

Vermont Lawyer Incubator Program

**(A partnership of the Vermont Bar Association
and Vermont Law & Graduate School)**

The Vermont Bar Association and Vermont Law & Graduate School partner to run the Vermont Lawyer Incubator Program to assist new and new-to-Vermont lawyers transition into solo practice while helping underserved Vermonters.

The Program includes 2-4 incubator lawyers, existing staff of the VBA and VLGS, veteran attorneys and Program alumni. This group supports the development of each new lawyer's solo law practice and practice skills. Incubator lawyers participate in weekly "rounds" via zoom to discuss current cases, new developments in the law, strategies for working with clients, lawyers and the courts, building a client base, law office start-up needs and much more. Lawyers accept low bono client assignments to serve their communities and hone their legal skills. At the end of their 18-month involvement with the program, Incubator lawyers will have established a profitable solo law practice serving underserved geographic and/or populations in Vermont.

Requirements During Participation in the 18-month Program:

- Each lawyer will be expected to set up a law office in a geographic area of the state where that lawyer plans to settle.
- Each lawyer will become active in their chosen community.
- Each lawyer will participate regularly in "rounds," the weekly peer discussion group, to share experiences and issues.
- Each lawyer will identify areas of the law in which to practice, and will develop expertise and a client base to match the practice areas.
- Each lawyer will maintain professional liability insurance coverage.
- Each lawyer will establish a functional law office with necessary equipment, furnishings, hardware, software and accounting systems, and a client trust account.
- Each lawyer will have been admitted to practice in Vermont prior to involvement in the Project. With prior permission of the Incubator Steering Committee, the lawyer may use the Incubator experience to meet first year licensing requirements.
- Each lawyer will commit to take at least 4 pro bono and 4 low bono/reduced fee cases during the 18 months in the Project; total time devoted should comply with rule VRPR 6.1 standards.
- Each lawyer will commit to settle in and practice law in Vermont as primary employment, and will not actively seek other legal employment while in the Project.

Incubator Attorney Benefits:

- Individual and group mentoring and support to establish a law practice and as needed to meet first-year licensing requirements.

- Reimbursement stipend of \$2,000 to pay for law office start-up costs.
- Weekly “rounds” with peers, veteran Incubator lawyers and VLS and VBA staff.
- Free membership in the VBA, free admission to VBA’s CLE programs and Lawyer Referral Service, free VLGS course to audit.
- Guest lectures on law practice management, ethics and trust accounting, tech needs, substantive law topics and much more.
- Client referrals and experience building through our low bono programs.
- Links to attorneys and mentors for advice and future practice opportunities.

To Apply:

You may apply at any time. Send a letter of interest and resume to:

Mary Ashcroft, Esq. mashcroft@vtbar.org

Professor Nicole Killoran NAKilloran@vermontlaw.edu

The letter should indicate your commitment to and reasons for in developing a solo law practice in Vermont. Please include preliminary information about where in the state you plan to practice, what area(s) of the law you may concentrate in, and how you think the Incubator Program can help you meet your goals. Include information about your Vermont law license status and whether you have completed your first-year requirements.

The Incubator Steering Committee will interview promising applicants to determine which applicants to accept into the Program.