



2023-2024 STATE BAR OF TEXAS

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee reports are included in the July/August issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to update Texas lawyers on State Bar activities. The reports do not necessarily reflect the position or official policy of the State Bar of Texas, which is formulated by the State Bar Board of Directors or by the membership through referendum. For more information or to complete a Committee Volunteer Interest Form, go to [texasbar.com/committees](https://texasbar.com/committees) or call 800-204-2222 or 512-427-1516.

## ADMINISTRATION OF RULES OF EVIDENCE

*Neil Kelly, Chair*

The Administration of Rules of Evidence Committee evaluates the Texas Rules of Evidence to ensure it meets today's practice of law. The committee makes recommendations to the State Bar of Texas, Supreme Court Advisory Committee, and the Supreme Court of Texas. In addition to researching inquiries from Texas attorneys about rules, the committee monitors changes to the Federal Rules of Evidence and considers whether similar changes should be recommended to the TRE. This year, the committee is analyzing inquiries into several issues, including: (1) updating Rule 606 to permit juror testimony as to whether extraneous prejudicial information was improperly brought to the jury's attention in criminal matters, (2) whether Rule 614 should be amended to ensure a witness excluded from the courtroom during trial cannot gain access to trial testimony, (3) whether Texas should adopt a residual hearsay exception similar to Federal Rule of Evidence Rule 807, (4) whether Texas should revise Rule 611 concerning illustrative aides, (5) whether the Texas rules have sufficient safeguards against "deepfake" "evidence," and (6) evidentiary issues arising from use of artificial intelligence. Questions about potential amendments to the TRE may be submitted to the State Bar or to any committee member for consideration.

## ADVERTISING REVIEW

*Jason Honeycutt, Chair*

The State Bar Advertising Review Committee assists in maintaining self-governance of attorneys by attorneys and assists the public by ensuring attorney advertisements are consistent with the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct.

These rules had material changes as of July 2021 and the State Bar advertising review staff is busy reviewing submissions to ensure compliance with the rules. The committee is facing new and interesting instances of attorney advertising, especially concerning the use of trade names.

The committee strongly encourages pre-review of all attorney advertising. This reduces consumer complaints on advertising as well as reduces the cost associated with changing advertising that has gone to market. Remember the State Bar advertising review staff is consultative on the advertising and wants to help attorneys use compliant advertising. The committee and staff are here to help.

## ANNUAL MEETING

*Jerry Alexander and Courtney Barksdale Perez, Co-chairs*

The Annual Meeting took place in Dallas at the Hilton Anatole. The meeting included a diverse selection of quality CLE and featured programs for everyone, from the first-year associate to the seasoned professional. State Bar of Texas sections provided practice-specific programs, including the Family Law, Litigation, Business Law, and Corporate Counsel sections. The meeting featured three dynamic keynote speakers: Attorney and legal analyst Camille Vasquez presented Thursday at the Bar Leaders Recognition Luncheon; Professor David Grenardo spoke Friday at the Bench Bar Breakfast; and the Hon. Irma Carrillo Ramirez presented at Friday's General Session Luncheon. Friday's programming included parting remarks from 2023-2024 President Cindy V. Tisdale and 2023-2024 Texas Young Lawyers Association President Laura Pratt and the swearing in of 2024-2025 President Steve Benesh and 2024-2025 TYLA President Hisham A. Masri. Be sure to mark your calendars for the 2025 Annual Meeting in San Antonio on June 19-20.

## CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

*Tina R. Green, Chair*

In April 2024, the Continuing Legal Education Committee met with the State Bar Board of Directors Professional Development Subcommittee and bar staff to propose topics for CLE programs and to discuss issues facing TexasBarCLE and Texas Bar Books. The committee continued its mission of providing cutting-edge CLE to hardworking Texas attorneys.

