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North Carolina Bar Association
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Transitioning Lawyers Commission

For help or information, call **1.800.662.7407**
and ask for TLC.

Request a consult online
tinyurl.com/TLCNCBA

**NORTH CAROLINA
BAR ASSOCIATION**
SEEKING LIBERTY & JUSTICE

TLC

Transitioning Lawyers Commission

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The Transitioning Lawyers Commission presents a multidisciplinary approach to planning and preparing for retirement, a period of transition which we all hope to face. The TLC is:

- A state bar-designated lawyer assistance program
- Completely confidential
- Part of the North Carolina Bar Association, a voluntary organization with no regulatory authority

What is the Transitioning Lawyers Commission (TLC)?

We are members of the North Carolina Bar Association (NCBA) who want to work with lawyers in deciding on the best way to slow down and ultimately retire with dignity and grace. A project originated by the Senior Lawyers Division, our purpose is to provide support to lawyers as they wind down their active career in the law.

What do we mean by "Transitioning"?

Life is filled with transitions, all of which signify the end of one phase of life and the beginning of another. Society has given some transitions a more positive connotation than others. TLC recognizes that the word "retirement" is too often viewed as a dead end. Retirement is actually just another transitional phase in life. Those who "retire" from the practice of law can still find activities which use their knowledge and skills to benefit society, but which impose less pressure in terms of deadlines and stress. And, maybe most important, many lawyers find ways to slow and wind down a practice as opposed to stopping cold turkey. TLC provides educational support as well as the support of other lawyers in working through the transitional process.

What is "Transitional Support"?

TLC has been designated as a lawyer assistance program (LAP) by the North Carolina State Bar. Therefore, when a referral is made to TLC requesting transitional support for a lawyer evidencing cognitive impairment or similar issues impacting their ability to practice law, a team leader (a trained volunteer, experienced lawyer) is designated to work with the lawyer, family and colleagues to help identify the underlying issues leading to the referral. The team leader then works with the lawyer to determine the best next step for the lawyer, the public and the profession.

What is "Transitional Support"? (continued)

The LAP designation provides an exemption to the team leader from the duty to report ethical violations to the State Bar. This designation permits individuals, including the attorney, to speak freely with the team leader so that an accurate understanding of the challenges being seen can be formulated.

Working with the neuropsychologists at Behavioral Health & Psychiatry, PA (HRC), along with help from the referral source, family and colleagues, the team leader will formulate a strategy to support the attorney. Support will include access to cognitive testing, an opportunity for consultation with a neuropsychologist and, if desired, a referral for a full cognitive assessment.

Our goal is to help lawyers explore their options. Whether they want to transition out of practice and don't know how to, or need to transition because of possible cognitive impairment, TLC stands ready to help protect their law firms and their reputations.

Why the NCBA?

This program is available to all lawyers and judges in North Carolina. The Senior Lawyers Division began this program and TLC is building on its work. As members of a voluntary organization, the TLC team leaders approach the process extending the right hand of friendship and the respect of a colleague in working to address concerns that a lawyer who has had a distinguished career might be hanging on longer than is prudent. The NCBA has no regulatory authority. Our goal and purpose is to protect the public, protect the lawyer, and make every effort to encourage a graceful, professional transition from the practice of law to life's next phase.

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