

LIV MENTORING PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Overview

The Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) recognises the importance of supporting, inspiring and encouraging lawyers of all levels of experience to pursue fulfilling careers in the law and remain active within the legal profession.

The LIV Mentoring Program provides a forum by which members can support members by discussing their experiences within the legal profession and their future careers in the law.

The benefits of mentoring are widely acknowledged, particularly in the legal profession. Career progression, the culture of law firms and work-life balance are among the hot topics that law students and lawyers are concerned about and that practitioners deal with on a daily basis. We believe that both mentors and mentees will find sharing their professional experience and goals personally satisfying and retain motivation to pursue long and rewarding careers in the legal profession.

Through the program, members seeking **one on one mentoring** will be matched with an appropriate mentor. These include:

- Law students in their penultimate or final year of study;
- Law Graduates;
- Practitioners on leave or returning to work after a period of leave;
- New Law practitioners starting up their own firm/business;
- Practitioners interested in learning more about the Victorian Bar; or
- Any other practicing certificate holder seeking one of one mentoring.

Those seeking **judicial mentoring** will be placed into a small group as part of the Judicial mentoring stream. Mentees in the judicial mentoring stream will be given the rare opportunity to meet regularly and informally with members of the Victorian judiciary.

For mentees, being mentored by an experienced member of the profession offers unique guidance and insight from a knowledgeable and experienced role model.

These guidelines are intended to provide all participants in the program with information on the role of a mentor and the mentee, as well as assistance on establishing, conducting and maintaining a mentoring relationship.

These guidelines should be observed by all participants. Please read this document carefully before completing a *Mentoring Program Application Form*.

Objectives

- a) To enhance the interaction and sharing of experiences between practitioners and barristers.
- b) To provide law students with a direct connection to the legal profession offering one-on-one guidance when planning a career in law.
- c) To law graduates in developing networks and professional skills that will enhance their career in the law.
- d) To provide mentees with the opportunity to discuss important practical and professional issues which might arise in professional practice and beyond.
- e) To give experienced practitioners the opportunity to share their experiences and advice with law students.

Mentoring Categories Defined

Law students in their penultimate or final year of study – mentoring category for those entering their penultimate or final year of study and forward planning a career in law.

Judicial mentoring – the Judicial mentoring stream links lawyers with less than 5 years PAE a member of the judiciary and discuss their experiences, as well as their future careers in the law. Through the program, mentees will be placed into small groups (4-6 participants) and given the rare opportunity to meet regularly and informally with Victorian Judges or Magistrates.

New Law mentor - designed to assist and guide those practitioners who are establishing their own practice.

Return to Work - supporting women returning to practice after a period of maternity leave or members returning to work after a break in their career.

Later Lawyer mentor – supporting law students and new lawyers that have come to the profession later in life as a second or subsequent career.

Barrister mentoring – widening practitioner’s knowledge, enhance professional networks, and increase awareness of the distinction between the role of a solicitor and barrister, and how to leverage this distinction for the benefits of clients. The program is suitable for young lawyers to develop their skills and confidence working with barristers away from the pressured environment of managing a specific brief.

1. Eligibility of participants

- a) Participants must be current members of the LIV and hold membership throughout the duration of the program.
- b) The LIV will notify successful participants of their selection for the program by email.

2. Conduct of the program

- c) The program will run from March to December 2019.
- d) Mentors and mentees are asked to commit to the program for the entire duration of the program.
- e) We encourage mentors and mentees to communicate at least monthly.
- f) Judicial mentoring groups should meet every six (6) weeks or at least 6 times throughout the duration of the program.

3. Judicial mentoring

- g) Each group in the judicial mentoring stream will have a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 6 mentees.
- h) Meetings should run for 1 hour over lunch, or after work hours.
- i) One participant in each group will be nominated by the group as coordinator at the first meeting. This person will remain in the role of coordinator for the duration of the program year, unless otherwise arranged with the LIV.
- j) Each group may follow a set meeting agenda at each meeting based upon the suggested agendas provided by the LIV, or else modify these agendas as decided by the group.
- k) Meetings can be held in chambers or at venues outside of the Courts as decided by each group.
- l) Venues in regional and suburban areas are to be selected by the group coordinator in consultation with the Judge/Justice/Magistrate.

4. Role of the coordinator

- m) Liaise with the participating member of the judiciary, or their associate, to set meeting dates and times.
- n) Consult with the participating member of the Judiciary after the first meeting to determine whether meeting dates can be fixed in advance for the duration of the program.
- o) Inform participants at least two (2) weeks prior to each meeting by email.
- p) Set the agenda for each meeting and distribute this to participants in the group at least one (1) week prior to each meeting by email.
- q) Ascertain whether there will be any participants absent from the next meeting and inform the participating member of the Judiciary.
- r) Keep a list of attendees for each meeting and provide the list to the LIV at the conclusion of each meeting.
- s) Inform the LIV if some group members are no longer able to participate in the program. In this instance, a replacement person will be allocated by the LIV to fill the vacancy.
- t) If the coordinator is not able to continue to fulfil his/her role then the group can nominate a change of coordinator, otherwise, any participant of the group may contact the LIV for further assistance in appointing a coordinator.