

**Florida Bar COVID-19 Task Force**

**Bar Responses**

**A. Accomplished**

1. The [CLER](#) and [BSCR](#) deadlines for February – November 2020 were extended to December 31, 2020.
2. Payment extensions: Members who need to extend the time for paying annual fees due to undue hardship may elect to pay the mandatory portion of their fees by installments. They check the "pay by installments" box on the statement, which automatically splits the mandatory portion of the fees into three payments. Active members would pay \$88.33, \$88.33 and \$88.34 respectively. The election and the first installment must be made by August 15. After the election has been made, The Florida Bar will send invoices for the other two installments in October and again in January. Paying by installments extends the deadline until February 1, 2021.
3. LegalFuel and various Bar sections have provided complimentary CLE programs related to practice during and post-COVID, teleworking/remote working, mental health and wellness associated with the crisis. The total number of these programs put on by sections and LegalFuel is unknown inasmuch as not all were recorded and made available after the live event. There are currently 10 section-produced courses on the Bar's COVID resources webpage. There have been approximately a dozen [LegalFuel-produced webinars or LegalFuel webinars](#) coordinated with approved member benefits providers which give COVID education and resources.
4. Member Benefits: Several member benefits providers offered additional discounts, additional services, or complimentary services during the height of the pandemic and several of those programs are still running with some of the additional promotions running through the end of the year: The number of these has varied since mid-March when the COVID crisis first emerged. Some member benefits providers offered short-term additional discounts or incentives related to COVID, while others waived fees or provided complimentary subscriptions for a defined period of time. At one time, we had approximately 15 (one fourth of the member benefits providers) offering additional discounts or some other type of incentives to Florida Bar members. Some of the [discounts or incentives](#) are still active. The Florida Bar Board of Governors recently voted to add additional financial services member benefits to the Member Benefits Program. The new consumer loan, credit card, and SBA loan product member benefits should become available before the end of January 2021.
5. Member benefits providers have been asked to extend concessions and promotions beyond the end of the year.

6. The Florida Free Legal Answers online pro bono platform: The number of volunteers and questions from the public have significantly increased over the past several months. From February 2020 through November 2020, the number of participating attorneys increased from 857 to 918. The number of questions asked from February 2020 through November 30<sup>th</sup> is 4,191 of which 4,000 questions have been answered for an answer rate of 95%.
7. First cycle (March) Board certification examinations were postponed to September 2020 and an online/virtual option has been added for those who had requested to take the exam via laptop.
8. Recertification application deadlines were extended from May to November 2020.
9. [LegalFuel](#) will continue to produce articles, podcasts, and webinars related to law firm and law office operations during and post-COVID.
10. Transitioned of certification grade review events from in-person to virtual.
11. Emailed reminder to members who haven't yet paid fees about payment options (*see* A.2. above).
12. Development of methods for our members to communicate with us about the challenges they are facing due to COVID-19. The virtual town halls and the newly redesigned Bar COVID webpage were the first of these methods.
13. Links on our new Bar COVID-19 webpage to websites of the Florida Supreme Court, its workgroup, and each of the 20 judicial circuits, as well as to helpful COVID-related websites of constituent groups of The Florida Bar and other professional groups such as the ABA, ABOTA and others.
14. Communication to our members that the Bar's [Florida Lawyers Helpline](#) offers assistance with child care, elder care and financial issues. The Board of Governors recently approved extending the services of the Florida Lawyers Helpline to Florida Registered Paralegals (FRPs) beginning in January 2021.
15. Resources have been added to the COVID-19 page for members to locate Home Services in their areas.
16. The COVID-19 page now has a section with Medical Information that includes the latest studies from the CDC and other reputable scientific sources on the coronavirus.