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Attorneys' Ethical Obligations After a Disaster

ABA Releases Formal Opinion to Clarify Ethical Obligations After a Disaster

When disaster strikes and lawyers scramble to recover from damage to their offices and to help people with their legal needs, professional ethics may not always be foremost in their minds. But no one wants the disaster to be compounded by a breach that puts the public, or the lawyer's license at risk. Last week, in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence and the West Coast wildfires, the ABA Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility released ABA Formal Ethics Opinion 402 to help clarify lawyers' ethical obligations pertaining to disaster. At [ABA Journal](#), read what the opinion says about such matters as maintaining clients' files (or alerting them to loss), withdrawing from a case, and soliciting disaster victims for business.

National Average Score on MBE Hits Lowest Level in Decades

The national average score for the July 2018 Multistate Bar Examination was 139.5, its lowest level in 34 years, according to figures released earlier this month. This average score was a decrease of about 2.2 points from the July 2017 average, the National Conference of Bar Examiners reported. The number of test takers was also down: The 45,274 examinees for the July exam were the fewest since 2001, representing a 2.9 percent decrease from the 46,627 who took the exam in July 2017. What does the president of the NCBE have to say about this drop in the national average and about what she is seeing, so far, in individual jurisdictions? Find out at [ABA Journal](#).

Shifting Your Focus from Members to Customers? Not so Fast

In recent years, some experts have advised association executives and leaders to think more in terms of customers than members. After all, it may be much easier to convince someone to buy something small than to make a larger commitment of money and, possibly, time. But Tony Russell, senior vice president of Marketing General Incorporated, says there's life in the membership model yet. For one thing, members have a much better retention rate than customers, his firm's research has found. The mean renewal rate for association members is 89 percent, which translates to an average tenure of five years, compared with a retention rate of 8 percent for customers (those who just attend one meeting, buy one book, etc.), or a tenure of 1.2 years. Learn more at [Membership Marketing Blog](#).

September-October *Bar Leader*: What Are Bars Doing in Light of #MeToo?

Last fall, the #MeToo movement gained nationwide attention as women in a variety of professions and walks of life disclosed, often for the first time, instances of sexual harassment or gender bias. The legal profession is not immune to these issues: In the months since, many women lawyers have shared their own experiences, and bar associations have conducted surveys, webinars, and other efforts to bring the problems to light and help ensure safety and fairness. The [September-October issue of Bar Leader](#) looks

at what some bar associations are doing, and at some new and upcoming resources to help bars and law firms combat sexual harassment and gender bias.



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