



Better Together: Texas Bar Incubator Launches **ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM**

THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS ESTABLISHED THE TEXAS OPPORTUNITY & JUSTICE INCUBATOR, OR TOJI, five years ago to support attorneys in building lasting businesses serving low- and moderate-income Texans. It is among the more than 70 legal incubator programs that have started worldwide since the first emerged in 2007 in New York, according to the American Bar Association. Today, TOJI is one of the world's largest legal incubators, and with the program's support, Texas attorneys have launched over 100 legal practices spanning more than 35 practice areas. In 2021, the ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services concluded a three-year study, reporting that incubator lawyers felt their legal incubator experience was instrumental to their success building solo and small law firms. Additionally, more than 80% of incubator lawyers expressed high satisfaction with their career—noting increased autonomy, flexibility, and purpose as contributing factors.¹

I'm thrilled to report that TOJI is now branching out beyond Texas, launching a new online platform to make TOJI materials available to legal incubators and lawyers across the globe who share our commitment to closing the access to justice gap.

This groundbreaking undertaking is inspired by our conviction that we are better together.

Powered by a state-of-the-art learning management system, TOJI on Demand is launching with a selection of TOJI videos, reading materials, worksheets, and supplemental resources. All of these materials are being made available for asynchronous learning, meaning that members can learn when and where it is convenient for them.

TOJI on Demand will launch in a beta format this fall and is expected to be widely available later this year.

Collaboration is at the heart of this initiative. As TOJI opens its doors to the world, the goal is to provide a platform for the frictionless transfer of knowledge and curriculum structure between program leaders, experts, and program members.

Incubator directors from anywhere will be able to drag and drop materials to create courses for their legal incubators. Incubator directors may also contribute to and improve the platform by uploading their own original content, ultimately providing more information for Texas lawyers. With the help of the learning management system, curating the best legal incubator knowledge will be as easy as plug and play.

The ability to combine the insights and experience of specialists from a variety of disciplines and present it in a way that encourages rapid learning is part of what makes legal incubators so effective. Through TOJI on Demand, experts will be empowered to develop and share their specialized knowledge simultaneously with all participating incubators and members.

This integrated approach to collaboration and knowledge sharing will directly benefit the members of participating incubators, delivering more value and a more complete body of knowledge through a platform that can be accessed at any time and from anywhere.

Joining this initiative, Baylor Law will be the first TOJI on Demand collaborator, turning over custodianship of its Legal Mapmaker materials to TOJI to be updated and launched on the learning management system alongside the TOJI materials.

"Baylor Law has been pleased to collaborate with TOJI in our mutual efforts to enable lawyers to reach out to underserved populations, statewide and nationally," said Brad Toben, dean of Baylor Law. "TOJI aims to make available efficient, effective, and ethical representation to those who otherwise cannot afford services. Legal Mapmaker, an innovative program developed by my colleagues, has been well-received and successful in application. We're delighted that TOJI is working to extend the availability and reach of this tool, along with TOJI's many other strategies, to meet the pressing need for legal services."

Legal Mapmaker is a step-by-step guide for how to start a legal practice that has been derived from the combined knowledge of dozens of solo and small firm business owners, law professors, and specialists. Checklists, written instructions, additional reading, and video lectures are all included in the materials.

Supporting entrepreneurial attorneys and tackling access to justice challenges requires no less than our best, which is why we must work together for a better future.

Kudos to TOJI Director Joshua Weaver for his innovation in spearheading this project, which will advance the State Bar's efforts to improve the quality of legal services available to the public. To learn more, go to TOJI at txoji.com or on Twitter and Instagram at @TXOJI.

Sincerely,

TREY APFFEL

Executive Director, State Bar of Texas
Editor-in-Chief, *Texas Bar Journal*

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1. Results of the Legal Incubator Lawyers' Survey; ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services, (April 2021) <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/center-for-innovation/deliveryoflegalservices/delivery-legal-incubator-survey-2021.pdf>.