

Frequently Asked Questions about the Business Law Section Community and the sub-Communities for its practice area committees

1. What is the Business Law Section (“BLS”) Community?

The Community is a closed Internet discussion and information sharing site - closed because it is available only to members of the New York State Bar Association Business Law Section. It takes the place of our previous Listserv and adds many additional functions. You can start discussions among members and ask for advice, forms, recommendations and referrals. One big advantage of the Community over our old Listserv is that you can read all posts on an issue sequentially on the Community site without having to search for individual incoming emails. You can upload documents, articles or forms to a BLS library that other members can then download. You can establish a personal profile so that members will know more about you. You can find other BLS members and send them email messages through the Community. You can also read announcements and get information about BLS events and programs. We also have separate sub-Communities for each of our practice area committees. See #12 and #13 below for more information about the sub-Communities and the practice areas that they cover.

2. How do I join the BLS community?

All existing members of the Section are already registered as members of the Community. However, we recommend that you log in to the Community (see #3 below) and configure it to fit your preferences.

3. How do I get to the Community?

You go to the web address communities.nysba.org and sign in using your ID and password for the NYSBA site. If you do not know your sign in credentials, call the NYSBA Member Resource Center at 800-582-2452 (8am-5pm, M-F) and they will help you set up your credentials. Once you sign in, click on the “Groups” tab in the upper left and then click on “My Groups” under that. You will then come to a page that lists all of your existing Communities. The Business Law Section should be shown, as will any of our committees that you have already joined. You can also get to the BLS Community by logging in at the NYSBA.org Internet site and then clicking on the Communities button at the top. All of the Section’s sub-Communities will appear under the Business Law Content Feed tab in the main Business Law Section Community. See #12 below regarding joining committees and accessing sub-Communities when you are not a member of the committee.

4. Can I access the Community from my smart phone?

Yes, there is an App. Go to the Apple or Google Play Store, search for NYSBA Communities, load the App and then select your Community. (Entries will appear on your phone in order of posting rather than as a thread.). NYSBA highly recommends the App, but some of our members have found

reduced functionality in the initial setup. We recommend that you initially set up your settings and preferences using full Internet access without the App.

5. What things should I configure first?

We recommend that the first thing you do is enter the Business Law Section Community by clicking on the words “Business Law Section” after clicking on “My Groups.” You should then configure your email notification settings (See #8 below) and, if you do not yet have a NYSBA profile, you should create that profile as well (See #9 below).

6. I want to start a discussion or ask a question of the members. What do I do?

Log on to the Business Law Section Community site, click on the “Discussion” tab and you will see a button “Post New Message.” Click on that and you will be off to the races. If you are a member of a Committee, you can also post directly on that committee’s sub-Community and your post will be directed to members who are interested in that practice area.

7. I’m impatient – is there a shortcut to start a discussion or ask a question?

Yes, you can start a discussion without logging on by sending an email directly to the Community email address. The subject line of your email will become the title of your post and the entire text of your email will become the body of the post. However, remember that if you have IRS or confidentiality notices at the bottom of your outgoing emails, they will be included in your post, so it can get very long. We suggest that you log in to start a discussion whenever possible. The email address for direct posting to the BLS Community is:

nysba-business@ConnectedCommunity.org

If you are subscribed to receive a daily digest (see #8 below), you should see your post early the next morning. If you are subscribed to real time, you should see the message very shortly after you post.

Direct email posting to the sub-Communities is also available by using the email addresses listed at the end of these FAQs. To maintain security and the closed nature of the Community, direct email posting will work **only** if you are sending the email from the email address you have registered with NYSBA. If you use a different email address, your post will be rejected.

8. How can I get notice of discussion posts that other people have made?

The Community will send you email notifications of all discussion posts on the Community, if you want to get them. You have four choices. (1) You can get notifications in real time as posts are made. (2) You can get a daily notification summarizing all discussion posts that day. (3) You can get real time notifications in text only format in the same way that notifications were sent in our previous Listserv. (4) You can get no notifications at all, in which case you can read discussion posts whenever you log in and enter the Community. To configure your choice, click on the “Settings” button on the Business Law

Section Community page and then under “Email Notifications” click on the dropdown box and choose which of the four alternative notifications you want. You can also separately set how you receive notifications on each sub-Community. Alternatively, you can modify your email settings by clicking on Groups, then “Modify Communication Settings” from the main navigation bar on the Communities page.

The default communication setting for the main Business Law Section Community is daily digest. The default for BLS Committee sub-Communities is real time.

9. How do I configure my profile?

In the upper right corner of the Communities page, there is a greyed out figurehead with a drop-down arrow. Click on the arrow and then click on Profile. You can then manually insert your profile or, if you have a LinkedIn profile that you want to start with, you can import it directly. You can change or update your profile in the same manner.

10. Will I need to set up a signature block or enter my name and other information each time I post a message?

No, your contact information as it appears on your profile, subject to your NYSBA privacy setting choices as discussed in the following question, will automatically appear.

11. What if I want to limit the people who can see my profile?

On the Profile page, there are four tabs. If you click on the “My Account” tab, you can then click on “Privacy Settings” and select exactly which parts of your profile you want to be seen by others. You can remain anonymous if you want.

