



Martin County Bar Association, Inc. (MCBA)

Association Handbook 2016

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Introduction/ How To Use This Document

The purpose of this Handbook is to specify, describe and communicate the requirements, responsibilities, policies, and procedures necessary to operate the Association (Corporation). It is intended to be consistent with the association's articles and the bylaws (posted on Board Only page of website), but where the handbook conflicts with those documents, those documents control.

It is a guide for all functions, responsibilities and interactions of the Executive Board (Board), committees, potential committees and general membership of MCBA, which are necessary for the success of the activities and administration of the Association.

This manual is to be used for as a resource for general Association leadership and for those transitioning to or from leadership positions.

Approach and use this handbook is a living guide—to simplify processes, save time, reduce effort and redundancy, increase efficiency and cooperation, and create continuity—for MCBA.

To that end, this manual may be updated when:

- It is determined that a current process is not functioning well;
- There is turnover in a position;
- New committees are formed;
- Upon completion of a process or event, - e.g. – we learned how to do it, how to do it better, etc., - and to track what worked and what didn't.

Policy Overview

All Chapter operations and business shall be conducted solely by and with approval of the Executive Board (Board), including but not limited to policies, procedures, communications, decisions, events, publications, and mandates. As a voluntary Bar Association, policies and procedures shall not conflict with the policies set by the Florida Bar nor with the Florida Bar's Oath of Office. The Association and its members will adhere to the current Standards of Professionalism (posted on the MCBA website).

Association Operations

Mission Statement

The MCBA is a Voluntary Bar Association dedicated to serving Martin County's legal community and legal needs. Membership of more than 450 attorneys include residents of Martin, Indian River, Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Palm Beach Counties who are involved in legal activities of Martin County. The goal is to foster the development of the Martin county legal community through providing high quality continuing education, information about our members to the general public, collegial social events and networking opportunities, as well as, provide community service/pro bono outreach.

Association Name

The chapter is incorporated as Martin County Bar Association, Inc. (herein after "MCBA"). It is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization. The Bylaws, Amendments and Articles of Incorporation can be found on the website (Board Only page).

Fiscal Year

Begins July 1 and ends on June 30 the following year.

Association Address

The Martin County Bar Association is a Florida not-for-profit corporation, with the principal place of business of the corporation being located in Stuart, Martin County, Florida. The corporation may have such other offices as the Board of Directors may designate and as the business of the corporation may require from time to time. The current business address of the MCBA is:

Martin County Bar Association (MCBA)
PO Box 2197
Stuart, FL 34995
Voice-mail Tel: 772-220-8018
Website: www.martincountybar.org
Email: martincountybarassociation@msn.com

Membership Overview

There are two types of MCBA memberships:

Regular Membership. Regular membership in this corporation shall be open to all attorney members in good standing of the Florida Bar who, at the time of application, either practice law or reside in Martin County, Florida, and are supportive of the purposes of the corporation as defined in the Restated Articles of Incorporation of the bylaws.

Associate Membership shall be open to all who live or work in Martin County, Florida in a law related field including but not limited to: paralegals, government employees, law students, retired attorneys, retired judges and legal support service business as approved by the Board of Directors. Associate members will pay the same membership dues, comply with the same admission process as the Regular Membership, be supportive of the purposes of the corporation as defined in the Restated Articles of Incorporation of the bylaws but have no voting rights.

Suspension or Expulsion: Any regular member who is suspended or disbarred by The Florida Bar shall be automatically suspended or expelled, as the case may be, from membership. Any member shall also be expelled for nonpayment of dues as set forth in Article III of the Bylaws.

Voting Rights: Each regular member shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members.

No Vested Interest: No regular member of the corporation shall have any vested right, interest or privilege to the assets or property of the corporation or any right, interest or privilege which *may* be transferable or inheritable or which shall continue if his membership ceases.

Membership Dues

Dues, meeting fees, and processing fees are set and approved by the MCBA Executive Board. See the application posted on the website for the current fee structure. Fees will be reviewed annually prior to the start of the bar year. Traditionally, there is a reduced fee rate for government attorneys and judges pay no dues. Rates are prorated in January and February annually. Written notice is sent to current members prior to July 1 and membership is delinquent if not paid by October 1.

Special Assessments: The membership at any regularly scheduled meeting may approve by a two-thirds vote a special assessment to cover any extraordinary expense or obligation of the corporation, and each member shall thereupon be obligated to pay said assessment.

