

# Professional Legal Associations in Massachusetts

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Participation in a professional legal association or “bar association” is an excellent way to immerse yourself in the local legal community. Joining a bar association while in law school has many benefits, including opportunities to network, to build contacts and legal skills through pro bono legal work, and to attend programs on specific topics of interest. After graduation, membership in such organizations will prove invaluable, providing opportunities to attend Continuing Legal Education (CLE) seminars and conferences, to build new client relationships through networking events, and to meet other practitioners in your area of interest. Legal employers value students who start early and make meaningful connections with attorneys and potential clients in the field.

## **Examples of Professional Legal Associations**

### **American Bar Association (ABA)**

<http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html>

Student membership: In 2013, the ABA selected Suffolk University Law School to be a part of a pilot program regarding ABA memberships for all law students. **This pilot program will provide free ABA memberships to all Suffolk Law students who are enrolled.** Please contact the Dean of Students Office for more information.

Sections include:

Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice | Antitrust Law | Business Law | Criminal Justice | Dispute Resolution | Environment, Energy, and Resources | Family Law | Health Law | Individual Rights and Responsibilities | Intellectual Property Law | International Law | Labor and Employment Law | Law Practice Management | Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar | Litigation | Public Contract Law | Public Utility, Communications and Transportation Law | Real Property, Trust and Estate Law | Science & Technology Law | State and Local Government Law | Taxation | Tort Trial and Insurance Practice

Commissions include:

Civic Education in the Nation’s Schools | Domestic & Sexual Violence | Ethics 20/20 | Hispanic Legal Rights and Responsibilities | Homelessness & Poverty | Immigration | Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA) | Jury Project | Law and Aging | Lawyer Assistance Programs | Commission on Disability Rights | Racial & Ethnic Diversity in the Profession | Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity | Women in the Profession | Youth at Risk

Divisions include:

Solo, Small Firm and General Practice Division | Government and Public Sector Lawyers Division | Judicial Division | Law Student Division | Senior Lawyers Division | Young Lawyers Division (YLD)

Member benefits include:

- Practice Specialty Groups: opportunities for leadership, authorship and speaking engagements; and involvement in diversity, advocacy and public service initiatives.
- Sections and Divisions: access to programming and professionals concentrated on your practice specialty.
- Committees and Task Forces: develop a national reputation through presentation, publication and leadership opportunities.
- Diversity and inclusion initiatives, pro bono opportunities and advocacy efforts through the Governmental Affairs Office.
- Free career resources, including an online job board: explore a new career, seek your first legal job or launch a solo practice.

- The ABA CLE Premier Speaker Series: features the most influential legal practitioners and allows you to earn up to 18 hours of free CLE.
- Subscriptions to the weekly eJournal and the monthly ABA Journal – the most widely read legal magazine in the nation – delivering top headlines and reports on trends affecting lawyers today.
- Ethics research helps you locate citations for relevant rules, opinions and other resources.
- Save money through discounts on brand-name products and services plus member-only pricing at ABA Advantage and the ABA Webstore.

### **Asian-American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts**

<http://www.aalam.org/>

Student membership: **Free**

Member benefits include:

- Law Student Outreach Committee: mentorship program that matches students with attorneys practicing in specific areas of interest and an annual scholarship awarded to one or more students
- Bi-monthly newsletters
- Social and networking events: annual anniversary banquet and summer picnic

### **Boston Bar Association (BBA)**

<http://www.bostonbar.org/>

Student membership: **\$70** for one year (September 1-August 31). Includes three section memberships. 50% off membership deals offered frequently.

Sections include:

Administration of Justice | Bankruptcy Law | Business Transactions | Civil Rights & Civil Liberties | College & University Law | Criminal Law | Delivery of Legal Services | Diversity & Inclusion | Environmental Law | Family Law | Financial Services | Health Law | Immigration Law | Intellectual Property Law | International Law | Labor & Employment Law | Litigation | New Lawyers | Real Estate | Senior Lawyers | Solo & Small Firm | Tax | Tax Exempt Organizations | Trusts & Estates

Member benefits include:

- Mentor program: one-on-one mentoring with an experienced attorney
- Volunteer opportunities: Children and Youth Outreach Program, Boston Municipal Court Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, Business Law Pro Bono Project, and more.
- Weekly online newsletter including bar news, section notices, and upcoming seminars
- Subscription to the *Boston Bar Journal*
- Online Career Center: search post-graduate jobs and research employers
- Annual conferences and Continuing Legal Education seminars at a discounted rate
- Access to free members-only materials on substantive legal issues through web site
- Insurance benefits, including professional liability, health, and life insurance
- Lawyer Referral Service

### **Boston Lawyers Group (BLG)**

<http://www.thebostonlawyersgroup.com/>

The organization's mission is to identify, recruit, advance, and retain attorneys of color. A majority of BLG's employer members are large firms, although membership also includes some government agencies and corporations. BLG hosts an annual job fair which allows students of color to interview with employers traditionally involved in on-campus interviewing (OCI).

