New ABA Standard 509

In August 2012, Standard 509, which addresses consumer information, was revised. The new Standards require four categories of public disclosure on law school websites: (a) policies on transfer of credit, pursuant to Standard 509(c); (b) employment outcomes data, pursuant to Standard 509(d); (c) conditional scholarship retention data, pursuant to Standard 509(e); and (d) other items of general consumer information, pursuant to Standard 509(b).

Standard 509(c) is not new. It is mandated by U.S. Department of Education regulations, and simply requires that schools post on their websites certain information regarding their policies on the transfer of credit earned at another institution.

New Standard 509(d) requires law schools to post their employment outcomes in the form approved by the Section’s Council. The new employment outcomes disclosure requirements that calls for posting three years of data, will be phased in. As of October 5, 2012, all schools were required to have posted their class of 2011 employment outcomes. Going forward, the required date for posting employment data is March 31 of each year for the graduating class of the prior year. For the March 31, 2013 posting, data for the 2012 and 2011 classes are required. Thereafter, schools are required to publish three years of data.

New Standard 509(e) requires the posting of conditional scholarship retention data in the form approved by the Council. This disclosure requirement will also be phased in. As of October 5, 2012, schools were required to post data for the 2011 entering class. By October 5, 2013, schools must post data for the 2011 and 2012 classes. Subsequently, schools are required to publish three years of data.

New Standard 509(d) requires law schools to publicly disclose on their websites a number of other items of consumer information, most of which were required to be disclosed under the former Standard 509(b). Previously, the disclosure requirement could be met through the publication of the information in the ABA-LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools. The additional consumer information is required to be posted by March 1, 2013. Subsequently, this information must be posted by February 1 of each year.