

STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

ANNUAL REPORT
2017-2018



STATE BAR OF TEXAS
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the State Bar of Texas is to support the administration of the legal system, assure all citizens equal access to justice, foster high standards of ethical conduct for lawyers, enable its members to better serve their clients and the public, educate the public about the rule of law, and promote diversity in the administration of justice and the practice of law.

Among its many roles, the State Bar of Texas serves as a clearinghouse for legal information and resources during natural disasters. Even before Hurricane Harvey made landfall in August 2017 and brought destruction and flooding to thousands of our fellow Texans' homes and workplaces, the State Bar was ready to help.

Our disaster legal hotline routed thousands of calls from hurricane victims to local aid groups to meet their legal needs. Our free online advice clinic, Texas Legal Answers (texaslegalanswers.org), offered a fast and easy way for Texans to post questions about their civil legal issues and receive answers from volunteer attorneys. And we amassed an arsenal of disaster relief resources not only for the general public, but also specifically for the many Texas lawyers whose lives and practices were disrupted.



I was one of those lawyers. Before being elected State Bar executive director in September 2017, I was a solo practitioner in Galveston County whose office sustained damages from Harvey. The past year was trying for many of us, but it was also a time of hope as ordinary heroes stepped up to meet their neighbors' needs.

Lawyers from across Texas and throughout the country were among those heroes. I am proud that the State Bar of Texas played its part in the recovery efforts by supporting the administration of the legal system and promoting access to justice, as the pages of this 2017-2018 annual report reflect.

This work would be impossible without the State Bar officers, directors, volunteers, and staff members whose dedication knows no bounds. I look forward to another year of serving alongside you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trey Apffel". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Trey Apffel
Executive Director
State Bar of Texas



WHAT WE DO

On August 25, 2017, Harvey made landfall in Texas as a Category 4 hurricane, ravaging coastal communities with its near-130 mph winds and dumping trillions of gallons of water into Houston, where catastrophic flooding destroyed homes and businesses and forced thousands to seek relief in shelters around the city. The death toll surpassed 80 by mid-September. First responders and volunteers from across the state and country sprang into action.

The State Bar of Texas quickly mobilized to assist the public and lawyers of Texas who needed help or could assist others. State Bar President Tom Vick called Texas lawyers to action on August 29. “As I write these words, many Texans are suffering the ravages of Hurricane Harvey and many are still in harm’s way,” Vick said. “This is the time when mere words fail . . . this is a call to action.” He referred to many of the bar’s resources.

DISASTER HOTLINE

The State Bar’s toll-free disaster hotline (800) 504-7030 served as a gateway to getting disaster survivors legal assistance through local legal aid or pro bono programs.

DISASTER RESOURCES

The State Bar collected a number of valuable explanatory documents, assistance links, and how-to videos for the public at texasbar.com/disasters. Disaster relief resources for attorneys are available at texasbar.com/attorneyresources.

ATTORNEYS AFFECTED

The State Bar created an assessment survey at texasbar.com/attorneyrelief where attorneys with needs related to Hurricane Harvey could report how their colleagues could assist them. State Bar staff worked to match those in need with lawyers who were eager to help.

VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

More than 2,000 attorneys volunteered to assist the public with this disaster. The State Bar’s Legal Access Division collected the volunteers’ information through an online form at texasbar.com/attorneyvolunteer and matched those volunteers with needs reported by the various legal aid agencies.



President Tom Vick with lawyers, law students, and paralegals at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston on September 3, 2017.

TEXAS LEGAL ANSWERS

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, dozens of attorney volunteers joined Texas Legal Answers—a free online legal advice clinic—and assisted people with their disaster-related legal questions.

TEXAS YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

TYLA, known as the “public service arm” of the State Bar, created materials for people recovering from the disaster.

TEXAS LAWYERS’ ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

TLAP released a video that discussed the symptoms of and treatment for PTSD after a natural disaster.

MONETARY DONATIONS

The State Bar encouraged donations to the Harvey relief effort at texasbar.com/harveyfund.

MCLE EXTENSION

Lawyers affected by Hurricane Harvey could request an extension of time for compliance with MCLE requirements.

In September 2017, Vick traveled to Houston to visit a volunteer-run legal clinic and disaster relief training seminar. In his October column in the *Texas Bar Journal*, Vick wrote, “Like many of you, I was glued to the television for days watching the heroics of ordinary citizens helping their fellow human beings. . . . I witnessed the same spirit in the shelters in Houston, where I met lawyers, paralegals, and law students all present on a holiday weekend to help Houstonians with legal issues essential to their lives.”

The dedication of the State Bar and the lawyers of Texas to assist the public and members whose lives were wrecked by Hurricane Harvey continues.

