Current Judicial Regulation of the State Bar Provides Public and Attorney Services.

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2-21-05
SB474

The State Bar works with eighteen committees, thirteen sections and a number of the Supreme Court's Commissions, Boards and Task Forces to provide services to its members and to the public. A brief description of some of the programs follows:

- Relying primarily upon money generated by the Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program, the Montana Justice Foundation provides much needed financial support for the Montana Legal Services Association and other programs that endeavor to make justice accessible to all Montanans.

- The website, www.montanabar.org contains resources, materials and links useful to lawyers and the public. A second website, www.montanalawhelp.org, contains information to assist self-represented litigants.

- Lawyers Helping Lawyers provides assistance to lawyers and judges troubled by alcoholism, other forms of chemical dependency, mental illness and depression.

- The Lawyer's Fund for Client Protection exists to compensate victims of lawyer misconduct. Lawyers contribute to create these funds. There is no cost to the taxpayer. Montana's Lawyer Protection Fund has, in the past four years, refunded victims of disbarred lawyers' misconduct more than $300,000.

- The fee arbitration program resolves fee disputes between attorneys and their clients.

- The Supreme Court's Character and Fitness Commission determines whether applicants for admission possess the requisite attributes to practice law in the state. It serves as the profession's gatekeeper.

- The Court's Office of Disciplinary Counsel investigates complaints alleging professional misconduct and Commission on Practice holds hearings and recommends any appropriate discipline. The Court itself retains ultimate authority to impose discipline on Bar members.

- The Court's Commission on Unauthorized Practice protects the public against those who purport to provide legal services but have not satisfied requirements to practice law in the State. It also addresses issues associated with pro se litigation.

- The CLE Board and CLE Institute provide seminars to improve the skills and knowledge of attorneys in different areas of the law while assuring the public that Montana attorneys continue their legal education throughout the active practice of law.

- The Lawyer Referral Service provides 4000 attorney referrals to the public each year.

- The Ethics Committee provides advisory ethics opinions to lawyers and judges.

- The Dispute Resolution Committee explores means of solving disputes that are cheaper, faster and more user-friendly than litigation.

This list of Bar services and activities is not complete.