

STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

VOLUNTEER AND STAFF GUIDE

———— **2024–2025** ————



LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

laborlaw.org

Budget Code: 9345

Created: 1947

Dues: \$30

Gilbert Sanchez, Chair

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Richard Carlson, Treasurer

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Term Expires 2025

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Laura Merritt

Mickey Washington

Marlene Williams

Term Expires 2026

Amy Gibson

Lorna Griffin

Abel Martinez

Ehsan Tabesh

Jennifer Trulock

LAW STUDENT DIVISION

texasbar.com/lawstudentdivision

Budget Code: 4070

Created: 1979

Dues: \$15

Tesia Lisbon, Chair

Naomi Stelivan, Vice Chair

Laura Pratt, Board Advisor

Alyson A. Martinez, Alternate Board Advisor

LEGISLATIVE AND CAMPAIGN LAW

legislativeandcampaignlaw.com

Budget Code: 9348

Created: 2014

Dues: \$20

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Term Expires 2025

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Denise Davis

Term Expires 2027

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Luis Figueroa

Steven “Wroe” Jackson

Term Expires 2026

Paul “Ender” Reed

Tyler Rudd

Hugh Brady

LGBTQ+ LAW

lgbtlawtx.com

Budget Code: 9372

Created: 1998

Dues: \$20

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Nadia Haghighatian, Secretary

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Term Expires 2025

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Sarah Cowen

Haley Hickey

Term Expires 2026

Alexis Lucero

Hon. Beau Miller

LITIGATION

litigationsection.com

Budget Code: 9347

Created: 1979

Dues: \$30

Sustaining: \$100

Hon. Rebecca Simmons, Chair

Raymond L. Thomas Jr., Chair-elect,

Jason Fulton, Vice Chair

Sofia Ramon, Treasurer

Hon. Christine Stetson, Secretary

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Kristina N. “Krisi” Kastl, Alternate Board Advisor

