

The Facts

Addiction

- Substance abuse is characterized by a preoccupation with alcohol or other drugs, coupled with a loss of control over consumption.
- Addiction is a progressive disease; without treatment it only gets worse, never better.
- 30% of male lawyers and 20% of female lawyers regularly exceed moderate drinking levels, and 15-18% of lawyers become addicted to alcohol or drugs.
- The risk of addiction to prescription drugs increases when used in ways other than prescribed. Approximately 20% of the U.S. populations have used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons.

Addiction is treatable.

Depression

- Depression affects mood, thought, body and behavior.
- Symptoms include sadness, irritability, loss of concentration, unexplained physical pain, inability to enjoy life, and/or suicidal thoughts.
- According to a Johns Hopkins study, attorneys suffer from depression at a higher rate than other professionals, and higher than the general population.
- Many people with depression do not seek treatment. Even those whose depression is extremely severe, can be helped.

Depression is treatable.

Stress

- Stress has the potential to create mental, social and physical problems.
- Symptoms can include fatigue, changes in appetite, headaches, crying and changes in sleep habits.
- Unmanaged stress can lead to serious physical and psychological problems.
- Unmanaged stress is linked to alcoholism, substance abuse, and depression.

Personal Inventory

Personal problems such as alcoholism, substance abuse, depression and stress affect one's ability to practice law. Take time to review the following questions and consider whether you or a colleague would benefit from the available Lawyer Assistance Program services.

1. Are my associates, clients or family saying that my behavior has changed or that I don't seem myself?
2. Is it difficult for me to maintain a routine and stay on top of responsibilities?
3. Have I experienced memory problems or an inability to concentrate?
4. Am I having difficulty managing emotions such as anger and sadness?
5. Have I missed appointments or appearances or failed to return phone calls? Am I keeping up with correspondence?
6. Have my sleeping and eating habits changed?
7. Am I experiencing a pattern of relationship problems with significant people in my life (spouse/parent, children, partners/associates)?
8. Does my family have a history of alcoholism, substance abuse or depression?
9. Do I drink or take drugs to deal with my problems?
10. In the last few months, have I had more drinks or drugs than I intended, or felt that I should cut back or quit, but could not?
11. Is gambling making me careless of my financial responsibilities?
12. Do I feel so stressed, burned out and depressed that I have thoughts of suicide?

If you answered **YES to ONE** or more questions, you owe it to yourself, your family, your clients and our profession to contact the

Nassau County Bar Association Lawyer Assistance Program (LAP) at 1-888-408-6222.

All communication is kept strictly confidential.

FREE
Confidential Help
Protected by Law



Exclusively for attorneys, judges, law students and their immediate family members.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

Alcoholism	Gambling
Drug Abuse	Depression
Substance Abuse	Eating Disorders
Mental Health Issues	Practice Closings
Stress	Unemployment/ Underemployment

We can help you.
We want to help you.

Confidential Hotline
Available 24/7
1-888-408-6222

www.nassaubar.org/LAP
lap@nassaubar.org



A service provided by the
Nassau County Bar Association



The Nassau County Bar Association takes the firm position that alcoholism, substance abuse, addictive behavior and psychological problems are treatable illnesses rather than moral issues.

**Confidential Assistance
for the Legal Community
Protected By Law**

Attorneys in need of assistance who continue to practice law hurt themselves and have an adverse impact on their clients, colleagues, and community.

What is LAP?

The Lawyer Assistance Program is a **free** and **confidential** program of the Nassau County Bar Association established to help attorneys, judges, and law students in Nassau County, as well as their family members, who are affected by alcoholism, drug abuse, gambling, depression, other mental health issues, or debilitating stress.

What services does LAP provide?

Services are free and include:

- Early identification of impairment
- Intervention and motivation to seek help
- Assessment, evaluation and development of an appropriate treatment plan
- Referral to community resources, self-help groups, inpatient treatment, outpatient counseling, and rehabilitation services
- Referral to a trained peer assistant – attorneys who have faced their own difficulties and volunteer to assist a struggling colleague by providing support, understanding, guidance, and good listening
- Information and consultation for those (family, firm, and judges) concerned about an attorney
- Training programs on recognizing, preventing, and dealing with addiction, stress, depression, and other mental health issues
- Guidance and assistance in closing a law practice due to illness, death, disability, or disbarment.

If you are concerned about your own alcohol or drug use and/or mental health, or if you are concerned about a friend or colleague, a call to the free Lawyer Assistance Program can help.

What can I expect when I contact LAP?

You will speak to a LAP professional who has extensive experience with the issues that affect the legal community. You will receive the undivided attention you deserve to share what's on your mind and to explore options for addressing your concerns. You will be provided with referrals, suggestions, and support. The LAP professional will ask your permission to check in with you in the weeks following your initial call.

Can I expect resolution of my problem?

LAP instills hope through its peer volunteers, many of whom have triumphed over their own significant personal problems. Also, there is evidence that appropriate treatment and support is effective in most cases of mental health problems. A combination of medication and therapy effectively treats depression in 85% of the cases.

Closing a Law Practice

Special circumstances, such as illness, death, disability or disbarment of an attorney can mandate that a law practice be closed. We provide guidance and assistance throughout this difficult and stressful process and can arrange for transitions of client cases. Retiring lawyers or their fiduciaries should feel free to contact LAP.

Your Confidentiality Is Completely Protected By Law

All LAP services are strictly confidential and protected under Section 499 of the Judiciary Law (as amended by Chapter 327 of the Laws of 1993).

1. **Confidential Information Privileged.** The confidential relations and communications between a member or authorized agent of a lawyer assistance committee sponsored by a state or local bar association and any person, firm or corporation communicating with such a committee, its members or authorized agents shall be deemed to be privileged on the same basis as those provided by law between attorney and client. Such privileges may be waived only by the person, firm or corporation that has furnished information to the committee.
2. **Immunity From Liability.** Any person, firm or corporation in good faith providing information to, or in any other way participating in the affairs of any of the committees referred to in subdivision one of this section, shall be immune from civil liability that might otherwise result by reason of such conduct. For the purpose of any proceeding, the good faith of any such person, firm or corporation shall be presumed.

*This service is not for the general public.
You do not have to be a member of the Nassau County Bar Association to receive help.*

The NCBA Lawyer Assistance Program is made possible by grants from the NYS Office of Court Administration and the We Care Fund, part of the Nassau Bar Foundation, NCBA's charitable arm.

24-hour Confidential Hotline • 1-888-408-6222