TexasBarCLE continues to be the go-to source for CLE for Texas attorneys and is currently in the process of developing a new CLE product called "Practice Skills Short Takes," which the committee anticipates rolling out in the fall. TexasBarCLE and Texas Bar Books continue to offer a variety of discounts, scholarships, and important free programming to help Texas attorneys advise and represent their clients in the areas needed most. Texas Bar Books continues to expand its offerings on the texasbarpractice.com website, which serves as the platform for Texas Bar Books and the Law Practice Management Program. The website offers lawyers a single place to explore free practice management content such as the Succession Planning Toolkit. Texasbarpractice.com is also where lawyers can go to shop for practice manuals, jury charges, desk books, and reference guides and where they can subscribe to online practice manuals with downloadable forms.

## COURT RULES

*Alan York, Chair*

This year, the Court Rules Committee submitted proposed rule changes to improve civil litigation. The committee recommended revisions of Texas Rules of Civil Procedure rules 10 (clarifying information necessary for a motion to withdraw as counsel to facilitate court contact with pro se parties), 12 (clarifying the process for challenging an attorney's authority to represent a party), 44 (modernizing language for when a party may be represented by a "next friend"), 194.4 (adding a comment to clarify filing requirements for pre-trial disclosures), and 621a (updating a statutory reference)—all of which have been submitted to the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors before being sent to the Supreme Court of Texas. The committee also recommended revisions of Texas Rules of Appellate Procedure rule 9.9(e) (clarifying the duty to protect unredacted sensitive data), 9.4(h) and (j) (clarifying requirements for bookmarks in electronically filed documents), and 18.1 (clarifying deadlines for issuance of mandates),

which have also been submitted to the board of directors. Finally, the committee engaged in continued discussions with the Supreme Court Advisory Committee regarding a standardized implicit bias instruction for juries and has begun work on revisions to rules applicable to justice of the peace courts.

## DISABILITY RIGHTS AND ISSUES

*Daphne Silverman, Chair*

The Disability Rights and Issues Committee provides resources for attorneys and members of the public who are experiencing disabilities. The Event Subcommittee is planning a town-hall-style CLE at which people experiencing disabilities can discuss problems impacting the accessibility of the judicial system to those experiencing disabilities. Sean Pevsner and Mary Allen Ramprasad lead this subcommittee. If you have a story to share, contact the committee. The Mentorship Subcommittee, led by Hannah Cramer, provided those experiencing disabilities in the legal field with a mentor, a one-on-one resource to answer questions regarding barriers they encounter, and recommendations on overcoming those barriers. If you would like to be a mentor or if you would like to have a mentee, contact the committee. The Public Education Subcommittee, led by Dominique Augustus, expanded its bureau of speakers related to disability. If you would like to present a speaker or to be a speaker, contact the committee. The Active-duty Military/Veterans Subcommittee, led by Gary Manuele, published resources available through government and public interests that assist military veterans with service issues including combat PTSD, which can lead to suicide, homelessness, and criminal charges.

## DIVERSITY IN THE PROFESSION

*Amar Raval, Chair*

The Diversity in the Profession Committee continued forward with its goal of increased participation in the State Bar of Texas by diverse attorneys.

All members understood the requirements faced by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit's opinion in *Boudreaux v. Louisiana State Bar Association* and ensured that their 2023-2024 goals complied with the opinion. The Texas Minority Counsel Program was held October 25-27, 2023, in Houston with excellent attendance. The Texas Minority Law Student Program was held April 5, 2024, at UNT Dallas College of Law. The committee also held the 21st annual Texas Minority Attorney Program, a CLE program at South Texas College of Law Houston, on April 12, 2024. This program provides valuable information and resources to small firms and solo practitioners. The bar prep scholarship program had another successful year. With so many remarkable applications, it was difficult to make the selections. The committee awarded bar prep scholarships to 15 students.