BY THE NUMBERS

The following information is collected pursuant to section 81.0215 of the Texas Government Code chapter 81 (the State Bar Act), which requires the State Bar of Texas to adopt a strategic plan every two years that includes measureable goals and a system of performance measures. The State Bar Act further requires the bar to report to the Texas Supreme Court the outcomes of these strategic plan performance measures.

As the basis of its current strategic plan, the State Bar identified six broad strategic categories guiding its goals and performance measures: 1) Service to the Public; 2) Service to Members; 3) Protection of the Public; 4) Access to Justice; 5) Sound Administration and Resources; and 6) Financial Management. The following data reflect results and outcomes of State Bar core services for the 2017-2018 bar year.

SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

*Distribution of information regarding legal issues of interest to the public: **34,130** pamphlets or printed materials*

*Distribution of multimedia information regarding legal issues and topics of particular relevance to the public: **56** news releases, media advisories, and op-eds*

*Visits to page on State Bar website relating to disaster relief resources for the public: **39,202** page views*

*Visits to page on State Bar website relating to disaster relief resources for attorneys: **12,554** page views*

*Number of members who interacted with the State Bar’s disaster survey, either requesting assistance or offering to help fellow members affected by Hurricane Harvey: **755***

*Number of people—including paralegals, law students, and in-state and out-of-state attorneys—who signed up via a State Bar of Texas form to offer disaster relief legal assistance: **2,573***

*Visits to pages on State Bar-related websites containing legal information on legal issues of importance to the public: **34,824** pamphlets page hits, **1,953** media page hits, **18,525,495** total hits to the SBOT website, and **13,130,927** unique page views*

*Traffic to Texas Bar Blog on legal issues of importance to the public: **189,600** page views*

*Traffic to State Bar social media sites on legal issues of importance to the public: **94,316** engagements, **20,326** link clicks, and **5,853,387** impressions*

*Courses provided to teachers by the Law-Related Education Department: **161** Law-Focused Education teacher training sessions and **6,238** participants trained by LRE*

*Students taught by LRE-trained teachers: **338,000** students impacted by teacher training sessions*

*LRE/LFEI website hits: **111,987** visits to texaslre.org, **67,657** visits to texasbar.com/civics, **15,690** visits to texasbar.com/iwasthefirst, **7,806** visits to texasregames.org/justiceville_usa, **107,101** visits to texaslre.org/liamlearns, **12,079** visits to citizenbee.org, and **3,456** visits to beeinabox.org*

*Traffic to the TYLA Ten Minute Mentor resource offered online: **36,550** watched online; **38,300** downloaded the audio only*

*Traffic to the TYLA Ten Minute Mentor Goes to Law School resource offered online: **4,038** watched online; **2,371** downloaded the audio only*

*Traffic to the TYLA After the Bar Exam resource offered online: **5,723** watched online; **3,389** downloaded the audio only*

*Distribution of TYLA information regarding legal issues of interest to the public: **4,145** pamphlets, DVDs, and flash drives*

Number of those helped by Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans: Since 2010, over **11,000** volunteer attorneys, paralegals, and law students have assisted more than **32,000** veterans through local bar associations and other attorney volunteer organizations

Number of Lawyer Referral and Information Service callers helped and referrals made: **64,871** callers helped and **73,635** referrals made

SERVICE TO MEMBERS

Attendance for TexasBarCLE webcasts:
Offerings — **152**, Attendance — **10,540**

Attendance for TexasBarCLE online CLE:
Offerings — **907**, Attendance — **92,188**

Attendance for TexasBarCLE video courses:
Offerings — **57**, Attendance — **2,941**

Attendance for TexasBarCLE live courses:
Offerings — **100**, Attendance — **15,887**

Number of books (print, digital, and additional licenses) sold by TexasBarBooks: **10,311**

Number of subscriptions sold by TexasBarBooks: **6,364**

Diversity of SBOT membership: **64%** male and **36%** female; **80%** White, **9%** Hispanic/Latino, **5%** Black/African-American, **4%** Asian/Pacific Islander, less than **1%** American Indian/Alaska Native, and **2%** all others

Diversity of SBOT section membership:
44,442 attorneys are members in sections; **64%** are males, **36%** are females; **18%** are racial/ethnic minorities

Diversity of SBOT committee membership: **56%** male, **44%** female, and **30%** ethnic minority

The State Bar remains committed to offering its members unique access to resources, goods, and services to help them in their professional as well as personal lives. In the 2017-2018 bar year, there were a total of **266** benefit providers featured through the State Bar Member Benefits Program. Goods and services offered include lawyer-specific programs, financial services, travel discounts, car rentals, office supplies, health insurance through the Texas Bar Private Insurance Exchange, and professional liability insurance through TLIE.

