

Colorado Lawyers Have the Opportunity to Advance Wellbeing Research Through a Confidential Lawyer Mental Health Survey

Colorado is participating in a new national research project on lawyer mental health and well-being. The project, a collaboration between the American Bar Association Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs and lawyer behavioral health and well-being specialist Patrick Krill (J.D., LL.M, M.A.), is being led by Krill and his research partner Justin Anker (Ph.D.) from the University of Minnesota Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. This research will be conducted by enlisting the help of state bars and lawyer/attorney registration offices across the country to disseminate an anonymous, voluntary survey to a random sample of their lawyers.

This study aims to provide a 10-year update to and build upon the landmark 2016 ABA-Hazelden Betty Ford study, providing essential insights into current trends, attitudes, and barriers to mental health and well-being in law. Given substantial shifts in the legal profession over the past decade, including significant changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and an increasing role of technology in legal practice, an updated national assessment of mental health and substance use among attorneys is critically needed.

In addition to updating and building upon the 2016 study, this survey will include methodological enhancements (e.g., a random sample) and reach an even wider cross section of the lawyer population. The anonymous and confidential survey will investigate a range of individual risk factors for mental health and substance use problems (including stress, anxiety, depression, and behavioral motives) as well as cultural and workplace risk factors (workload, burnout, attitudes towards substance use and self-care, availability and utilization of support resources). The survey will also explore mental health and well-being protective factors in order to highlight behaviors, norms and experiences associated with good mental and physical health.

The Office of Attorney Registration is assisting in this effort by allowing its email service to be used to send out the survey. Approximately 20,400 individuals will be randomly selected from Colorado's attorney registration and invited to participate in this research study. If you are selected, you will receive an email that comes from attorney_registration@coloradosupremecourt.us but is authored by the research team. The email has more information about the study and a link to complete the survey. This voluntary survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Raw data collected in this survey will not be shared with the Office of Attorney Registration, the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel or any associated office. All survey responses will be anonymous and go directly to the University of Minnesota which maintains the confidentiality of all data. No identifying information will be asked, and all data will be de-identified including IP addresses.

Any questions should be directed to Dr. Justin Anker, Principal Investigator or Patrick Krill, Co-Investigator.

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