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## **Bar Leaders Shine a Light on the Pandemic's Impact on Mental Health**

### **Bar Leaders Share Updates on Lawyer Well-Being During COVID-19**

A persistent stigma against getting help. Work that focuses on one problem after another and strong incentives to continue that work without a break. Isolation exacerbated by the pandemic. Those are just a few of the factors cited by bar leaders across the country who spoke with [Daily Business Review](#) about trends they're seeing in their legal communities in terms of mental illness, stress, addiction, and even suicide. Included are leaders from the Connecticut Bar Association, The Florida Bar, the New York State Bar Association, and the State Bar of Texas. What did they share about what they've been seeing, and the steps lawyers can take to feel better?

### **New York State Works to Implement Proposed Legal Service by Social Workers, Expanded 'Navigators' Program**

At the end of 2020, the New York state courts' Working Group on Regulatory Innovation unanimously recommended that the state create a program to train and license social workers to provide limited legal service, including court representation and advocacy. The panel (which advised holding off on alternative business models, including nonlawyer ownership), also recommended expanding the Court Navigator Program, which permits nonlawyers to provide some services to pro se litigants. Now, New York Chief Judge Janet DiFiore has tasked a judge who served on the working group to oversee implementation of the social worker and navigator proposals. [ABA Journal](#) talks with working group members, social workers, and others about what the next steps might be.

### **Think Outside the Glowing Box: How to Add Life to Your On-Screen Presentations**

Now that your presentations take place on a screen rather than in person, do they feel a little, well, flat? You're not alone, writes Anett Grant, an expert on public speaking and executive presence. The pandemic forced many of us to adapt to Zoom and other such technologies very quickly, she explains at [Fast Company](#), and it's taken some time to figure out this new medium. While moviemakers can overcome the 2D format through clever use of a soundtrack, you don't have that tool at your disposal. But, Grant says, there are some things you can do to add rhythm to your voice and ensure that your physical gestures help you make the most of your electronic space.

### **Why Did Bar Exam Takers in 3 States Do Worse Online than in Person?**

Most jurisdictions saw their bar pass rates increase in 2020, but in three states that offered both remote and in-person exams—Texas, Idaho, and Arizona—the online test-takers didn't do as well. The biggest discrepancy was in Idaho, where the 120 people who took the in-person exam had a pass rate of 76.7%, compared with just 32.1% for the 28 who took the remote exam. Explanations vary among law professors, test prep executives and others. For example, were online exams graded differently? Did remote test takers struggle with scrolling back and forth? Or was it simply that stronger students opted for the in-person

exam? [ABA Journal](#) takes a closer look?and sheds light on what this means for the National Conference of Bar Examiners' upcoming move to online exams.



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