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State Bar of California Audit Takes a Critical Look at the State's Discipline System

Audit Ordered by Legislature Finds State Bar of California Failed to Protect Public from Lawyer Misconduct

An audit of the State Bar of California, ordered last year by the state Legislature after an investigative report revealed how the bar handled complaints against attorney Tom Girardi over the course of four decades, was released last week. The public examination of the bar's attorney discipline system concluded that the bar failed to properly investigate some attorneys, relied on confidential warning letters and other nonpublic methods that did not adequately deter misconduct, and has not dealt with conflicts of interest between its regulatory staff and the attorneys being regulated. The chair of the bar's board of trustees says fully implementing the auditor's recommendations would require about 30 new employees and \$1 million in one-time funds. The [Los Angeles Times](#) has more details about the Girardi scandal, the audit's findings, and reactions from bar leaders and others.

Mean Score on February 2022 Multistate Bar Exam Drops Back to Same Level as in 2020

After a bump last year, the national mean scaled score on the February 2022 Multistate Bar Exam went back down to the same all-time low as in 2020—132.6, compared with 134 in 2021. A spokesperson from the National Conference of Bar Examiners cautions against reading too much into this decline: The 2022 and 2020 mean scores aren't much lower than in 2018, she notes, and the February MBE typically attracts repeat test takers, who tend not to perform as well as the first-time test takers who gravitate toward the July MBE. Unlike the previous three times the MBE was offered, in February 2022, there was no remote option. Could this have contributed to the drop in the mean scaled score? Learn more at [Above the Law](#).

New Virtual Platform Hopes to Offer Streamlined Experience for Pro Bono Administrators, Lawyers, and Clients

At a physical pro bono clinic, clients hand over their documents and are then assisted in a fairly seamless manner. A new product called Virtual Law Clinic aims to bring that same ease to an online platform, helping law firms and legal organizations manage their pro bono matters, assign matters to lawyers, monitor case statuses, document outcomes, and offer training materials and forms. Created by legal tech design and development company Theory and Principle, Virtual Law Clinic will be sold on a subscription basis, with pricing dependent on the type and size of the organization. At his [LawSites blog](#), Bob Ambrogi explains how three different interfaces will help Virtual Law Clinic serve pro bono administrators and coordinators, lawyers, and clients.

Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers Urges Major Revision to ABA Model Rule on Multijurisdictional Practice

In a letter this week to ABA President Reginald Turner, the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers urged the ABA to reconsider what it called the "anachronistic"

current version of Model Rule 5.5 and eliminate the requirement that lawyers practice only in states in which they are admitted. "Our proposal advocates that a lawyer admitted in any United States jurisdiction should be able to practice law and represent willing clients without regard to the geographic location of the lawyer or the client, without regard to the forum where the services are to be provided, and without regard to which jurisdiction's rules apply at a given moment in time," APRL President Brian Faughman wrote. [LawSites](#) shares further information about the proposal as well as links to the letter and to APRL's version of Model Rule 5.5.



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