

State Bar of Michigan | 2015-2016 SECTION ANNUAL REPORT

Article VIII §1, Bylaws of the State Bar of Michigan

Every Section and State Bar entity so directed by the Board of Commissioners or Representative Assembly shall annually make a written report containing a summary of its activities during the association year which shall be submitted to the Secretary on or before May 31. Annual reports may not exceed five 8 1/2" x 11" pages unless a waiver of this limitation is approved by the Executive Director.

Family Law Section

Chair

P35075 Carol F. Breitmeyer
Breitmeyer Cushman PLLC
40900 Woodward Ave
Bloomfield Hills MI 48304-5115
Phone: (313) 962-4600
Fax: (313) 962-3600
e-mail: breitmeyer@bcfamlaw.com

Chair-Elect

P25664 Hon. Richard B. Halloran, Detroit

Recording Secretary

P38364 Elizabeth K. Bransdorfer, Grand Rapids

Corresponding Secretary

P63873 Robert Charles Treat, Jr., Taylor

Treasurer

P30891 Kent L. Weichmann, Detroit

Council Member

Term Ending: 2016

P38364 Elizabeth K. Bransdorfer, Grand Rapids
P56102 J. Matthew Catchick, Jr., Southfield
P47550 Sahera G. Housey, Pontiac
P73367 Peter Michael Kulas, Grand Rapids
P48027 Anthea E. Papista, Detroit
P61498 Gail M. Towne, Kalamazoo

Term Ending: 2017

P35075 Carol F. Breitmeyer, Bloomfield Hills
P25664 Hon. Richard B. Halloran, Detroit
P45391 Mathew Kobliska, Farmington Hills
P63901 Vanessa Marie Moss-Wilson, Southfield
P45407 Steven D. Reinheimer, Bloomfield Hills
P37160 Rebecca E. Shiemke, Ann Arbor
P52044 Amy M. Spilman, Birmingham

Term Ending: 2018

P32475 Daniel B. Bates, Bloomfield Hills
P61706 James W. Chryssikos, Troy
P69624 Christopher J. Harrington, Novi
P56418 Kristen L. Robinson, Troy
P63873 Robert Charles Treat, Jr., Taylor
P29422 Randall L. Velzen, Grand Rapids
P55309 Tina M. Yost, Battle Creek

Commissioner Liaison

P41321 Victoria A. Radke, Escanaba

Ex Officio

P37160

Rebecca E. Shiemke, Ann Arbor

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
SECTION ANNUAL REPORT**

Council Meeting Schedule:

Reset Form

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Council meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Council Meeting		
Annual Meeting (Immediate Post-Election)	10/08/15	Grand Rapids
Regular Meeting	11/13/15	Novi
Regular Meeting	12/05/16	Grand Rapids
Regular Meeting	02/06/16	Lansing
Regular Meeting	03/05/16	Novi
Regular Meeting	04/09/16	Ann Arbor
Regular Meeting	05/07/16	Lansing
Regular Meeting	06/04/16	Ann Arbor
Annual Meeting (Elections - upcoming)	09/22/16	Grand Rapids

General Budget Information: Please refer to p. 49 of the [SBM Final Audited Financial Statement FY 2015](#)

Our budget is in good shape. After Journal changed from the print to digital version we have seen exactly the positive budget change we anticipated. The SBM Monthly Budgets as presented have been approved.

Events and/or Seminars:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding events and/or seminars as an addendum.

Event or Seminar Title	Date	Location
Mid-summer 2016 (upcoming)	July 28-31, 2016	Grand Traverse Resort
Mid-winter (past)	February 2016	Puerto Rico
Mid-winter (upcoming)	February 2017	Dominican Republic

Reset Form

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
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Legislative issues:

See report attached.

Recommendations for next Council:

Continue monitoring of legislative activity. Take initiative in developing gender neutral policy and laws given the constitutional change of last year. Continue to encourage participation by Council members with individual legislators.

Other Information:

Please see attached key committee reports from 2016.

Reports must be submitted before May 31, 2016 to:

Jennifer Williams
Administrative Assistant
306 Townsend Street, Lansing MI 48933
Email: jwilliams@mail.michbar.org
Phone 517-367-6421 Fax: 517-482-6248

Reset Form

e-mail form

**2015-2016 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION**

COMMITTEE Legislative Committee

DATE: May 10, 2016

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Kent Weichmann

CO-CHAIR: Barbara Kelly

◦ **Tel No.** 313.224.6639

Tel No. 734.222.3345

◦ **Email:** weichmannk@att.net

Email: kellyb@ewashtenaw.org

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

◦ Amy Spilman

Dan Bates

◦ Bob Treat

Richard Halloran

◦ Carol Breitmeyer

James Chryssikos

◦ Chris Harrington

Mathew Kobliska

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: Monthly on the Thursday immediately preceding the Council meeting.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : _____

During the 2015-2016 legislative term, the Legislative Committee has reviewed more than 80 bills and recommended that Council take positions on more than 50 bills. Members of the committee have testified before House and Senate committee to advocate for Council's positions.