Financial Review, Responsibilities & Budget

MCBA is responsible for its own financial obligations and commitments. The MCBA may not enter into any agreements, obligations or contracts that would jeopardize its financial responsibilities and must comply with reporting requirements of Florida's Department of State Division of Corporations and with Chapter 617, Florida Statutes. No individual member, officer or subcontractor may enter into any financial obligation on behalf of the Chapter without the prior consent of the Board.

The Board will approve a President prepared Association budget ideally prior to August 15 annually in order to provide committee budgets to Chairs at the first meeting of the year.

Any Board approved Officer or subcontractor with an MCBA credit card shall submit receipts in a timely manner to the Treasurer noting budget category. Current cards are issued by GulfStream Business Bank in Stuart.

Association Meetings / Events

General membership meetings are held on the third Friday of each month (August – May); exclusions and changes are dependent on the calendar year with a minimum of one (1) month notice to members. Non-members and guests may attend for a fee and may continue to come as a guest for unlimited number of meetings by paying the current meeting guest fee. All events organized or sponsored by the MCBA are open to members unless restricted by the Board for a subset of members; guests may be invited at the discretion of the Board. The fees are at the discretion of the Board.

Annual Meeting. The annual-meeting shall be the regular monthly meeting of the corporation in June, unless the Board of Directors, for good cause, determines otherwise; in that event, the membership shall be given at least sixty days written notice prior to the meeting. Since historically there is no monthly meeting in June, the annual meeting is typically held in May. The annual meeting of the corporation includes at a minimum, the election of officers who are also all of the Directors of the Corporation.

Special Meetings: Special meetings of the corporation may be called from time to time by any two members of the Board or at the written request of five percent of the members of the corporation. The Board of Directors may call special meetings of the corporation to be held at such time and place as the President shall designate with at least 10 days notice.

Quorum: The presence of no less than thirty (30) members shall constitute a quorum and shall be necessary to conduct the business of this corporation.

Currently, general meetings are held at the Kane Center in Stuart. The Board will confirm meeting venues prior to the start of each Bar year.

Association events (with venues, dates and budgets) are typically confirmed prior to the start of the Bar year at an annual Board strategic planning meeting. Past recurring events include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fall Judicial Reception• Constitution Week Program in the schools• Circuit and County Bench-Bar Programs• Monthly General CLE Meetings (August – May)• Fall Football Social• Spring March Madness Social• Annual Spring Installation Banquet• Spring Law Day Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual Canoe, Tennis & Softball Events• Past President Recognition Breakfast• YLD Behind Scenes Courthouse Tour• Judicial Investitures (as applicable)• Committee lunches/social meetings determined by Committee Chairs annually
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Code of Conduct for Meetings and Member Gatherings

- Speak and dress professionally;
- Respect the confidentiality of others;
- Listen and speak with respect / agree and disagree respectfully;
- Expect and manage change;
- Bring Association related thoughts or concerns directly to a member of the Board;
- Honor timelines and deadlines;
- Everything that occurs is due to the efforts of volunteers. The most effective way to affect change is to become a volunteer.

Promotion of Member Businesses

The MCBA has several sponsorship opportunities for members and non-members (posted on website). Typically, in order to avoid selective endorsement, promotion of events is limited to paid advertising at the discretion of the Board; members or guests cannot make any announcements or display promotional materials at any meetings or events without approval of the Board.

Association Board

Board Members Qualifications / Responsibilities

In order to qualify for nomination and election to the Board of Directors, the following requirements and conditions (for both nomination and fulfillment of position) must be met:

