

# Assistance Resources

## Lawyer Assistance Programs

Patricia Spataro, Director NYSBA LAP	1.800.255.0569 or 518.487.5685
Paul Curtin, Coordinator NYSBA LAP, Fourth Department	1.800.255.0569
Eileen Travis, Director New York City LAP	212.302.5787
Peter J. Schweitzer, Director Nassau County LAP	888.408.6222

## Lawyer Assistance Committees

Sallie Krauss, Chair NYSBA Committee	718.637.7561
Thomas E. Schimmerling, Broome County, Southern Tier	607.435.6225
Larry Zimmerman, Capital District	518.429.4242
Lee Klein, Dutchess County	845.454.9200
Katherine S. Bifaro, Erie County	716.852.1777
Daniel Lukasik, Erie County Lawyers with Depression Committee	716.852.2212
David Antonucci, Jefferson County	315.788.7300
John Urban, Kings County	718.624.4001
John Crowe, Monroe County	585.234.1950
Annabel Bazante, Nassau County	516.776.7030
Gary Reing, New York City	914.245.7609
Timothy D. Foley, Oneida County	315.369.3544
William R. Morgan, Onondaga County	315.476.2945
Jacqueline Torchin, Queens County	718.307.7828
Benjamin Selig, Rockland County	845.942.2222
Richard Zahnleuter, Saratoga County	800.255.0569
Hon. Vincent Reilly, Schenectady County	518.285.8425
Sarah Jane LaCova, Suffolk County	631.697.2499
Richard M. Wallace, Tompkins County	607.272.2102
Mitchell J. Baker, Westchester County	914.681.9500

For additional information and resources  
for lawyers dealing with depression issues  
go to [www.lawyerswithdepression.com](http://www.lawyerswithdepression.com)

## Judiciary Law

### Section 499. Lawyer Assistance Committees 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 which 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.

### Judges' Assistance Program

We all have problems from time to time whether resulting from personal issues, every day stress, or just the circumstances of everyday life. Members of the legal profession are often too busy tending to the troubles of others to acknowledge their own needs. Now there is specialized help available for members of the judiciary.

The purpose of the Judges' Assistance Program of the New York State Bar Association is to assist judges who are affected by alcoholism, drug abuse, stress, depression or other mental health issues. The goal of the Judges' Assistance Program is to prevent health-related, personal or professional problems.

#### Contacts:

Hon. Sarah L. Krauss, Kings County	518.285.8422
Hon. Vincent J. Reilly, Jr., Capital District	718.637.7561
Hon. John C. Rowley, Tompkins County	607.277.4957
Confidential Helpline	1.800.255.0569



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NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION



# Lawyer Assistance Program

Confidential Helpline

**1.800.255.0569**

**518.487.5685**

email: [lap@nysba.org](mailto:lap@nysba.org)

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



The Lawyer Assistance Program (LAP) of the New York State Bar Association was established in 1990 to assist attorneys, judges, and law school students who are affected by alcoholism, drug abuse, stress, depression, and other mental health issues. LAP also provides support services to families, law firms and others in the legal community who are concerned about mental health issues among attorneys.

## LAP Services

- 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 concerned about an attorney
- Training programs on recognizing, preventing, and dealing with addiction, stress, depression, and other mental health issues

**Access to LAP is voluntary.**

**LAP is guided by the New York State Bar Association Lawyer Assistance Committee.**

**LAP is available to all attorneys in New York State and their immediate family members, whether or not the attorney is a member of the New York State Bar Association.**

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

## Facts about Addiction, Depression and Stress

### Addiction:

- Alcoholism and drug abuse are treatable illnesses.
- 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.
- Statistics indicate that 30% of male lawyers and 20% of female lawyers regularly exceed moderate drinking levels and 15-18% of lawyers become addicted.
- Marijuana impairs memory and concentration.
- The risk of addiction to prescription drugs increases when drugs are used in ways other than prescribed. Approximately 20% of the U.S. populations have used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons.

### Depression:

- Depression affects mood, thought, body, and behavior.
- Symptoms include sadness, irritability, loss of concentration, unexplained physical pain, and inability to enjoy life.
- Depression is a treatable illness. However, many people with depression do not seek treatment.
- The great majority, even those whose depression is extremely severe, can be helped.
- According to a Johns Hopkins study, attorneys suffer from depression at a higher rate than other professionals.

### Stress:

- Stress creates mental, social, and physical problems.
- Symptoms can include fatigue, changes in appetite, headaches, crying, changes in sleep habits.
- Unmanaged stress can lead to serious physical and psychological problems.
- Unmanaged stress is linked to alcoholism, substance abuse, and depression.
- There are many positive ways to manage stress.

## 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. If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, you may need help.

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?

**There Is Hope**

**Contact LAP today for free confidential help and support!**

**1.800.255.0569**

**[www.nysba.org/lap](http://www.nysba.org/lap)**