

MISSOURI LAWYERS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Background

Alcoholism, drug addiction and mental health problems are afflictions that affect a great number of professionals, including lawyers and judges. It is conservatively estimated that 15-18% of lawyers have a substance abuse problem, compared to 7-10% of the general population. The incidence of depression for lawyers is at least double the rate for the general population.

To create a model for assisting these lawyers, the American Bar Association created the Commission on Impaired Lawyers in 1988, with the name changing to the Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs in 1996.

Today, all 50 states have developed a lawyer assistance program or committee focusing on substance abuse, depression and other mental health issues. The commission provides multiple services for these programs, including its annual national workshop.

Missouri Bar Activities

Assistance for impaired lawyers in Missouri started in 1977 with an ad hoc group of recovering lawyers and judges who created Missouri Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers. In 1980, The Missouri Bar established the Committee on Alcoholism, which was later changed to the Lawyers' Assistance Committee.

The Missouri Bar created MOLAP (Missouri Lawyers' Assistance Program) in 1990, out-placing the program with a St. Louis-based employee assistance program. MOLAP was converted to an internally managed/serviced program in 1996.

MOLAP provides professional, confidential counseling to help members of The Missouri Bar and their families, along with law students, overcome personal issues that may interfere with their professional or personal well-being. These problems may include depression, substance abuse, stress, burnout, marital, family, emotional, elder care or work-related issues.

Professional services include:

- Counseling
- Referrals
- Interventions
- Education & Prevention Program

All direct services are cost free. For more information, please see the MOLAP web page at www.mobar.org/law/molap.htm.