12. You have sub-Communities for each BLS substantive practice area Committee. How can I use those?

You may view all of the sub-Community pages if you are a member of the BLS Community—simply click the Committee’s name from the Business Law Content Feed tab in the main BLS Community page—but you can only post or reply to discussions in the sub-Community if you are a member of that Committee. If you want to join a Committee, send an email to businesslaw@nysba.org. It may take a few days for the system to be updated to recognize your membership. You will then be able to post and reply to discussions on that sub-Community.

13. I did not know about the practice area committees. What committees are there?

We have committees for Banking Law; Bankruptcy Law; Business Organizations Law; Derivatives and Structured Products Law; Franchise, Distribution and Licensing Law; Insurance Law; Mergers and Acquisitions; Not-for-Profit Corporations Law; Public Utility Law; Securities Regulation, and its subcommittee on Private Investment Funds; and Technology and Venture Law. You are welcome to

look at all of the sub-Communities and join those of interest to you. More information about BLS committees is available at www.nysba.org/BLSCommittees. There is no cost for BLS members to join a committee.

14. What else should I do to configure my sub-Communities?

You should configure your email notifications for the sub-Communities as you do it for the BLS main Community (see #8 above). You do not have to have the same email preferences for all Communities.

15. Can I set the system to send me weekly updates?

Yes. While we recommend that members interact with the Community on a more frequent basis, you may set your preferences to receive one weekly consolidated update from one or more Communities. Select Groups, then “Modify Communication Settings,” and turn on the Weekly Consolidated Digest option. (If you do not also want to receive daily messages, you will want to then set your individual Community notification settings listed beneath the digest option to “No Email.”)

16. We have a Legislative Affairs committee. Why doesn't it have a sub-Community?

Legislative Affairs are normally of interest to either our entire group or only to specific subject matter committees. Legislative matters of interest will be posted as discussions to the main Community page or, when of limited interest, to the applicable sub-Community.

17. How do I upload a document?

Click on the “Library” tab in the Community or sub-Community and then click on “Create New Library Entry.” Fill in the information about your library item, then click on “Next,” attach your file and upload it by finishing the process. If you are posting a message to the Community via email (see #7 above), you may simply attach the document to the email and it will be automatically posted to the library.

18. How do I communicate with other BLS members? What if I want to communicate with someone in a specific subject matter area?

You can send emails from the Communities to BLS members. All BLS members are listed in the Members section of the main BLS Community. To reach one of them, go to the Business Law Section Community front page and click on the “Members” tab towards the top. You will then see a search screen that allows you to search for members by first name, last name, law firm/company name or email address. If you go to a sub-Community, your search will return only members of that subject matter committee. You can click on each member by name and look at his or her profile. You will be able to send them a direct email message by clicking on “Send Message.” As you can see, having your own complete profile will help other members know more about you and contact you when appropriate.

19. What happened to the Listserv?

The Listserv continued for a brief period of time to allow members time to acclimate to the new Community. The Business Law Section Listserv was shut off in January 2016.

20. What if I have more questions?

If you have more questions, post them as discussion points on the main BLS Community and you should get the prompt response. Questions of general interest will be added to this FAQ.

21. Will there be moderators or the deleting of posts on the Community?

We expect that everyone will act in a courteous and professional manner, and we do not plan to engage in active monitoring for the purpose of policing the Community. NYSBA's experience with other Communities is extremely positive and we are told (as of this writing) that there has been only one situation in which a post had to be taken down. Spam marketing should be minimal because of the closed nature of the Community. If any member abuses his or her position to engage in such marketing, his or her posts may be subject to advance review, or other action may be taken, but we hope that will never be necessary. You can see the NYSBA Communities Rules & Etiquette at www.nysba.org/communitiesterms.

22. What are the direct posting email addresses for the sub-Communities?

If you want to post directly to a sub-Community from your email application without signing on to the site, you should use the following email addresses. If you are not a member of a Committee, you can view that Committee's sub-Community online (as a Business Law Section member), but you will not be able to post messages either online or by email (see #12 above to join a Committee).

Banking Law Committee:

nysba-blsbanking@ConnectedCommunity.org

Bankruptcy Law Committee:

nysba-blsbankruptcy@ConnectedCommunity.org

Business Organizations Law Committee:

nysba-blsorganizationslaw@ConnectedCommunity.org

Derivatives and Structured Products Law Committee:

nysba-blsderivatives@ConnectedCommunity.org

Franchise, Distribution and Licensing Law Committee:

nysba-blsfranchise@ConnectedCommunity.org

Insurance Law Committee:

nysba-blsinsurance@ConnectedCommunity.org

Mergers and Acquisitions Committee:

nysba-blsmergers@ConnectedCommunity.org

Not-for-Profit Corporations Law Committee:

nysba-blsnfpcorporations@ConnectedCommunity.org

Private Investment Funds Subcommittee:

nysba-blprivateinvestmentfunds@ConnectedCommunity.org

Public Utility Law Committee:

nysba-blpublicutility@ConnectedCommunity.org

Securities Regulation Committee:

nysba-blsecurities@ConnectedCommunity.org

Technology and Venture Law Committee:

nysba-blstechventure@ConnectedCommunity.org