

History of the TBA

Formation

The Tennessee Bar Association was formed on December 14, 1881, by 71 lawyers in the state. On that day, meeting in the Nashville, the group adopted a charter, constitution and bylaws, and elected officers and a central council. At that time, membership in the association was limited to lawyers licensed in the state who were approved by the central council and the association. Today, membership is available to any lawyer licensed in any jurisdiction and to currently enrolled law students.

Mission

The purpose of the Tennessee Bar Association is to foster legal education, maintain the honor and dignity of the legal profession, enhance the performance of the legal profession, cultivate professional ethics and fellowship among its members, and promote responsible relationships between the legal profession and the public.

Location

The TBA offices are housed in the Tennessee Bar Center located at 221 Fourth Avenue North in downtown Nashville. TBA occupies the second, fourth and fifth floors. The main office is located on the fourth floor. The CLE Commission occupies the second floor. The bar center is conveniently located within walking distance to state and local courts, the capital and many law firms.

The TBA moved into the Tennessee Bar Center in 2000 after the Tennessee Legal Community Foundation – the TBA’s charitable and educational arm – purchased the building for \$1.35 million and spent \$850,000 renovating it. Prior to the move, the TBA headquarters was located in a house at 3622 West End Avenue. This location, which was home to the association for 21 years, was the TBA’s first permanent headquarters. The TBA purchased the house in 1979 for \$150,000 and spent \$40,000 renovating it. Prior to the purchase of the house, the TBA rented space in three locations: 1717 West End Avenue, Capitol Towers near James Robertson Parkway and the Life & Casualty Tower on 4th Avenue North – the TBA’s first office.

Historical Fun Facts

- The association held its first annual meeting on July 4, 1882, at the Bon Aqua Springs Hotel in Hickman County.
- TBA’s first female president was Pamela Reeves, who served from 1998-1999. There have since been four female presidents: Katie Edge (2000-2001), Marcia Eason (2007-2008), Gail Vaughn Ashworth (2009-2010) and Jacqueline Dixon (2012-2013).
- In 2011, Danny Van Horn took office as the youngest president ever to serve.
- In 2011, the association celebrated its 130th anniversary.

Structure of the TBA

Governing Documents

Charter. The TBA is organized as a not for profit corporation. Its original charter was filed on December 28, 1881 and restated on June 8, 1978. The charter sets out the name of the corporation and its purposes; states that the organization will have members and that its bylaws should provide for their election or appointment; and sets out procedures for dissolution of the corporation.

Bylaws. The TBA Bylaws set out procedures for the operation of the association, including membership requirements; establishment of the Board of Governors and House of Delegates; election of officers, board members and delegates; and procedures for creating sections.

Administrative Policy Manual. The Administrative Policy Manual includes the association's employment policies; discrimination and sexual harassment policies; investment and financial policies; emergency plan; section and committee policies; editorial policies for publications; awards; and election handbook. It also serves as a catalog of TBA's official public policy positions.

Governing Body

The Board of Governors is the governing body of the association. It meets quarterly and when a special meeting is called.

Members. The board consists of 24 voting members:

President	The president automatically succeeds to the office of immediate past president at the end of a one-year term.
President-Elect	The president-elect automatically succeeds to the office of president at the end of a one-year term.
Vice President	The vice president is elected by the TBA membership and automatically succeeds to the office of the president-elect at the end of a one-year term. Each year the position rotates among Tennessee's grand divisions from Middle to East to West. In 2010, the vice president will be elected from the Middle Division.
Immediate Past President	
Secretary	The secretary is elected by the board members.
Treasurer	The treasurer is elected by the board members.
House of Delegates Speaker	The speaker is elected by the House of Delegates.
YLD President & President-Elect	Elected by young lawyers in the state.
3 Grand Division Governors	Grand division governors are elected by members residing in each of the state's three grand divisions.
9 District Governors	District governors are elected by members residing in each of the nine districts established by the board.

Tenn. Judicial Conference	Seat is held by the president of the conference.
District Public Defenders	Seat is held by the president of the conference.
District Attorneys General	Seat is held by a representative of the conference.

The board also consists of four ex-officio non-voting members: the TBA general counsel and the chairs of the board's Membership, Operations and Programs committees.

Committees. The board has established five committees to review specific issues and make recommendations to it.

Executive. The Executive Committee is comprised of TBA's six officers (president, president-elect, vice president, immediate past president, secretary and treasurer) and four ex-officio non-voting board members (the association's general counsel and the chairs of the board's Membership, Operations and Programs committees). The Executive Committee meets regularly at and between full board meetings.

Finance. The Finance Committee, headed by the treasurer, is charged with development of the TBA budget. The committee monitors financial activities of the association and serves as the audit committee. The YLD president typically sits on this committee.

Membership. The Membership Committee has responsibility for developing membership programs and for reviewing and making recommendations regarding member benefits.