## JURY SERVICE

*Doryn Danner Glenn, Chair*

The purpose of the Jury Service Committee is to develop and implement programs to ensure broad citizen participation in, and support of, jury service. The committee continued to promote Jury Appreciation Week, (which was established by the Texas Legislature in 2015 and is celebrated each year during the first week of May), by providing activity and program suggestions. The committee also created "Jury Duty—A Texas Tradition" stickers, which highlight one's jury service and have been distributed to clerks around the state at no cost to the clerks. The committee also sought to collaborate with other standing committees to promote the missions of both. An email was sent to certain standing committees in the hope that some common ground for partnership may be found. The committee continued its work to create public service announcements promoting jury service and warning citizens of ever-present and evolving criminal jury and court scams. The committee will continue to look for ways to promote and celebrate the efforts of jurors in Texas.

## LAW FOCUSED EDUCATION

*Shivali Sharma, Chair*

The Law Focused Education Committee presented *Legal Beagle: The Case of the Stolen Collar* to elementary school students, teachers, and local bar associations throughout the state. The committee translated the book, which educates students about the role of attorneys and judges, into Spanish, French, Arabic, and Vietnamese and added a concept poetry module on the project website, found at [texaslr.org/legal-beagle](https://texaslr.org/legal-beagle).

The committee also (1) provided a wide array of free professional development training opportunities for Texas teachers; (2) promoted the Texas Citizen Bee, a statewide civic education program, and served as support personnel for regional competitions; (3) provided free Texas Law-Related Education materials ([texaslr.org](https://texaslr.org)) to school districts, private school networks, and community groups; (4) continued to partner with attorneys and local bar associations to assist in the rollout of LRE materials; (5) translated *Scrappy Explores His Community*, a children's book on civic participation, into additional languages to increase outreach; and (6) presented the Nancy Garms Memorial and Leon Jaworski awards to deserving recipients.

## LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

*Greg Sampson, Chair*

The Law Practice Management Committee conducted its work through six subcommittees. Succession planning remained a focus for three subcommittees. The Succession Planning Toolkit Subcommittee supplemented the Succession Planning Toolkit with content for lawyers who are conducting succession planning, acting as a custodian, or are selling/buying all or part of a law practice. The Succession Planning Outreach Subcommittee created a succession planning presentation for judges and for local bars to use with their members. The Sale of Practice Portal Subcommittee is creating a portal to match lawyers wishing to sell their practice with lawyers interested in buying. At the request of 2023-2024

State Bar of Texas President Cindy Tisdale, the Vacation Letters Subcommittee identified the issues and considerations regarding attorney vacation letters. The Emerging Practice Trends Subcommittee developed a chart of alternative fee structures, including sample fee agreement language and references to relevant ethical opinions, and is developing videos on AI uses in managing a law practice. The Annual Meeting LPM-Track CLE Subcommittee presented topics during the State Bar Annual Meeting on starting a law firm, handling turnover and other staffing issues, law firm compensation, trust account myths and grievance pitfalls, and the ethical integration of AI in a law practice.

### **LAWS RELATING TO IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY**

*Rehan Alimohammad, Chair*

The State Bar of Texas Laws Relating to Immigration and Nationality Committee has been meeting regularly and discussing new measures that address the migrant crisis that continues along our border and our points of entry along with the extraordinary delays in processing cases within our borders. In October 2023, members of the committee attended a meeting at the San Antonio U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field office to discuss current issues with processing on specific types of cases as well as other administrative policies and changes. In February 2024, the committee met with Bureau of Consular Affairs officials regarding issues in processing current and future cases. The April meeting included a meeting at the Mexican Consulate and YMCA International Services. The committee will continue to monitor laws related to immigration and nationality with the goal to improve the quality of legal services provided to those in need and to improve the functioning of the legal system.

### **LAWYERS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

*Jo Whittenburg, Chair*

The Lawyers' Assistance Program

Committee assists the Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program by creating initiatives and programming for lawyers, law students, judges, and legal professionals related to substance use and mental health challenges as well as general well-being for the legal community. January 2024 marked the 35th anniversary of the creation of the Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program, and the Volunteer Engagement Subcommittee focused on hosting anniversary celebrations in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and Dallas. TLAP worked with founders and volunteers to create a video highlighting the contributions of those founders and the early days of TLAP. The Volunteer Engagement Subcommittee provided online volunteer training and had 36 participants attend.

