

LAWYERS PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY BOARD

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<http://lprb.mncourts.gov/AboutUs/Pages/LawyersBoardDirectory.aspx>

Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board Overview

Our fundamental purpose is to enhance public trust and confidence in the lawyer disciplinary system. We do this primarily in our role as adjudicators which includes, among other things, deciding complainant appeals, presiding over lawyer reinstatement hearings, determining whether there is probable cause to support charges that could result in public discipline, approving stipulations for private probation, and authorizing the issuance of investigatory subpoenas. In addition to our adjudicatory role, we propose and create key policy and rule changes in order to further our mission. Our board members not only draft proposed policy and rule changes but occasionally argue our position to the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Importantly, we are independent from the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility. Our board is comprised of attorney and public members appointed by and accountable to the Minnesota Supreme Court. We do not prosecute or investigate ethical violations. We do not negotiate settlements with Respondent attorneys. Instead, as set out in the Rules on Lawyers Professional Responsibility, we review certain decisions made by the OLPR and can return cases for further investigation or request that a case be presented to a Panel to consider charges for public discipline. We also preside over reinstatement hearings, which are often contested between the OLPR and the petitioning attorney and make findings that are subject to Supreme Court review.

Time investment

1. Attend 4 Open Board meetings per calendar year – 12 hours per year
2. Attend 4 Closed Board meetings per calendar year – 12 hours per year
3. Participate in board projects and committees - 30 hours a year
4. Decide Complainant appeals- (4 hours per month) – 48 hours per year
5. Panel matters
 - a. Reinstatement hearings (prep and hearing) -40 hours per year
*these are hit or miss. Can have none, one or two per year.
 - b. Probable cause findings- 25 hours per year

This equates to an average of 170 hours of volunteer service per year on the high end. Except for board meetings and reinstatement hearings, much of the work can be done outside of normal work hours. Board meetings, trainings and committee meetings will be remote or hybrid allowing for board members to avoid travel time and travel expenses when preferred.

Support and training

As a general rule, attorney board members do not serve as a panel chair or lead any project work for the first year of service. Public board members do not serve as panel chairs. All new board members receive training that includes several one-hour sessions on board-related topics and duties. We assign two mentors to each new board member- one is their panel chair, and the other is an experienced board member. For complainant appeals, new board members are also supported by the LPRB Vice Chair who guides and reviews the work product. We have a detailed internal reference guide available to all board members as well as a recently public FAQ document for panel matters.

Board member commitment

1. Serve to promote integrity of the profession and protect the public.
2. Pledge to not use the position for political, financial, or personal gain.
3. Meet deadlines for deciding complaint appeals and panel matters
4. Maintain confidentiality without exception
5. Contribute to discussions and decision making at board meetings
6. Collaborate with board members on projects