Operations. The Operations Committee makes recommendations on several important operational details of the association including election procedures, personnel and administrative policy. It also oversees the staff evaluation process.

Programs. The Programs Committee oversees the work of the association's committees and sections, encourages the development of new programs, and makes recommendations to discontinue dormant ones. For the last three years, the YLD president-elect has served on this committee (prior assignments have included the Operations and Finance committees).

Advisory Bodies

House of Delegates. The House of Delegates is charged with debating and making policy recommendations on matters of interest and concern to the legal profession. It meets quarterly.

Membership. Every two years, in odd years, a district delegate is elected from each of the state's 31 Judicial Districts to serve a four-year term except that the 6th, 11th, 20th and 30th districts elect two delegates. In addition to the district delegates, one young lawyer delegate is elected from each grand division by the young lawyer members of that grand division. Seats for young lawyer representatives were added to the body in 2004.

Leadership. The House of Delegates elects from its membership a speaker and a secretary. Each serve a two-year term, even if the officer's term as a delegate expires in the interim.

Sections. TBA currently has 33 sections organized around substantive areas of the law (e.g., Family Law, Health Care, Bankruptcy). Section chairs are selected by the section's membership. The function of a section is to investigate, discuss and evaluate trends and activities in its specialized area and make recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding legislation, continuing legal education or other needed action. Each section forms an executive council to oversee its activities and many sections form subcommittees to delve deeper into specific issues. Each section is responsible for producing at least one CLE a year. See a list of current sections at <http://www.tba.org/sections>

Committees. The TBA currently has 4 committees. Chairs are appointed by the president. The current committees are:

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| | Responsibility |
| • Attorney Well Being | • Committee on Racial & Ethnic Diversity (CRED) |
| • Continuing Legal Education | |
| • Ethics & Professional | |

Learn more about TBA's standing committees at <http://www.tba.org/committees>

Other Entities

Tennessee Bar Association Leadership Law (TBALL). The TBALL program began in 2004 as a resource for lawyers with five to 15 years of experience. A new leadership class is selected each November. The program trains participants in issues related to policy and politics, the courts, the legal profession, community leadership and working with the media. The program is directed by a steering committee of volunteer lawyers and supported by a dedicated staff member. TBA has established a scholarship fund and an endowment fund that individuals may give to support the mission of the TBALL program.

Tennessee Bar Association Leadership Law Alumni (TBALLA). Past classes of the TBALL program maintain contact with each other through the TBALL alumni program. The group participates in public service projects and supports the current class.

Tennessee Bar Association Seasoned Counselors Up to Something (TBASCUS). TBASCUS was formed in 2008 to provide opportunities for lawyers age 50 and over to

gather for social and cultural activities. The group has held several events in conjunction with TBA meetings. TBA Programs Administrator Lynn Pointer provides support to the group.

Tennessee Legal Community Foundation. The Tennessee Legal Community Foundation (TLCF) is the law related education entity of the Tennessee Bar Association. It is organized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. Activities geared to the public include promoting understanding of the law and the legal system and working for more effective delivery of legal services. Activities geared to lawyers include promoting the administration of justice, encouraging continuing legal education, and assisting judges and lawyers who are unable to adequately perform their duties. Specific programs and groups that fall under the TLCF umbrella include youth courts, the Pro Bono Initiative, continuing legal education, Leadership Law alumni and the TBA YLD Fellows.

Young Lawyers Division (YLD). The Young Lawyers Division was created in 1936 as the Junior Bar. It was renamed the Young Lawyers Conference in 1971 and finally renamed the Young Lawyers Division in 1993. Any member of the TBA who is under 36 years of age or within the first five years of practice is automatically a member of the YLD. The division is governed by a board consisting of six officers (president, president-elect, vice president, immediate past president, secretary and treasurer), one governor from each of the state's three grand divisions, 14 district representatives, committee chairs, and affiliate representatives from young lawyer organizations and specialty bars in the state. Election of the vice president (who automatically succeeds to the office of president-elect and president) rotates each year among Tennessee's three grand divisions. In 2021, the vice president will be elected from the Middle Division. The membership of the YLD, which also includes approximately 300 law students, runs about 2,600. Staff support is provided by YLD Director Stephanie Vonnahme.

Young Lawyers Division Fellows. In 1991, former leaders in the Young Lawyers Division formed the YLD Fellows to promote the objectives of the YLD, encourage young lawyer participation in the TBA, and maintain friendships they had developed while serving in the division. New members are added each year through an invitation-only process that recognizes leadership in the division or strong support for the division. Honorary fellows may also be inducted. The Fellows organization is governed by its bylaws and an executive council comprised of an elected president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and immediate past president – as well as the president and immediate past president of the Young Lawyers Division. Beginning in 2004, the Fellows were given a seat on the YLD Board with the liaison appointed by the YLD president. The current membership of the Fellows stands at 185. Staff support is provided by YLD Director Stephanie Vonnahme.