The Law Schools Subcommittee expanded outreach to law students, law school faculty, and deans. TLAP presented at law school orientations and increased follow-up presentations in professional responsibility, externship, and other law school courses. The subcommittee supported TLAP staff making presentations at Texas law schools and was invited to present alongside TLAP staff. TLAP hosted the 15th annual Law School Deans Meeting to provide a forum for deans of students to express ideas on how TLAP can support them in law student mental health and wellness.

### **LEGAL SERVICES TO THE POOR IN CIVIL MATTERS**

*Shelby Jean, Chair*

Fifty years ago, the Legal Services to the Poor in Civil Matters Committee was formed to address civil legal issues that impact low-income Texans. The committee is dedicated to enhancing access to justice, implemented mainly through pro bono programs and services in collaboration with stakeholders and legal service providers. Committee members include those who work at law firms, corporations, law schools, and legal aid organizations; judges; and solo practitioners. Members are committed to doing work that helps ensure delivery of legal services to Texans who are unable to afford counsel to represent

them in civil matters. Committee objectives include promoting events that support access to justice to colleagues, including National Pro Bono Week, Veterans Week, and annual fundraisers such as LAWteria and the Champions of Justice Gala. The committee also focused on the statewide virtual court kiosk project, which was established by the Texas Legal Services Center. The committee formed a subcommittee to help support TLSC's project by beta-testing several existing kiosks around Texas to enhance its understanding of the kiosks and promoting awareness of the kiosks' ability to help Texans attend online court hearings, get free legal help, or find legal information and resources.

### **LEGAL SERVICES TO THE POOR IN CRIMINAL MATTERS**

*Jessica Canter, Chair*

The Legal Services to the Poor in Criminal Matters Committee studies the indigent defense system in Texas and develops recommendations for entities that are or should be involved in the provision of quality representation to indigent persons involved in criminal matters. The committee comprises members of the judiciary, prosecution, and defense, as well as representatives of court administration, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations with a focus on indigent defense. The committee has worked on a guide for attorneys in criminal courts in dealing with indigent clients in relation to court costs, fees, and fines. Additionally, the committee drafted an "Ability to Pay Guidance" for indigent clients and the fees that are assessed with community supervision, which was adopted by the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors. The committee also received excellent recommendations for its Warren Burnett Award. The award recognizes individuals that made extraordinary contributions to improving the quality of criminal legal representation to indigent Texans.

### **LOCAL BAR SERVICES**

*Leslie Dippel, Chair*

The Local Bar Services Committee enhances communication between State Bar of Texas leadership and local bar

associations to assist local bar leaders in the development of their associations. Resources available from the State Bar Local Bar Services Department include speaker coordination, membership assistance, program coordination, and guidance on creating a new association. Yearly, the committee plans the annual Law Day contest, Stars of Texas Bars Awards, and the Local Bar Leaders Conference. The Stars of Texas Bars Awards recognize local bar associations for outstanding involvement and commitment to the legal profession and are presented at the Bar Leaders Recognition Luncheon at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting. The winners of the annual Law Day awards are recognized on the State Bar website. The Local Bar Leaders Conference is scheduled to take place July 25-26 in Houston.

### MINIMUM CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

*Stuart Colburn, Chair*

The Minimum Continuing Legal Education Committee administers minimum continuing education programs established by Article XII of the State Bar Rules and the regulations and accreditation standards promulgated therefrom. The committee serves several functions. Most frequently, providers of continuing legal education appeal State Bar of Texas staff's decisions regarding hours or accreditation. Staff receives over 48,000 applications per year from non-accredited sponsors, out-of-state attorneys seeking credit, and existing accredited sponsors. The committee determines if the presentation consists of legal education or ethics within the definition of accreditation standards. Aside from its normal work, the committee was tasked with evaluating whether CLE credit should be available for serving as a judge, coach, or other participant in mock trial or moot court competitions. Currently, attorneys can claim up to three hours of self-study for such activities.

### OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

*Deborah L. Cordova, Chair*

The purpose of the Outreach and

Engagement Committee is to develop and promote strategies and best practices for outreach to and engagement of the diverse membership of the State Bar of Texas. The committee will identify opportunities within the organization to create an environment conducive to involvement of attorneys of all backgrounds and locations across Texas; assist in the creation of measurable goals; and periodically report on progress toward achieving the goals set by the State Bar Board of Directors. The committee met four times this year and was divided into three subcommittees. The Communications Subcommittee worked on a flyer outlining diversity as a business imperative and focused on recommendations to better locate the Outreach and Engagement Committee on the State Bar website. Shana Faulhaber is the committee's *Texas Bar Journal* liaison and will be heading up the January 2025 issue, which will focus on wellness in the practice of law. The CLE/Education Subcommittee continued to promote the speaker interest form to help build a database on [texasbar.com](http://texasbar.com) of potential speakers. The CLE/Education Subcommittee also assisted the Office of Minority Affairs with the Train-the-Trainer event. The Pipeline Subcommittee will be hosting another Law School Dean's Roundtable on August 1, 2024 at the Texas Law Center.

### PATTERN JURY CHARGES—BUSINESS, CONSUMER, INSURANCE & EMPLOYMENT

*Carlos Soltero, Chair*

The Pattern Jury Charges—Business, Consumer, Insurance & Employment Committee has spent the year completing updates for its 2024 edition, to be published this year. The committee has studied and is undertaking updates on employment, trade customs, privacy torts, damages, and predicate findings. The committee also enlisted a group of experts to complete a comprehensive review of the construction contracts materials to evaluate whether updates or new additions are needed. The committee will review their feedback and consider updates for a future edition. The

committee has also drafted an instruction and commentary for use in cases involving multilingual jurors to be included in each of the civil pattern jury charge volumes once finalized and approved. Additionally, the committee has collaborated with the other civil drafting volumes and the PJC Oversight Committee to develop new material and draft updates on deposition testimony and broad form and *Casteel* issues. The committee welcomes questions and input from the bench and bar; these can be sent to [books@texasbar.com](mailto:books@texasbar.com).

### PATTERN JURY CHARGES—CRIMINAL

*John Messinger and Hon. Alan Bennett, Co-chairs*

Unlike other pattern jury charges, the *Texas Criminal Pattern Jury Charge* operates as an online-only publication. By publishing an update approximately every four months instead of yearly, the Pattern Jury Charges—Criminal Committee can efficiently add new or update existing criminal jury charges. Updates from the past year include revisions to concurrent causation, new materials on “repeated violation of a protection order,” new materials on lesser included offenses, and updates to “failure to register” materials. Practitioners are encouraged to view and comment on the committee's proposed drafts posted on the Texas Bar Practice Blog ([blog.texasbarpractice.com/proposed-changes-texas-criminal-pattern-jury-charges](http://blog.texasbarpractice.com/proposed-changes-texas-criminal-pattern-jury-charges)). The members of the committee strive to educate the bench and bar about the usefulness and quality of the new online *Texas Criminal Pattern Jury Charges*. The committee welcomes questions and comments about the online product as well as suggestions for future instructions, which may be sent to [books@texasbar.com](mailto:books@texasbar.com).