Student membership: **Free**

Programs include:

Charting Your Legal Future (1L) | Mentor Program (1L) | Mock Interview Program (1L) | Welcome Dinner for Law Student Leaders of Color | Welcome Reception for New Fall Associates of Color | BLG Job Fair (2L and 3L) | Creating Best Practices Series | Courtroom Decorum Program | Meet the Partners of Color | Celebrating Justices of Color | Summer Associate Events | Networking Events

**Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys (MATA)**

<https://www.massacademy.com/>

Student membership: **Free**

Specialty practice sections include:

Auto Litigation | Criminal Law | Medical Malpractice | New Lawyers | Women Trial Lawyers Caucus | Workers' Compensation

Member benefits include:

- E-mail listserv: over 700 attorneys!
- Mentor program: students are matched with an experienced attorney in a desired practice area
- Deposition coaching
- CLE seminars available at discounted rates
- Networking opportunities include a golf tournament, holiday party, annual dinner, and opportunities to attend political functions and bench-bar receptions honoring judges and clerks throughout Massachusetts
- Online access to a law library, verdicts & settlements, a deposition bank with over 200,000 depositions, online forums, legislative updates, membership listings, calendar of events, online CLE, CLE videos and materials for sale, E-clips daily news abstracts of interest to the trial bar, and links to firms and vendors
- Publications: *MATA Journal* (quarterly) & *Membership Directory* (bi-annual)
- Affinity programs for insurance, structured settlements, and banking
- Lawyer Referral Service

**Massachusetts Bar Association (MBA)**

<http://www.massbar.org/>

Student membership: **\$35** (includes one section membership), September 1 - August 31

Sections include:

Access to Justice | Business Law | Civil Litigation | Criminal Justice | Family Law | Health Law | Immigration Law | Individual Rights & Responsibilities | Judicial Administration | Juvenile & Child Welfare | Labor & Employment | Law Practice Management | Probate Law | Public Law | Real Estate Law | The Sole Practitioner & Small Firm | Taxation Law | Young Lawyers Division

Member benefits include:

- MBA Publications: *Lawyers Journal*, *Massachusetts Law Review* (quarterly), *Section Review*, *It's Your Law* (web-based)
- Law Calendar - <http://www.massbar.org/events/calendar>
- Casemaker Online Law Library: 24 hour/day free access to SJC decisions and Massachusetts court rules
- Annual conferences and over 50 CLE seminars each year at discounted rates
- E-Group discussion lists: online discussions available through section homepages to discuss current issues, share ideas, etc.
- Career center: partners with BostonWorks.com for post-graduate employment opportunities
- Insurance benefits: coverage available for professional responsibility, health, life, auto, and more
- Internship program: MBA hires approximately six law students each year.

## **Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association**

<http://www.massblacklawyers.org/>

Student membership: **Free**

Committees include:

Community Service | Programs | Professional Development | Student Support | Membership Development | Marketing & Technology | Judicial Appointment | Finance

Member benefits include:

- CLE programs
- Mentorship programs
- Online listings of post-graduate career opportunities

## **Massachusetts LGBTQ Bar Association**

<http://www.masslgbtqbar.org/>

Student membership: **Free**

Sections include:

Committee on Transgender Inclusion (CTI) | Family Law | In-House Counsel | Trust & Estates

Committees include:

Judiciary & Amicus | Legislative | Events | Law Student | Communications | Membership | Bar Relations | Western MA | Nominating | Audit

Member Benefits Include:

- Discounted rates on LGBTQ seminars, conferences, and workshops
- Networking and social events: Annual Law Student Reception, Annual Dinner, holiday parties, monthly “bar” nights, and educational events
- Monthly newsletter
- Mentor/Mentee Program for law students and newly admitted attorneys
- Membership Directory (in print & online): great networking tool.
- Listings of student and graduate career and volunteer opportunities

## **Women’s Bar Association of Massachusetts (WBA)**

<http://www.womensbar.org/>

Student Membership: **\$25**

Committees Include:

Amicus | Appointments, Awards, & Endorsements | Business Development | Cape Cod & Islands | Central MA | Employment | Government | Greater Boston | In-House | Law Firm Advancement | Law Student | Legislative | Metro West | Middlesex County | Mothers’ Forum | New Bedford & Fall River | New Lawyers | North Shore | Public Relations | Rosa Parks | Senior Practice Group | Solo and Small Firm | South Shore | Western MA | Women in the Courtroom | Women of Color

Member benefits include:

- Complimentary one-year subscription to *Women’s Business*
- Monthly newsletter
- **Women’s Bar Foundation** (pro bono opportunities, which include training and mentoring):
  - Family Law Project for Battered Women
  - Elder Law Project
  - Women’s Lunch Place Project
  - Rape Survivors’ Law Project
  - Framingham Project for Incarcerated Women
  - Judicial Consent for Minors Lawyer Referral Panel

## **Additional Professional Legal Associations in Massachusetts**

Boston Patent Law Association (<http://www.bpla.org/>)

Hellenic Bar Association (<http://www.hellenicbarassociation.com/>)

Massachusetts Association of Hispanic Attorneys [MAHA] (<http://mahaweb.org/>)

Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys (<http://www.massblackwomenattys.org/>)

Massachusetts Defense Lawyers Association (<http://www.massdla.org/>)

Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association (<http://www.massmunilaw.org/>)

National Lawyers Guild – Massachusetts Chapter (<http://www.nlgmass.org/>)

Real Estate Bar Association of Massachusetts [REBA] (<http://www.reba.net/>)

South Asian Bar Association of Greater Boston (<http://sabagb.org/>)

Worcester County Bar Association (<http://www.worcestercountybar.org/>)