoring Program is to provide experienced practitioners for law students to better assure that, as graduates, they will be equipped to deal with the realities of the practice of law and to understand ethics and professionalism more fully.
3. Appropriate topics for discussion between students and mentors are issues of current concern to the profession, the mentors' approaches to ethical and professionalism dilemmas, career goals, types of legal practice, law practice management issues, and quality of life issues in law school and the practice of law.
4. It is not appropriate for the student to seek from the mentor assistance or research on substantive courses or substantive legal issues that arise in clinical programs for students.
5. Conversations between students and mentors are confidential.
6. The mentor applications and pairings will be completed in the fall academic semester and the mentoring relationship should last for the duration of the spring academic semester.
7. The law student is expected to initiate contact with the mentor within fourteen days of the date of the letter notifying the student of the identity of the mentor, unless the student and mentor are introduced at a law school function. Failure of the student to initiate contact with the mentor within the fourteen-day period will result in the removal of the student from the Mentoring Program.
8. Matches of students and mentors on the basis of common professional interest cannot be assured.
9. While mentors may be asked for guidance as to locations and types of practice, the Mentoring Program is not meant to serve recruitment or placement needs.
10. Students are expected to respect time and availability limits of mentors.
11. Students and mentors are encouraged to meet informally for breakfast, lunch, late in the afternoon at the mentor's office, or anywhere else that is mutually convenient. The primary means of communication between students and mentors will necessarily be by telephone.

Establishing the Mentoring Relationship

Mentors and students are free to structure the relationship to meet the needs of both the mentors' and students' availability. They may need to meet informally over breakfast, lunch, late in the afternoon, or at any other mutually agreed upon time. Mentors are asked to invite students to attend hearings, meetings, lectures, or any special law-related event. Mentors and students are encouraged to communicate by telephone. Mentors are informed that students have busy and perhaps unpredictable schedules. At the same time, the students are urged to recognize that mentors are taking time away from work and other responsibilities to share time, wisdom, and experience. It can be challenging to accommodate schedules.

Please remember that it is the quality of the relationship, not the quantity of time spent, that determines the success of the mentoring relationship. While the mentor may be asked to offer guidance as to the locations and types of practice a student may be considering, the Mentoring Program is not meant to serve recruitment or placement needs.

Concerns

If, at any time, you have concerns or wish to end the relationship for any reason, or a problem arises with your mentor, please e-mail YLD staff liaison, Jacquelyn Terrell-Fountain at jterrell@ncbar.org or call 1-800-662-7407.