Term Expires 2025

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Justice Chari Lynn Kelly

Hon. Sue Kurita

Karen Precella

Amy Prueger

Term Expires 2027

Nadia Bettac

Lara Brock

Sylvia Cardona

Robert Ford

Andy Jones

Term Expires 2026

Raymond Baeza

Chip Brooker

Andy Kerr

Mia Lorick

Jackie Robinson

MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW

militarylawsection.com

Budget Code: 9350

Created: 1958

Dues: \$25

Jon Shelburne, Chair

Christine Herron, Chair-elect

Bradley Hennings, Vice Chair

Jim Stephenson, Secretary/Treasurer

Kay Perry, Immediate Past Chair

Jason Charbonnet, Board Advisor

Jeff Cochran, Alternate Board Advisor

Term Expires 2025

Benton Baker

Jefferson Moore

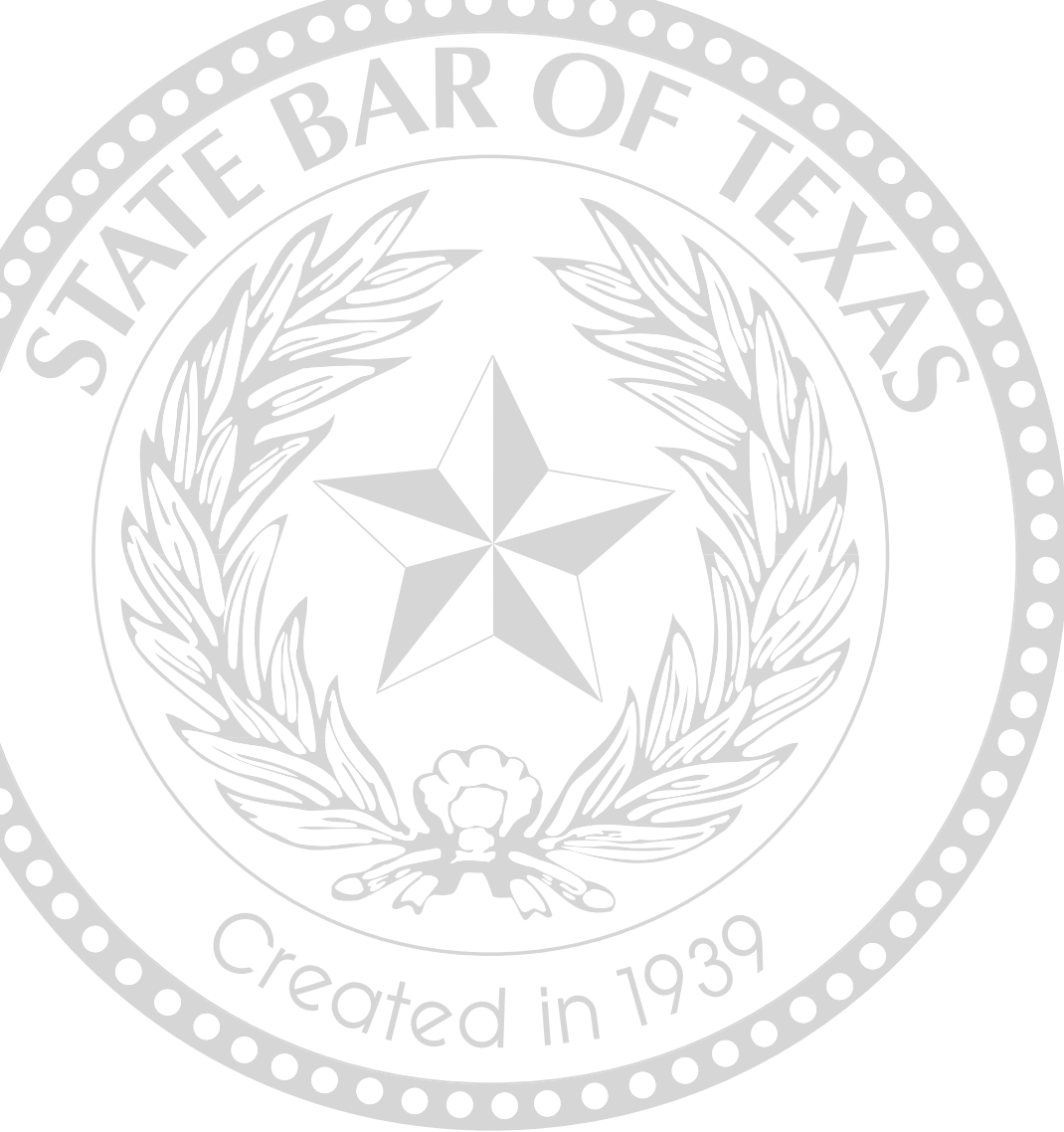
Sean Timmons

Term Expires 2026

Christine Clemens

Benjamin Gifford

Linda Webster



2024-2025 STATE BAR OF TEXAS SECTION REPORTS

Section reports are included in the July/August issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to update Texas lawyers on State Bar section activities. Section membership and dues are voluntary. These 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 join a section, go to texasbar.com/sections or call 512-427-1420.

Texas because of the work and services provided by the State Bar of Texas Judicial Section to its members. For example, the Ethics Committee, led by Judge Lee Gabriel, responds to ethics questions from members who can receive opinions on an informal basis or, upon written request, a formal written advisory opinion. The section provides access to a database of ethics opinions for use by its members. The Legislative Committee, led by Chair Judge Alfonso Charles, monitors and informs members of new and proposed legislation affecting the judicial system, including efforts related to judicial compensation. The Membership Committee, chaired by Judge Kirsten Cohoon, continues maximizing membership across Texas. Membership Committee members welcomed new judges at the Annual Judicial Education Conference, the spring regional conferences, and the College for New Judges. Additionally, Website Committee Chair Victor Villarreal created new membership brochures to inform potential members of the section's numerous benefits. Plus, the section is launching "Judicial Sidebar"—an avenue for judges with similar jurisdictional issues to communicate and answer questions on best judicial practices. The section continues to provide a forum to examine and discuss issues affecting the judiciary, all in the interest of justice.

