



Issue 237 | January 27

Updates from the Sandboxes

State Bar of California 'Sandbox' Working Group Has First Meeting, Plus Updates from Utah

The State Bar of California Closing the Justice Gap Working Group had its first meeting earlier this month, hearing from speakers who advocated for testing alternative models, including nonlawyer investment or ownership of law firms. One notable member of the working group is Crispin Passmore, a legal industry consultant based in the U.K., where legal regulations were loosened in 2011 to allow a range of alternative business structures, including nonlawyer legal service ownership. California is considering establishing a "sandbox" to test new ideas, akin to what is being done in Utah. At [Bloomberg Law](#), find out why any regulatory changes in California are expected to make a big impression across the country, and read some updates from Utah as well.

Cluster of Suicide Deaths Among Lawyers in Kentucky Brings Renewed Focus on Mental Health

Within a space of three weeks in December 2020 and January 2021, four lawyers in Kentucky died by suicide, bringing renewed focus to a nationwide problem within the legal profession. Kentucky Bar Association Executive Director John Meyers said the bar's board of governors would discuss at a January 15 meeting what additional resources the bar could offer to help address lawyer suicide. A lawyer from Louisville shared with [KyForward](#) some insights into why lawyers suffer from higher rates of mental illness, stress, and substance abuse than the general population and one way he hopes the bar will respond. In [a statement on the KBA's website](#), President Thomas N. Kerrick expresses his sorrow at the recent deaths, calls attention to several resources available for lawyers who need help, and links to the bar's newly created [Mental Health Resources page](#).

How to Help Diversify Legal Profession? Community Fund Closes Important Gaps

For many Black law students, the last hurdles before becoming a practicing lawyer are big ones: paying the fees for bar exam prep and for bar exam applications. These fees get bigger every year, notes Joe Patrice, a senior editor at [Above the Law](#). How is a nonprofit called the Community Fund for Black Bar Applicants working to diversify the legal profession by defraying these costs?

Bloomberg Law, Paladin Provide Free Legal Research to LSC Grantees, Pro Bono Lawyers

Last week, Bloomberg Law and pro bono technology company Paladin announced a partnership to provide 90 days' free access to the Bloomberg Law legal research platform for any lawyers who take pro bono cases. This comes on the heels of an earlier announcement that Bloomberg Law is now offering free access to all grantees of the Legal Services Corporation. At [LawSites](#), Robert Ambrogi shares more details about this new partnership and about what type of information and tools will now be complimentary for LSC grantees and pro bono lawyers.



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