

# MASSACHUSETTS ATTORNEY MENTORING PROGRAM

## SJC Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being



Attorney Connect



Mentor Connect

### Guidelines

#### Mentoring in the MA Attorney Mentoring Program

- Commit to the structure, expectations, and best practices of the MA Attorney Mentoring Program.
- Establish a confidential, working partnership with a peer for the benefit of the mentee.
- Accept the responsibility of being prepared for meetings and available to one another.
- Take the time to get to know one another and explore topics, ideas, and feelings.

#### Scheduling meetings

- Mentor shall respond promptly to mentee requests to schedule or reschedule meeting(s) and confirm meeting dates with mentee by email, phone, or text in the week prior to meeting.
- Mentee shall respond promptly to mentor communications and follow through with commitments.
- If anyone needs to change a meeting date or time, do so in advance, and reschedule promptly.

#### Preparing for meetings

- Preparation on both sides makes all the difference.
- Mentor shall ask mentee to formulate long and short-term goals for the mentorship experience, and to share these goals with the mentor in advance of their first meeting so the mentor can prepare thoughts and ideas and think about possible resources to recommend.
- Mentee shall prioritize topics and prepare questions and issues to discuss in advance of each meeting, consistent with the mentee's overall and specific mentorship goals.

#### The initial meeting

- Be upbeat, sincere, and appreciative of each other's time.
- Express interest in working and learning together to support the mentee's professional development and personal growth, and to maximizing the time together.
- Mentor shall be honest and direct in communications, ensure mentee knows their conversations are confidential, and encourage discussion of issues of well-being and/or identity.
- Mentor shall relieve mentee of concerns regarding burdening the mentor with the sacrifice of time or worrying about having "silly" questions or issues to discuss.
- Mentor shall reinforce the importance of taking risks, being open to doing things differently, thinking outside the box, and moving outside one's comfort zone.
- Share previous experiences with mentoring, if applicable.

#### Establishing a working partnership

- Be respectful of each other's time.
- At the beginning of each meeting, take a few minutes to check in, share how things are going, and learn what topic or experience is most pressing for the mentee that day.
- Be willing to take chances, consider different ideas and feelings, and try new approaches.
- Use effective communication skills, including listening actively, asking probing questions, pausing and observing, and demonstrating curiosity and empathy towards the speaker.
- Remain open to exploring and understanding differences of identity.
- Mentor shall draw out the mentee to allow the mentee to find an individually suited positive direction or course of action and not be prescriptive or tell the mentee what to do.
- Mentor may share personal experience to establish trust but remember to focus on the mentee.