- Be an active Association Member (at a minimum having previously served as a committee Chair) and be a member in good standing (meet membership criteria and dues paid).
- Agree to act in the best interest of the Corporation and always maintain professional & ethical conduct;
- Consent to serve without compensation. Officers or independent contractors will receive reimbursement from the Corporation for any expenses incurred in connection with fulfilling the duties of or on behalf of the organization (with approval of the Board & submission of reimbursement request).
- Read and agree to abide by the Bylaws and the items outlines in this Handbook;
- Read and agree to abide by Policies and Procedures;
- Prepare for and participate in Board meetings, General Meetings and other MCBA functions;
- Attend MCBA-sponsored events when possible;
- Be timely in email communications;
- Notify Board of scheduled vacations or absences;
- Deliver appropriate reports at Board and General Meetings as needed. Project reports shall detail the scope, sources, prices, expenditures, and all other information that may be deemed useful to the Association now or in the future;
- Keep track of expenses and submit approved expenditures with accompanying receipts to Treasurer for timely reimbursement;
- Participate in budget and financial review process to maintain fiscal wellbeing of MCBA;
- Maintain proper reporting channels;
- Take part in MCBA-sponsored events;
- Set an example of ethical professionalism and excellence in business within the Association;
- Encourage members to become active in the Association by volunteering and expressing their opinions, including suggesting new ideas to the Board;
- Educate oneself, Board Members, Members and prospective members about the legal profession;
- Welcome and extend assistance to new Members;
- Actively recruit sponsors;
- Hold a transition meeting and transfer officer specific files (paper or electronic) as applicable to new incoming Officer when vacating a position.

Duties of Board Officers

The following pages list the general responsibilities for each position on the Board of Directors. **Directors are responsible for making sure that tasks get done; they are not expected to do all of these jobs by themselves!**

President

The President shall preside at all membership meetings and at all Board of Directors meetings and ensure that all books, reports, and certificates as required by law are properly kept or filed. The President shall be one of the Officers who may sign the checks or drafts of the corporation and shall have such powers as may be reasonably construed as belonging to the chief executive of *any* corporation. Specific responsibilities include:

- Prepare a monthly President's Message for newsletter and update website President's Message as needed;
- Approve meeting agenda's, presentation materials and correspondence prepared by Executive Director;
- Oversee Executive Director function and meet Executive Director as needed to conduct Association business;
- Official spokesperson of the Association;
- Select annual Law Day program and annual Banquet theme;
- Fill all Committee Chair positions and thank out-going Chairs in the spring annually;
- Prepare annual budget;
- Prepare and sign all subcontractor contracts as needed;
- Confirm speakers for Bar year and provide Executive Director content for CLE submission;
- Assign tasks to Board and Committees as needed.

Vice-President

The Vice President in the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of President and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. The Vice President shall be familiar with all activities and affairs of the corporation and shall have such other duties as may be assigned by the President or Board of Directors. Additional specific responsibilities include:

- Oversee Committee Programs;
- Edit monthly newsletter

Secretary

The Secretary shall keep the Board Meeting minutes and be the custodian of the corporate records (ensure they are posted on website) and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or Board of Directors. Specific responsibilities include:

- Providing monthly meeting minutes to Board within one week of meeting for review/changes as needed;
- Propose updates to this Handbook for Board review and approval prior to vacating position.

Treasurer

Perform all duties incident of the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to the Treasurer by the President or Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall be one of the Officers who shall sign checks or drafts of the corporation. No special funds *may* be set aside without the knowledge of the Treasurer, and said fund shall require the signature of the Treasurer or President for checks to be issued upon it or withdrawals made from said funds. The Treasurer shall have the duty to personally perform or oversee Independent Contractors to:

- Collect all dues, receive all monies, and disburse the same upon order of the proper Officers, and to keep a correct account of the same, and to prepare a written monthly report of the finances of the corporation for presentation to the regular meeting of Directors, which shall be physically affixed to the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting;
- Report to the Board of Directors any dues delinquency as of October 1 of each year.
- Deposit money in the name of MCBA in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories that may from time to time be selected by the Board of Directors;
- File all annual reports with the Secretary of State;
- Keeping of the register of the names and addresses of all members in good standing and give/serve notices to members of this corporation;
- File certificates and reports as required.

Immediate Past President

The Immediate Past President shall serve as a Director at large and shall have the duty to act as a consultant to the Board of Directors in all affairs of the corporation. The Immediate Past President may from time to time be assigned additional duties by the President or Board of Directors and will act as Law Day Committee Chair and serve on the board of the Legal Aid Society of the Martin County Bar Association.

Executive Director

The Executive Director is currently filled by an Independent Contractor. In addition to specific duties outlined below, this position serves as an advisor to the Board to impart institutional knowledge and share awareness of procedures, ongoing projects, and developments based on previous service.