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: We are up to date on reviews of pending legislation. We

are ready to mobilize opposition if the disguised version of the mandatory equal physical custody bill is introduced.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

We recommended opposition to HB 4141, mandatory equal physical custody, and supported the package of bills for marriage equality.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

Additional Committee members: Randy Velzen, Rebecca Shiemke, Ross Stancati, Sahera Housey, Sandy Glazier, Stephanie Benedict, Tina Yost, and Victoria Radke.

By: Kent Weichmann

Date: May 10, 2016

2014 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION

COMMITTEE Court Rules/Ethics **DATE:** 5/25/2016
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Chris Harrington **CO-CHAIR:** _____
◦ **Tel No.** 248-347-9620 **Tel No.** _____
◦ **Email:** cjh@jjharringtonlaw.com **Email:** _____

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| ◦ <u>Mathew Kobliska</u> | <u>Elizabeth Bransdorfer</u> |
| ◦ <u>Kent Weichmann</u> | <u>Lori Buitewig</u> |
| ◦ <u>Daniel Bates</u> | <u>Amy Spilman</u> |
| ◦ <u>Kristen Robinson</u> | <u>Dick Halloran</u> |
| <u>Bob Treat</u> | <u>Jennifer Johnsen</u> |

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 9/9/2015, 10/6/2015, 11/10/2015, 12/1/2015, 2/2/2016,
3/1/2016, 4/5/2016, 5/3/2016

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : Chairperson testified before
Supreme Court at the 9/16/2016 and 5/18/2016 public administrative hearings
regarding ADM File No. 2014-09 and 2014-27. Both appearances were believed
to have impacted Court's final Order on those issues. Public comment also filed on
ADM 2014-04.

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: Discussion re: MCR 2.102(E) regarding dismissals for
non-service. Council-Approved amendment to MCR 7.215(D) still pending
committee approval.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

By: Christopher J. Harrington
Date: 5/25/2016

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT:

**2014 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION**

COMMITTEE QDRO & Taxation

DATE: 5/11/2016

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Robert Treat

CO-CHAIR: Joseph Cunningham

◦ Tel No. (734) 675-8207

Tel No. (248) 631-8575

◦ Email: bob.treat@qdrexpressllc.com

Email: joecunninghampc@gmail.com

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

◦ Robert Treat

◦ Joseph Cunningham

◦ Nancy Keppelman

◦ Rebecca Shiemke

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 1/26/16

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : Our main action in 2016 was the continuation of the pro bono QDRO initiative. The pace is about the same as it was in 2015, with a projected number of pro bono QDROs around 50. This is administered through the State Bar by Rob Mathis and Jennifer Williams. The committee continues to discuss a possible amendment to the EDRO Act, to eliminate the unusual recoupment policy/problem for State and Municipal pensions.

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: 7/14/16 meeting

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Amend the EDRO Act to eliminate the recoupment problem

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

Solving the Recoupment issue would be a huge accomplishment, and discussion will continue as to how the bill would read, and how best to find support, a sponsor, and a way to turn the bill into law.

By: Robert Treat

Date: 5/11/2016

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT:

The committee will continue to seek ways to make this complicated area of family law more user friendly to parties and their attorneys.

**2014 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION**

COMMITTEE Family Court Forum

DATE: 05/05/2016

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Barbara J. Kelly

CO-CHAIR: N/A

◦ **Tel No.** 734-222-3345

Tel No. _____

◦ **Email:** kellyb@ewashtenaw.org

Email: _____

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

◦ Carlo Martina

Margaret Nichols

◦ Lorne Gold

Elizabeth Sadowski

◦ Ed Gold

Archie Brown

◦ Naomi Woloshin

Linda Hallmark

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: October 21, 2015, November 17, 2015, February 2, 2016.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : The committee puts on an interdisciplinary conference for about 200 people focusing on a single topic in family law. The Forum is designed to foster communication and knowledge sharing across the various professional disciplines involved in family court cases. Approximately 200 judges, therapists, lawyers and mediators meet for this daylong program. This year's conference is June 10, 2016

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: The final conference

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

The Forum is sponsored by the Family Law Section and funded with contributions from the Section, several professional organizations, and various law firms and accounting firms.

By: Barbara J. Kelly

Date: 05/05/2016

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT:

**2014 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION**

COMMITTEE Alternative Dispute Resolution

DATE: _____

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Randall Velzen

CO-CHAIR: Gail Towne

◦ **Tel No.** 616-233-9160

Tel No. 269-381-8844

◦ **Email:** rvelzen@westmichigandivorce.com

Email: gtowne@lennonmiller.com

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

◦ Rebecca Shiemke

Zena Zumeta

◦ Veronica Thronson

Bill Capretne

◦ Lee Hornberger

Mary Lovick

◦ Toni Raheem

Deb Bereiz

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 05-21-2015, 09-17-2015, 10-15-2015,
11-19-2015, 12-10-2015, 12-17-2015, 01-21-2016,
02-18-2016, 03-17-2016, 04-21-2016, 05-19-2016

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : See attached.

