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## **Update on Alternative Licensure Pathways**

### **IAALS Looks at Recent Explorations of Alternative Licensure, Presidents of 17 Bars in California Object to Proposal in Their State**

Because of some persistent questions about the traditional bar exam and how well it assesses minimum competence to practice law, a few states are now exploring alternative licensure approaches that would be permanent rather than an emergency measure due to COVID-19. [IAALS Blog](#) summarizes the recent work of task forces, blue ribbon commissions, and other groups in Oregon, California, Minnesota, and New York, and also looks at longstanding alternative pathways in Wisconsin and New Hampshire. Also, earlier this month, the presidents of the Los Angeles County Bar Association and 16 other bars in California wrote a letter expressing concerns about a related proposal to be voted on by the State Bar of California Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of the Bar Exam. In [their letter](#), the presidents caution that a non-exam pathway could cause public harm by opening the door to legal practitioners who are both unqualified and unscrupulous.

### **Oregon to Become 5th State with Program to Allow Limited Legal Services by Licensed Professionals**

Last week, the Oregon Supreme Court approved a licensed paralegal program that the Oregon State Bar has been working on since 2017. Oregon is the fifth state that will allow nonlawyers to provide some legal services; the others are Washington (though its program is now defunct), Utah, Arizona, and Minnesota. The licensed paralegal program, which will go into effect in July 2023, will allow participants to provide limited legal services in family law, including divorces and custody matters, and in landlord and tenant cases. [Reuters](#) has more information, including how judges, members of the public, and lawyers have responded to this idea as it has developed over the years.

### **Amidst Systemic Lack of Black Lawyers in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County Bar Association Program Focuses on Pipeline**

Less than 3% of the roughly 5,500 members of the Allegheny County (Pa.) Bar Association are Black, and there's not much room to grow that percentage simply by attracting other Black lawyers in its area: Kellie Ware, the bar's new director of diversity, equity, and inclusion, estimates that there are fewer than 50 Black lawyers in the Pittsburgh region who do not already belong to the bar. Meanwhile, the city's Black population overall has dropped from 27% in 2000 to about 22% today. For the past 17 years, ACBA has focused on building a diverse pipeline of new lawyers into its area through its Summer Clerkship program. This program helps Black law students, other law students who are of color, disabled law students, and those who are LGBTQ connect with Pittsburgh-area corporations, giving them real-world legal experience and potentially leading to future employment. The [New Pittsburgh Courier](#) shares more details about this program and talks with a few Black law students about their experiences in Pittsburgh.

### **Can You Walk Down the Hall in a Remote Workplace?**

## Training for New Lawyers Potentially at Risk

If remote work becomes permanent at many law firms, what will happen to the almost unspoken though widely known training system for new associates? Unlike in many other professions, law students often graduate with little practical experience, writes Tom Sharbaugh, professor of practice at Penn State Law and the director of the law school's Entrepreneur Assistance Clinic. A lawyer's first years in practice are a de facto apprenticeship, he believes—and much of the day-to-day learning is done through spontaneous interactions that are difficult to replicate on virtual platforms. At [Legal Evolution](#), Sharbaugh takes a deep dive into recent research and writing about the remote workplace, the nature of interpersonal work relationships, and his own experiences successfully running a business-focused legal clinic with a hybrid format.

## July-August 2022 *Bar Leader*: How Some Bars Are Thinking About Board Meetings, Culture Today

If your board has recently transitioned back to in-person meetings from a virtual format, are you noticing and working to repair any little gaps in institutional knowledge or in how board members relate to each other and do the work of the bar? The [July-August 2022 issue](#) of *Bar Leader* looks at how some bars are thinking about board meetings, orientation, and culture as we continue to move through and past the pandemic. Also in this issue: a handy summary of post-*Janus* cases against mandatory bars, all in one place.



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