Specific duties include:

- Preparing Board and General Meeting agendas & meeting presentation materials for President's approval;
- Coordinating all aspects of the general meetings including but not limited to: sending notices, collecting RSVP's, badge preparation, menu and venue coordination, speaker follow-up for presentation needs & requirements, speaker gifts, agendas, presentation materials, sign-in sheets, display of signage, event/other approved materials;
- Coordinating all menu and venue requirements of Board meetings and special events;
- Oversee hospitality and registration at MCBA meetings and events;
- Submit Speaker CLE's applications to the Florida Bar and prepare CLE certificates for meetings;
- Review and process all membership applications;
- Maintain all Active and Associate membership applications in a database;
- Respond to all inquiries regarding membership;
- Conduct new member orientation - distribute new member information packets and materials;

- Chair the membership committee;
- Conduct membership renewal process (login to database, add to website, add to Practice Area Referral database, update Bilingual Attorney list, update Committee interest list and forward checks to Treasurer/Bookkeeper);
- Website management - update and edit content as needed / coordinate new content with IT;
- Email monitoring and follow-up daily;
- Keep voice-mail message on the voice-mail line;
- SideBar Newsletter (monthly excluding July and possibly June): Send reminders to Board, Committee Chairs, advertisers for monthly content, create design & editing with VP and coordinate final copy with IT then process mailing and emailing in a timely manner;
- SideBar Advertising: ensure that advertisers are paid-up in full for ads, maintain a billing process for contracts and renewals;
- Voice-mail: check MCBA voice-mail line daily (business days) and follow-up as needed;
- Forward Florida Bar Daily News Summary to interested Board members as they are sent to MCBA via email;
- Committee support as needed;
- Face Book Directory: Manage all aspects from notices to members, editing and final production coordination (publication dates at the discretion of the Board);
- Sponsor recruitment as needed;
- Oversee MCBA Investiture participation;
- Maintain annual calendar (posted on website and updated monthly);
- Secure and confirm venues for MCBA meetings, Board meetings, seminars, and special events or delegate and oversee this responsibility;
- Process scholarship guidelines and submitted applications;
- Communicate AV & equipment needs to facility prior to meeting;
- Create member surveys as needed;
- Send press releases as needed;
- Develop promotional materials needed to support ongoing MCBA business and events;
- Perform other duties as requested and/or delegated by the President.

Information Technology Director (IT)

The IT Director is currently filled by an Independent Contractor (Kevin Mulligan at Spiral Media). Specific duties include:

- Act as web administrator assigning usernames, passwords and permissions/roles;
- Stay alert to changes in website's procedures as applicable and alert Board accordingly;
- Modify links for members to helpful pages and procedures to follow to improve their website experience when they are unable to locate such information on their own;
- Facilitate and coordinate all MCBA website activity with Direction from the Executive Director.
- Work with a designated Board liaison for website, electronic communications, and newsletter updates as applicable;
- Maintain vision, general direction and management of website, newsletter, and electronic communications, with Board approval. Assist committee chairs to plan and manage improvements or major alterations;
- Supervise and support committee chairpersons, ensuring functional maintenance of information on website, newsletter, and electronic communications;
- Perform other duties as requested and/or delegated by the President.
- Display sufficient knowledge of the Internet, websites, and allied computer and networking-related functions & issues and suggest modifications as needed to Board.

Website, Social Media & Electronic Communications:

- Policies and Procedures will be updated on the MCBA website as needed. To date, the following are posted: ADA, Emergency Contact, Social Media Policy and Investitures.
- It is the responsibility of the Board to examine website and newsletter, when applicable, to identify necessary alterations to improve consistency, functionality, maintenance and alignment with new Association directives/interests/activities;
- If complete or major revision of entire website is planned, coordinate website design, content, maintenance, etc. with IT Director, Executive Director and Board to ensure website shall conform to Florida Bar requirements and MCBA Mission.
- Develop guidelines and specifications for submission of improvement requests, forms, information, etc. to website;
- Proposed links, additions to content, and enhancements of the website to the Board of Directors. Work closely with Board to discuss, review, and gain approval for appearance and content alterations of website pages;
- Tasks may change incrementally or dramatically as website development, expansion, and interaction with membership and public grows and changes.
- Monthly Board meeting minutes, ByLaws, Handbooks and other relevant documents needed for reference of the Board are posted and updated regularly on the “Board Only” section of the website.