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: Domestic violence sub-committee working with SCAO and
scheduling listening sessions throughout the state. Working on automatic
mediation statute and continuing work regarding the attached.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

See attached.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

See attached.

By: _____

Date: _____

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT:

Attachment to the Family Law Section Annual Report

1. Significant Committee Actions/Accomplishments

- **Domestic Violence and ADR** The committee presented on the domestic violence screening protocol at the annual state bar meeting. Because of the continued feedback from the bar, that the DV screening is not actively or accurately being used, this has been a continuing project for our committee. The committee has continued to present open table discussions throughout the state, the efforts to continue in the fall. The goal is to educate and ensure that this is a standard practice throughout the state, in all counties, in mediation. Now, with the recent enactment of PA 93, these endeavors to ensure that the DV screening is utilized is of even greater importance. The enactment of PA 93 has also given us more opportunity to spread the word and continue our efforts of public education regarding the screening protocol. This continues to be an ongoing project for the committee.
- **Mandatory (Automatic) Mediation** The ADR Section of the Michigan State Bar has drafted a statute proposing mandatory mediation in various practice areas, including domestic relations. This statute has been reviewed by the ADR Committee of the FLS and they are working with the ADR Section on this endeavor with input from the Domestic Violence Committee of the Family Law Section.
- **Friend of the Court ADR, Parent Coordination Act Training, Collaborative Court Rules, Family Law Case Captions**—The ADR Committee continues to be involved, monitoring these committees, with several members working on the various task forces or committees as described herein with input of the ADR members.

**2014 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION**

COMMITTEE Mid-Summer Seminar

DATE: 05-12-2016

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Elizabeth Bransdorfer

CO-CHAIR: Traci Rink

◦ **Tel No.** 616-632-8029

Tel No. 248-858-1840

◦ **Email:** ebransdorfer@mikameyers.com

Email: rinkt@oakgov.com

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

◦ Elizabeth Bransdorfer

◦ Traci Rink

◦ _____

◦ _____

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: phone / email only

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : Plan and execute Family

Law Section Mid-Summer Conference held (typically) in July each year.

Conference includes top-notch presentations by attorneys, Judges and other professionals.

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: 2016 Mid-Summer Conference will be the weekend of

July 28 - July 31st.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continue to make this a must-attend yearly event for

practitioners and increase participation by younger and geographically-diverse

Michigan family law attorneys while generating a profit.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

We are pleased to report that the 2015 Mid-Summer Conference made a net profit (after all expenses) of \$3,683.00. The highest in recent memory -- or perhaps ever!

By: _____

Date: _____

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT:

2016

2016 ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT
FAMILY LAW SECTION

COMMITTEE JOURNAL

DATE: May 27, 2016

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Anthea E. Papista

CO-CHAIR:

o Tel No. (313) 965-1688

Tel No.

o Email: aep@papistalaw.com

Email:

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE:

o Amy M. Spilman

Ryan M. O'Neil

o Daniel B. Bates

Shelley R. Spivack

o Sahera G. Housey

Lisa M. Damphousse

o James W. Chryssikos

DATES of COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 4/25/16 - Tel Conference Meeting & Several Monthly Email Communications over the year between committee members on issues relating to the monthly Journals.

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE ACTIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS : 1.) Streamlined approach to the Family Law Journal's editorial review and publication process; 2.) Two Special Editions published for the 2015-2016 season; 3.) greater variety of authors and topics; 4.) Review & implementation of methods to enhance e-Journal visibility, readership, and advertisement; and, 5.) Consideration for two (2) Special Editions for next year: Technology Issue and Transgender Issue.

PENDING COMMITTEE MATTERS: 1.) Improved turn-around time for publication; 2.) Better editorial communication in order to meet deadlines and to ensure quality; 3.) Enhance visibility and access issues

SIGNIFICANT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Re-publish Journal on Listserve with Council "commentary" for each monthly issue; Implementation of strategies to enhance Journal access and visibility

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (USE 2ND PAGE IF NECESSARY):

Although the publication process has improved greatly through editorial review, discussion and commendatory, the committee remains concerned about the the Journal's impact as an electronic document. Steps have been taken to publicize the Journal's monthly publication by means of a second "blast"

By: Anthea E. Papista

Date: May 27, 2016

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT:

through our Listserv by the editors who participated in the editorial process for that particular Journal. These editors would then "comment" on certain articles and try to spark chatter within the

Listserv about the articles contained in that month's Journal issue. Additional effort to get the "word out" would include

disseminating flyers to a variety of family law events, informing family law audience best how to access Journal & all that Journal has to offer,

include Journal information at our Section's tables at various ICLE & State Bar events, and to work with the Advertisement Committee to ensure a healthy advertisement budget.

We continue to strive to ensure quality submissions and enlisting interesting authors throughout the State of Michigan to write for our Section's Journal.