



4 Ways to Make the Most of Your Bar Association Membership

Are you taking advantage of all the opportunities your local bar association membership provides? Whether you live in a state with a unified (mandatory) or voluntary bar association, your bar provides a wealth of opportunities for new and established attorneys alike. Make the most of your membership by looking into the following:

1. Networking opportunities within your area(s) of practice.

In addition to the general networking opportunities, most associations also have divisions or sections that focus on specific areas of law. These sections gather together interested members to exchange ideas and closely examine regulations and trends in their chosen areas. Another advantage of joining a section is that you will meet attorneys with a wide range of experience, so it provides excellent mentoring opportunities with those passionate about the same area of law.

2. Educational tools.

Most bar associations offer free or discounted CLEs to members. Be sure you check your association's site, as many provide webinars or recorded sessions that can be watched on-demand. Also look into the other online resources your bar provides. Many offer free legal research tools, case law updates and databases and legal form templates. These resources can save you from having to go elsewhere to search for information or create documents from scratch. You can also attend workshops or presentations on technological advancements, financial solutions for running a business and industry insights.

3. Marketing tips.

Associations want to see their members flourish in their practices and firms. They provide their members with approved resources that will help them build and continue to grow successful businesses. New attorneys can use online career centers to post résumés and find jobs. Some bar associations also offer "find-an-attorney" services to potential clients that will help you advertise your growing practice. Also consider ways to use your membership as a marketing opportunity. Take full advantage of peer relationships and opportunities to exchange referrals with one another as a way to grow your business and help others. Many associations have publications that publish articles written by members. Getting published is a great way to establish yourself as an authority in certain areas of law and increase your visibility.



4. Member discounts.

Bar associations work with companies to provide discounted services for their members on things like health insurance, malpractice insurance, office supplies and postal services. The American Bar Association even offers discounts on hotels, rental cars and clothing stores. Many members recoup their membership dues and then some by taking advantage of these deals. Contact your local bar association or visit the association's website to learn more about member discounts available to you.

If you are a new attorney, joining a bar association will help you make connections and gain the experience you need to establish a successful practice. For existing attorneys, bar associations provide you with new ways to grow your business. Visit the [American Bar Association website](#) to learn more about your state and local associations.



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About the Author

Jean Clauson is the Network Development Manager at ARAG. Jean works to build awareness of ARAG in the legal industry and develop the ARAG Attorney Network. Jean also serves as President of Group Legal Services Association (GLSA).



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