Committees

All MCBA Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the President upon request and expression of an intent of such member to serve. Terms of service will be one year then reviewed for a second year (or more at the discretion of the Board). Committee members are updated annually based on the membership application for categories of interest. Chairs shall submit to the President for approval a proposed course of action and scope of work to be done by the committee, including but not limited to a proposed budget. The final powers, duties, functions and scope of each committee shall be as approved by the Board of Directors. Budgets will be approved by the Board of Directors and the following outlines the Committee responsibilities:

- Annually Committee Budgets are provided at the August meeting run by VP;
- Should Chairs want to submit a Request For Additional Funds; submit details and cost requirements in writing to the Treasurer for Board review before October 1st;
- Chairs must get sponsors for events if they go over your budget, otherwise Committee members will need to reimburse MCBA;
- No MCBA member or Committee Chair is authorized to enter a contract on behalf of the MCBA under any circumstances;
- Procedure is as follows: Pay it yourself, then you get reimbursed if there is \$ remaining in your budget. MCBA will refuse all bills sent to it unless pre-approved by Board or \$ to cover is in budget.
- Reimbursement Form must accompany all reimbursement requests, an electronic copy is emailed to each Chair in August annually;
- Reimbursement checks are cut only once per month;
- Check contact info/photo and committee information on the website under Committees – The website is updated on the 1st of every month by the Executive Director Website is: www.martincountybar.org

- List of members who are interested in your committee, with email and tel #, will be sent to Chairs by Executive Director after the summer registration is completed by email. **Note, the list is to be used for MCBA committee information only** and will be revised as new members join.
- *SideBar* Newsletter articles are due to Executive Director on or before the 1th of each month prior to the publication via email: martincountybarassociation@msn.com
- Contact Executive Director if CLE credits for committee meetings are warranted. NOTE: 45 day lead-time needed or if late, the Florida Bar charges \$75 which comes out of your Committee budget. There is no guarantee that the CLE will be approved.
- Committee Chair positions are a one year term (2 year maximum unless no replacement can be found). As the year progresses, Chairs are to consider and recommend successor.
- The bar year is from July 1st to June 30th. All reimbursements must be submitted for payment by June 15th. Unused funds will not be carried over to the next bar year.

Standing committees shall include the membership committee and other such committees as deemed appropriate by the President or the membership. It shall be the duty of the VP and membership committee to investigate, consider, and submit recommendations upon all applications for membership in the corporation. Past Committees and associated groups (noted at end of list under dotted line):

ADR	Foreclosure	Professionalism	YLD
Admiralty	Golf Tournament	Scholarship	-----
Appellate	Immigration	SideBar	Other Associated Groups:
Bankruptcy	Judicial Relations	Softball	Inn of Court
Canoe	Justice Teaching	Small & Solo Practice	Real Property
Constitution Week	Law Day	Social Committee	FAWL
Criminal Law	Law Library	Social Media	Lady Lawyers
Employment & Labor	Pro Bono	Tennis	Paralegal
Family Law	Probate Trust Elder Law	Trial Litigation	

Legal Actions:

MCBA members asked to testify and/or the subject of any legal action must seek legal counsel; MCBA provides no legal, medical or financial guidelines.

Florida Bar Voluntary Bar Associations:

There are more than 200 voluntary bars located in Florida. Each voluntary bar association in the state should have a record on file with the Public Information and Bar Services Department of The Florida Bar. The information in the file includes:

- All bar officers with their office addresses, telephone & fax numbers and e-mail addresses;
- The month the bar installs new officers;
- The number of members in the bar;
- The name of the bar's newsletter, publication date and publication deadline;
- Meeting dates and locations;
- The Florida judicial circuit;
- The area served by the voluntary bar, i.e., statewide, circuit-wide, county-wide, city-wide, or legal specialty;
- Membership dues;
- A list of programs/committees in which the bar is involved

Updates are made to the record during the month new officers are installed by the Executive Director. The president-elect and/or executive director is sent a copy of the information on file to update along with a letter of explanation. It is in the best interest of the bar association to keep the file information updated. E-mail and/or fax of updates is preferred. You can also call the Public Information and Bar Services Department to provide any changes, (800)342-0860, ext. 5648. Visit the Voluntary Bar Center on The Florida Bar web site, <http://www.floridabar.org/voluntarybars> for a listing of bar association officers and staff.

The Florida Bar Voluntary Bar Leaders Handbook is posted on the MCBA website (Board Only Page) and should be reviewed by each new Board member upon joining the Board.