JUSTICE COURTS

Scott H. Fournier, Chair

The Justice Courts Section maintained its mission of furthering the administration of justice in justice courts, providing a forum for the exchange of information on matters of practice and procedure in justice courts, providing information and educational opportunities for its membership. During the 2024-2025 year, the section continued to provide virtual one-hour lunchtime CLEs, including offering some ethics credit. Section members enjoyed reconnecting in person at the section's general membership meeting, CLE presentation, and reception at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in June. The section extends its sincere

gratitude to its officers and directors for their outstanding contributions and efforts in helping make the 2024-2025 year a success.

JUVENILE LAW

Hon. Maggie Ellis, Chair

In February of this year, over 250 attorneys, judges, and probation officers attended the 38th annual Texas Juvenile Law Conference in Allen. The conference is designed to promote and improve all facets of the juvenile justice system and to provide a fun and informative opportunity to visit with friends and practitioners from around the state. At the conference, Jill Mata was recognized as the recipient of the Robert O. Dawson Visionary Leadership Award for her dedication to the juvenile justice field.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

Gilbert L. Sanchez, Chair

The Labor and Employment Law Section continued its dedication to enhancing the practice of labor and employment law in Texas. In January 2025, the section, with the State Bar of Texas, hosted the Advanced Employment Law and Employment 101 seminar in Dallas. Each year, the section organizes the Labor and Employment Law Institute, offering a top-tier CLE program at discounted rates for members. This year, the institute will take place on August 22-23, 2025, at the JW Marriott in San Antonio. In its ongoing efforts to support legal professionals, the section is continually improving its website (laborlaw.org), which now includes a searchable format for the latest jury verdicts and charges. The section also publishes a quarterly newsletter to keep practitioners informed of recent cases and legal developments in labor and employment law. The section made strides in student outreach, visiting law schools to inspire future attorneys to pursue employment law. The section is also inviting applications from nonprofit organizations for pro bono grants to support hiring law students for summer internships focused on labor and employment causes. If you're not yet

a member and have an interest in labor and employment law, consider joining today.

LAW STUDENT DIVISION

Tesia Lisbon, Chair

The Law Student Division continues to work hard increasing Texas law students' access to and knowledge about the State Bar of Texas resources available to them. This year, representatives from Texas law schools hosted various free programs for students at their respective schools including student outreach events. For a \$15 annual membership fee, the Law Student Division provides many benefits to its student members, including exclusive scholarship opportunities; free membership in select State Bar of Texas sections; a monthly subscription to the *Texas Bar Journal*; member discounts; free registration for TexasBarCLE live seminars; and continuing this year, a BetterHelp discount to give Texas law students access to mental health resources to support their professional performance.

LEGISLATIVE AND CAMPAIGN LAW

Rahul Sreenivasan, Chair

The Legislative and Campaign Law Section comprises attorneys who work in and around the Legislature, state agencies, elections, and campaigns and those who are interested in those processes. In December, the section held an informative and successful CLE at the Texas Law Center in Austin. The section is grateful to all the speakers who participated in the CLE and shared their insights and knowledge with attendees. Coming soon, the section plans to host a Legislative Update CLE to discuss the recent legislative session. If you are interested in legislative or government processes, election law, campaign law, or any of the ethical issues that pop up in those areas, please consider joining the section. You can learn more by visiting legislativeandcampaignlaw.com.

LGBTQ+ LAW

Derek Mergel-Rust, Chair

The LGBTQ+ Law Section is the LGBTQ+ law resource for the

State Bar of Texas and its members. The section is open to all lawyers, judges, and law students who have an interest in laws that pertain to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender persons, as well as persons living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Whether your interest is related to specific client needs or general information, the LGBTQ+ Law Section can provide you with excellent resources through its networking opportunities, continuing legal education programs, caselaw updates, newsletters, and Listserv. If you are interested in joining the section or serving as a council member, you can find more information online at lgbtlawtx.com.

