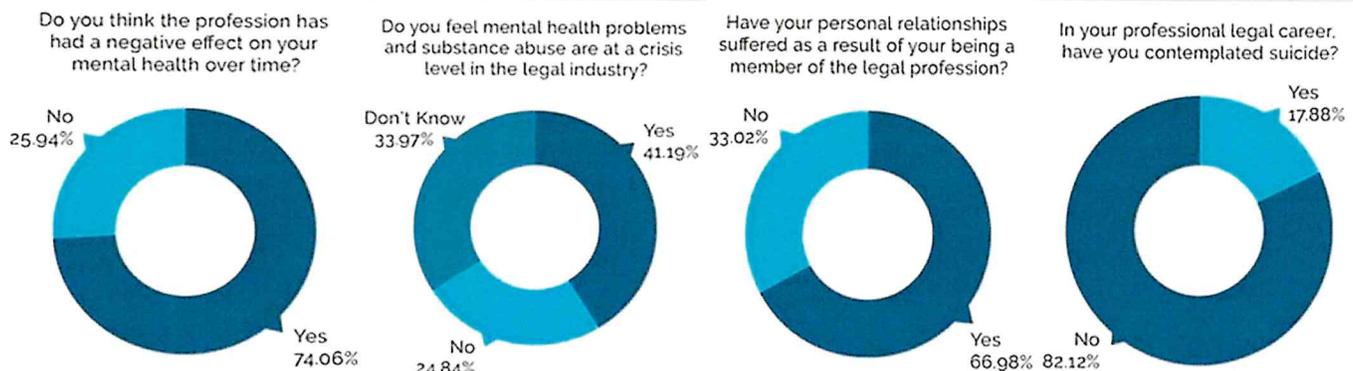


Lawyers & Depression

Source: ALM Survey on Mental Health and Substance Abuse (2018)

- Depression among law students is 8-9% prior to matriculation, 27% after one semester, 34% after 2 semesters, and 40% after 3 years.
- Stress among law students is 96%, compared to 70% in med students and 43% in graduate students.
- Entering law school, law students have a psychological profile similar to that of the general public. After law school, 20-40% have a psychological dysfunction.
- Psychological distress, dissatisfaction and substance abuse that begin in law school follow many graduates into practice.
- Only half of lawyers are very satisfied or satisfied with their work.
- Lawyers are the most frequently depressed occupational group in the US.
- Lawyers are 3.6 times more likely to suffer from depression than non-lawyers.
- Depression and anxiety is cited by 26% of all lawyers who seek counseling.
- Lawyers rank 5th in incidence of suicide by occupation.



Why the Legal Industry Is Different

- Asked what about their job negatively impacts their mental well-being, respondents identified a number of factors. Most popular among those factors, capturing a majority of respondents, were: the feeling of always being on call and unable to disconnect; billable hour pressures; lack of sleep; and client demands.
- Only 36% of respondents said they use all of their vacation time. The others, asked why they do not, most commonly answered that they “can’t disconnect” and that “client demands” keep them from doing so, or that they “don’t want to have work pile up.”
- Even when they do take vacation, 72.5% said they cannot disconnect from work



LAWYER HELPING LAWYER NETWORK

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9/20

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Please contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181 for information regarding additional lawyers who participate in the Lawyer Helping Lawyer Network.

OBJECTIVES:

To provide assistance to lawyers, judges, legal staff, law students and professors troubled by alcoholism, other forms of chemical dependency, stress, depression, or mental health problems. The committee also offers assistance to family members.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Lawyers Helping Lawyers is independent from any disciplinary organization and does not police, report, discipline or otherwise threaten the career of an attorney or judge. By order of the Montana Supreme Court (Order No. 85-96), the names of persons seeking assistance under this program shall be confidential.

CALENDAR:

Periodic reports to the Board of Trustees. To call for assistance or to volunteer to help, dial (406) 660-1181.

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Lawyer Assistance (<https://www.montanabar.org/page/LAP#>)

Purpose

The Montana Lawyer Assistance Program exists to protect the interests of clients and the general public from harm caused by impaired lawyers or judges, by confidentially assisting impaired members of the profession to begin and continue recovery, and educating the bench, the bar, and the public to the causes of, and remedies for, impairments that effect members of the legal profession.

ABA CoLAP Anti-Stigma Campaign



Stigma, shame, and fear. These obstacles frequently play a major role in an individual's decision not to seek help when suffering from mental health and substance use disorders. Too often, lawyers, judges, and law students find themselves wrestling privately with frustration and despair as an addiction or mental health problem dominates their life and threatens their career.

Resources for Montana Attorneys

- **Helpline** - Confidential, 24-hours a day, every day - (406) 660-1181
- **Lawyers Helping Lawyers Network**
- **Guidance and Referral** - For the impaired member of the legal community or their friend, associate, spouse, or other family member. We provide information on alcohol and drug or mental health treatment programs, interventions, and family or friend support, suggestions for appropriate treatment options, as well as general education on mental health and chemical dependency issues for the legal community. This program is designed to provide help and education to lawyers, judges, paralegals, law students and faculty, and their families.
- **Substance Abuse/Mental Illness (SAMI) CLE** - to hold a program for local bar associations and others in the legal community, please contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.

Program Support Groups

- **Billings:** Third Thursday at noon in the conference room of the GW Building, intersection of Third Avenue North and North Broadway. For more information, contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.
- **Great Falls:** First Friday of each month, conference room at 104 4th St N #200. Meeting begins at noon. For more information, contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.
- **Helena:** Last Wednesday of each month in the Aspen Court Building, 33 S. Last Chance Gulch, in the upstairs board room. Social gathering is at noon, followed by the meeting at 12:15 p.m. For more information, contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.
- **Kalispell:** Meeting temporarily suspended. For more information, contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.
- **Missoula:** First Wednesday of every month at -- p.m., Pope Room at the University of Montana School of Law. For more information contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.

Where to Volunteer

Become a part of the Montana Lawyer Assistance Program's statewide network. All network members will attend general education workshops. To join the network, contact Mike Larson at (406) 660-1181.

Confidentiality

The Montana Lawyer Assistance Program is independent from any disciplinary organization and does not police, report, discipline, or otherwise threaten the career of an attorney or judge. By order of the Montana Supreme Court (Order No. 85-96), the names of all persons seeking assistance under this program shall remain confidential.

For Further Information

Hotline Counselor - Mike Larson (406) 660-1181

Links

- The Path to Lawyer Well Being (<https://lawyerwellbeing.net/>)
- National Lawyers Assistance Program (https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/)
- Alcoholics Anonymous (<https://aa.org>)
- Lawyers with Depression (<http://www.lawyerswithdepression.com/>)
- The Ranch Treatment Program (<https://www.recoveryranch.com/>)
- Bradford Treatment Program (<https://bradfordhealth.com/>)

<https://www.montanabar.org/page/LAP#>