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Issue 246 | April 7

ABA President Speaks out Against Hate Crimes & Discrimination Against Asian Americans

ABA President Patricia Lee Refo Makes Statement on Discrimination, Hate Crimes Targeting Asian Americans

"People need the protection of the government and the law," wrote ABA President Patricia Lee Refo, in a statement issued last week on the subject of hate crimes and discrimination against Asian Americans. "But we all bear the responsibility and moral duty to stand up for our neighbors and ensure they are safe and respected." Refo's statement shares data regarding a pandemic-related increase in such incidents and commends U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland and the Justice Department for its recently announced 30-day internal review of how these incidents are tracked and prosecuted. The full text of the statement is on [the ABA website](#).

Rhode Island Lowers Bar Exam Cut Score, Other States Consider Changes

After California permanently lowered the cut score on its bar exam in summer 2020, it saw a significant increase in the diversity of bar applicants who passed the exam and became new lawyers. Now, several other states are following suit, or are monitoring changes being made by the National Conference of Bar Examiners with an eye toward possible changes in their jurisdictions. For example, last week, Rhode Island announced that it had lowered its cut score, and a spokesperson for the Idaho Supreme Court said scoring changes may be considered in that state. [Bloomberg Law](#) takes a comprehensive look at results in California and at how some other states are thinking about changes to their bar exams.

Are You Ready for the Hybrid Workplace? Are You Sure?

For the past few months, experts have predicted a hybrid model for many workplaces. Now, many are suggesting that this may involve bigger transformations and disruptions than those that occurred in 2020 with the sudden switch to all-remote work. Several major companies have announced that many, or even a majority, of their office employees will work from home on some days, indefinitely, and at least one?Target?is ending its lease for one of its headquarters buildings. How are employers applying what they've learned from the pandemic, and what adjustments now need to be made in terms of technology and management style to accommodate the permanently hybrid workforce? Learn more at [The Washington Post](#).

Toward a Vaccinated Workforce: Some Law Firms Offer Paid Time Off for COVID-19 Shots

In much of the legal industry, the billable hour is an important form of currency. So, the fact that some big law firms are offering their lawyers and staff paid time off to get their COVID-19 shots shows how much they want all employees to be vaccinated before returning to in-person work. One firm is even allocating additional time off for this purpose, so employees don't have to use their existing time off?and another firm is requiring, not encouraging, people to be vaccinated before they return to the office. Which firms are taking which approaches? Find out at [Above the Law](#).

Nominations for E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Awards Open Until April 30

Nominations are now open for the E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Awards, with a submission deadline of April 30, 2021. This award recognizes exemplary, innovative, and ongoing professionalism programs established by law schools, bars, courts and other legal organizations that help ensure the maintenance of the highest principles of integrity and dedication to the legal profession and the public. Administered by the ABA Standing Committee on Professionalism and supported by the E. Smythe Gambrell Fund for Professionalism, each award carries a \$3,500 prize. Visit [the award's web page](#) to learn more, to read about last year's winners, and to download the nomination form.



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