LITIGATION

Hon. Rebecca Simmons, Chair

The Litigation Section had a productive year in 2025, continuing its commitment to keeping members informed about critical developments in litigation. The online Lunch and Learn video series offered valuable, complimentary CLEs exploring the new business courts and recent amendments to the Federal Rules of Evidence. In January, the section hosted its annual Litigation Update Institute in San Antonio, featuring timely topics such as artificial intelligence, proving up damages, and multidistrict litigation. The section also honored outstanding achievement by presenting the prestigious Luke Soules Award to Judy Kostura. The *Advocate*, the section's premier publication, addressed key areas of interest throughout the year. The fall issue explored damages, the winter issue examined the evolving impact of artificial intelligence, and the spring 2025 issue analyzed rapidly developing employment law trends. The section proudly inducted Kleber Miller as the newest Legal Legend during a ceremony at Texas A&M University School of Law in Fort Worth. Additionally, the section engaged with future practitioners by participating in a panel discussion at the University of Houston Law Center. The Litigation Section remains dedicated to advancing the professional growth and

effectiveness of its members through innovative educational programming and publications. Learn more at litigationsection.com.

MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW

Jon Shelburne, Chair

The Military and Veterans Law Section conducted three CLE programs in conjunction with the annual, fall, and spring section meetings and co-sponsored a CLE with the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association in January. Each program featured speakers and topics of interest to those who have practices representing veterans, work in areas with veterans, or are veterans themselves, as well as to those who are simply interested in issues impacting the lives of veterans and servicemembers. The section held the fall meeting in Lubbock with the support of the Texas Tech University School of Law. Several of the professors graciously offered their time, knowledge, and expertise by presenting on topics ranging from the conflict in Israel to updates to military justice. The spring meeting and CLE was held in San Antonio, where the section heard from speakers about the fight against terrorism, Second Amendment issues related to servicemembers discharged with bad paper, and most importantly, the section provided a program for practitioners seeking CLE credits to be certified to practice in veterans' affairs courts. The section hopes to see members at Baylor Law School for the fall meeting and CLE.

MUNICIPAL JUDGES

Hon. James Huggler, Chair

This has been a year of changes for municipal courts and the section. There were major legislative changes that became effective on January 1, 2025. The section's primary guiding code provisions were moved into the new Chapter 45A from Chapter 45 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. This was not a copy conversion—portions of articles merged, were moved, and reorganized into the new chapter. Another legislative change was due to

House Bill 3186 (88R). Briefly, for all juveniles receiving citations for non-traffic Class C offenses, a diversionary program must be offered to juveniles. This allows courts to use programs to reduce recidivism and provide resources in the areas of mental health, substance use, developmental disabilities, and navigate the court system without receiving a conviction. The section has been busy as well and is in the midst of updating the section bylaws. There are approximately 1,276 municipal judges spread through 950 separate courts. While the majority are attorneys, there are more than 500 judges who are not attorneys. Last fall, the section board voted, without opposition, to allow non-attorney municipal court judges to become associate members of the section. This allows these judges access to the section's meetings, website, and training.

NATIVE AMERICAN LAW

Eric Reed, Chair

The Native American Law Section strives to maintain awareness about the law and proposed legal changes impacting Native Americans. While the section does not recommend legislation, it provides educational background and context on relevant laws and monitors legislation to provide an end-of-session report to the section regarding such legislation. During the 2024-2025 year, the section has encouraged new bar members to join. The Native American Church of North America honored attorney Jerry D. Patchen, of Houston, with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his decades of pro bono representation. Section Chair Eric Reed assisted with events and presented two CLEs regarding Native American citizenship under U.S. laws to the Tarrant County Bar Association. The section presented at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in June and has proposed CLE topics for indigenous legal issues for future CLE events.

OIL, GAS AND ENERGY RESOURCES LAW

Trace Burton, Chair

The Oil, Gas and Energy Resources