Visits to SBOT Member Benefits homepage: **35,987**

Visits to Texas Bar Private Insurance Exchange website:
155,219 page views

Number of members enrolled in one or more insurance products: **16,276**

Number of members enrolled in major medical insurance: **9,617**

Number of customer service complaints received via the “Contact Us” page on the SBOT website: **23** and all resolved successfully

Number of attorneys, law firms, and legal departments attending and participating in the Texas Minority Attorney Program: **89**

Number of attorneys, law firms, and legal departments attending and participating in the Texas Minority Counsel Program: **529** attendees, **22** interviewing corporations, and **95** sponsoring organizations

The Texas Lawyers’ Assistance Program took a total of **717** calls—**58%** were related to mental health, **37%** were related to substance abuse, and **5%** were related to cognitive issues—and its webpage on texasbar.com garnered **681** page views and its website, tlaphelps.org, garnered **7,699** page views. TLAP made **115** presentations reaching **11,462** people.

Number of views of TLAP videos via the website: **3,753** plays of Courage, Hope, Help—TLAP Is There; **1,518** plays of the four-minute excerpt of Courage, Hope, Help—TLAP Is There; and **905** plays of the short TLAP promo; **1,452** plays of Practicing From the Shadows; and **1,260** plays of Practicing Law and Wellness

Number of page views to the Law Practice Management Program webpage: approximately **16,000**

Number of lawyers the Law Practice Management Program assisted through online classes, live and video seminars, webcasts, website resources, and telephone and email inquiries: approximately **27,500**

Number who voted in the 2018 SBOT president-elect race: **32,643** (**32%** of eligible voters); **74%** voted online, **26%** voted by paper ballot

PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC

Contacts the Client-Attorney Assistance Program received: **22,520** via mail, email, and phone

Dispute resolutions conducted by CAAP: **1,077**, with productive communication successfully re-established in **87%** of the cases

Number of submissions reviewed by the Advertising Review Committee: approximately **3,000**

BAR YEAR 2017-2018

	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
Disbarments	21	45
Resignations	23	102
Suspensions	116	163
Public Reprimands	25	29
Private Reprimands	70	74
Grievance Referral Program	77	77
Total	332	490

Eligible applications considered by the Client Security Fund: **222**

Eligible applications approved by the Client Security Fund: **148**

Total amount of grants approved by the Client Security Fund: **\$901,718.68**

The two ethics attorneys on the Ethics Helpline handled more than **6,000** calls.

Number of ethics publications by TexasBarBooks: **17** books and **2** DVDs

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Legal aid referrals made by SBOT to members of the public and to inmates: **6,786**

Legal aid and pro bono attorneys using free legal research: **475** attorneys, **90** paralegals

Legal aid and pro bono programs using free malpractice insurance: **66**

Legal aid and pro bono attorneys who received scholarships to TexasBarCLE events in conjunction with the Legal Access Division: **159**

Participation in the Language Access Fund and work accomplished: **55** translated documents; **6,531** phone calls interpreted; more than

66 languages; and **147** on-site interpreters

Legal aid attorneys who received help through the Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program: **199**

Attendees at Legal Access Division annual seminars:

340 attended the Poverty Law Conference, **65** attended the Pro Bono Coordinators Retreat, and **30** attended the Pre-Trial Academy

Participation in texas.freelegalanswers.org online legal advice clinic:

4,601 questions asked; **3,147** questions answered; **5,085** client accounts; **225** active volunteers on the site

Number of those helped by Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans: Since 2010, over **11,000** attorneys, paralegals, and law students have assisted more than **32,000** veterans through local bar associations and other attorney volunteer organizations

Number of sections that have pro bono initiatives (including grants, CLE scholarships, and internships): **18**

Total voluntary ATJ contributions through dues statements: **\$1,481,048** from **10,000** attorneys

Total amounts funded to legal assistance to the poor: federal funding—**\$33.9** million to the Legal Services Corporation, state funding—**\$2.108** million in general revenue

SOUND ADMINISTRATION AND RESOURCES

Trainings provided to staff: all employees offered extensive online training through the Employees Assistance Program service; customer service training offered to **35** employees with direct customer service responsibilities; all employees received sexual harassment training (staff and management training); all employees received safety training (Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events); **3** full staff meetings were held

Ethnic and gender diversity of SBOT staff: **221 (74%)** female and **76 (26%)** male; **183 (62%)** White, **78 (26%)** Hispanic/Latino, **28 (9%)** Black/African-American, **6 (2%)** Asian/Pacific Islander, and **2 (1%)** American Indian/Alaska Native

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial audit: The result of the most recent financial audit (FY 2017) was an unmodified auditor's opinion, considered the highest and best opinion; the FY 2018 financial audit began August 1, 2018

Amount SBOT has set aside in general fund reserves: **\$9,868,603**

STATE BAR OF TEXAS
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DIRECTORS**

2017-2018

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