### PATTERN JURY CHARGES—FAMILY AND PROBATE

*Chris Nickelson, Chair*

Over the past year, the Pattern Jury Charges—Family and Probate Committee engaged in the rigorous process of refining additions and updates to the material in the *Texas*



*Pattern Charges—Family and Probate* volume. Its work culminated in the publication of the 2024 edition with changes to admonitory instructions, dissolution of marriage, reimbursement, modification of conservatorship and support, termination of the parent-child relationship, and express trusts. The committee is considering new PJC's, including additional charges for fraud actions in divorces, a new charge for criminal contempt of court, and new charges for breaches of privacy in divorces. The committee also plans to revise the commentary about burdens of proof in will contests. Possible new materials under consideration are charges for guardianships of adults, fraudulent securing of document execution, and actions in beneficiary and survivorship designations, as well as instructions to jurors about trial testimony translated from foreign languages, and instructions on depositions. The committee kept an eye on legislation from the recent session and updated the volume to account for changes in relevant statutes. Comments, questions, and suggestions for new topics for inclusion in future editions may be sent to [books@texasbar.com](mailto:books@texasbar.com).

### **PATTERN JURY CHARGES—GENERAL NEGLIGENCE, INTENTIONAL PERSONAL TORTS & WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

*Hon. Hyattye Simmons, Chair*

The Pattern Jury Charges—General Negligence, Intentional Personal Torts & Workers' Compensation Committee has been working on updates for the upcoming 2024 volume. These changes include updates involving workers' compensation lifetime income benefits, new comments involving disfigurement damages, mental anguish and physical pain, and personal injury damages as well as planning a CLE presentation for practitioners highlighting recent updates to this PJC. The committee has also been working with other PJC committees on a potential new charge involving Instructions for Deposition Testimony. Lastly, the committee continues to monitor recent legislative statutory changes and caselaw.

### **PATTERN JURY CHARGES—MALPRACTICE, PREMISES & PRODUCTS**

*Michelle Robberson, Chair*

The Pattern Jury Charges—Malpractice, Premises & Products Committee has been preparing updates for the upcoming 2024 volume. These potential changes include new comments involving loss of chance, personal injury damages (including disfigurement and physical pain and mental anguish), products liability, and patient abandonment. The committee also has been working on a new charge involving instructions for deposition testimony and a comment regarding periodic payments in health care liability claims. The committee continues to keep a close eye on new developments in Texas law and welcomes any comments and suggestions, which may be sent to [books@texasbar.com](mailto:books@texasbar.com). The mission remains the same—to “get it right.”

### **PATTERN JURY CHARGES—OIL AND GAS**

*Craig Haynes, Chair*

The Pattern Jury Charges—Oil and Gas Committee is wrapping up its work on the 2024 volume, to be published later this year. As with previous editions, the committee collaborated with the other pattern jury charges committees to update several charges. This included working closely with the committee for the *Business, Consumer, Insurance & Employment* volume on a renewed trade customs comment and instruction and with the committee for the *General Negligence* volume on a new deposition instruction in the admonitory chapter. In addition, after lengthy research and careful discussion, the committee has drafted a new comment on confusion of goods and the potential jury questions arising therefrom, as well as updated the damages instruction for improper use and comment on cessation of production in paying quantities. The committee has already begun working on the 2026 volume, closely following caselaw developments, and proposing new questions where appropriate to

assist litigators in proper submission in the oil and gas context. As always, the committee actively solicits and appreciates any comments and suggestions and examples of practically used jury questions, which can be sent to [books@texasbar.com](mailto:books@texasbar.com).

### **PATTERN JURY CHARGES—OVERSIGHT**

*Daniel Hinde, Chair*

The Pattern Jury Charges—Oversight Committee worked closely with the PJC General Negligence, Malpractice, Business, and Oil and Gas committees as they complete updates for their 2024 editions. The committee helped finalize updates for the PJC Family Committee, which published its new edition this year. Updates included revisions to reflect statutory changes on reimbursement and revisions to include specific findings on grounds for divorce. The committee worked with the remaining civil volumes on updates to materials covering mental anguish, workers compensation, and trade customs for publication later this year. The committee has also supported the drafting of new materials covering confusion of goods, depositions, and instructions for trials involving multilingual jurors. The Oversight Committee continues to work with the PJC Criminal Committee as it completes ongoing updates to the recently launched online library of charges. Updates this year included new charges on violation of a protective order, lesser included offenses, and on weapons offenses and revisions to the charges on concurrent causation and failure to register. An oversight working group is also developing guidelines, including best practices, to support the volume committees in their work. The committee welcomes questions and feedback, which can be sent to [books@texasbar.com](mailto:books@texasbar.com).

### **PROFESSIONALISM AND CIVILITY**

*Kathy S. Mills, Chair*

The Day of Civility in the Law and the Texas Lawyer's Creed remain the

central focus of the committee. In recognition of the annual Day of Civility in the Law, the committee obtained a joint proclamation from the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals along with a related resolution from the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors. The committee consistently develops and shares ideas for encouraging professionalism and civility in the profession. Members of the committee present at and organize various CLEs and networking events where they provide free posters of the Texas Lawyer’s Creed. To educate and encourage law student engagement in professionalism and civility, the committee sponsored the Professionalism Award to be presented at the National Trial Competition awards banquet. Efforts to promulgate the lawyer’s creed to newly licensed lawyers and judges are ongoing, and the committee continues efforts in making the Texas Lawyer’s Creed available wherever the oath of the profession may be found, so judges are reminded to highlight the Texas Lawyer’s Creed and its valuable message during swearing-in ceremonies. The committee dedicated all other efforts in general furtherance of its mission.

**REAL ESTATE FORMS**

*Roland Love, Chair*

After the 2023 version of the *Texas Real Estate Forms Manual* was published, work began for the 2024 version. Revisions to the manual this year reflect recent caselaw and implementation of legislative amendments enacted through the 88th regular legislative session and

four special sessions, as well as providing new forms and adding references to State Bar CLE articles. The manual is available as two softbound volumes and online, downloadable versions that offer enhanced word-processing forms and links to cases, statutes, and CLE articles. The manual provides a starting point for recognizing issues and drafting documents for real estate transactions as well as relevant information and resources for understanding how to handle varying types of real estate transactions. In particular, the 2024 manual includes commentary regarding the Corporate Transparency Act, renewable energy leases, and real estate purchase agreements. Changes were made to update letters of intent, purchase agreements, and deeds of trust. New forms include the termination of condominium regimes, a surface use agreement, and statutorily required notices and documentation regarding property owners’ associations and fines. The 2024 manual includes some incredible and timely new work product representing many hours of discussion and drafting. Don’t practice without it.

**TEXAS BAR JOURNAL BOARD OF EDITORS**

*Angelica Hernandez, Chair*

The *Texas Bar Journal* is the official publication of the State Bar of Texas. In print since 1938, the magazine serves as a publication of record for the Supreme Court of Texas, a scholarly legal journal, and the association magazine for the State Bar of Texas. Each month (except a combined July/August issue), the *Texas Bar Journal* is mailed to approximately

131,764 subscribers, is available in digital format, and is the only publication reaching every lawyer in Texas. The Texas Bar Journal Board of Editors reviews legal article submissions, develops issue topics, and helps set the general editorial direction for the magazine. In 2023-2024, *TBJ* examined a number of subjects of interest to Texas lawyers, including appellate law, civil litigation, the legislative update, mentoring and lawyer engagement, renewable energy, estate planning, law practice management, and oil and gas law. The *Texas Bar Journal* also offered an informative “Year in Review” issue.

**WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION**

*Linda A. Samples, Chair*

The Women in the Profession Committee has been addressing issues impacting women lawyers since 1989. The committee’s 2024 mission is sisterhood in the practice of law. In keeping with its mission, in March 2024, the committee promoted statewide networking opportunities on International Women’s Day (March 8) and encourages all members of the bar to participate in an event near you next year. Based on the success of its inaugural book club in 2023 and in an effort to further sisterhood in the practice of law, the committee selected *Her Honor—My Life on the Bench . . . What Works, What’s Broken, and How to Change It* for its next book club. Please read the book and join the committee in discussing it. Details will be posted on the committee’s webpage accessible through the State Bar’s website. **TBJ**



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