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**N** AFFILIATED  
ASSOCIATION

South Dakota  
Paralegal  
Association

# Reporter

## 5 Litigation Support Trends and Tips for 2025 p. 9

*Written by Kim Bookout*



SEMI-ANNUAL  
SOCIAL, SEMINAR  
& MEETING:

*October 9-10, 2025*  
DOWNTOWN SIOUX FALLS

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# President's Message

Autumn Nelson, ACP



It is an honor to address you as the Interim President of our Association. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to serve and lead such a talented and dedicated community of professionals. As I step back into this role, I want to assure you that I am committed to continuing the important work of advancing our mission, supporting our members, and promoting excellence within the paralegal profession. I will do all I can to lead with integrity, transparency, and purpose.

As we look ahead, I'm especially excited about our upcoming Semi-Annual Seminar and Meeting this October. This event is always a valuable opportunity for us to come together, expand our knowledge, earn CLE credits, and connect with colleagues across the region. Planning is well underway, and we're looking forward to offering engaging sessions, experienced speakers, and practical tools you can take back to your daily work. Please be on the lookout for registration details and a full agenda in the coming weeks.

Also, we have an immediate need to fill the position of Interim Second Vice President, with the selected candidate continuing in the full term running June 2026--June 2027. This is a vital leadership role, and your contribution can make a meaningful difference for our organization. In addition, we are actively seeking candidates for two other key board positions, both beginning in June 2026--Secretary (2-year term) and NALA Liaison. As part of the NALA Liaison role, the elected individual will have the exciting opportunity to accompany me to the NALA Conference & Expo in Denver, Colorado, in July 2026. This is a fantastic way to represent SDPA on a national stage and connect with paralegal professionals from across the country.

Finally, I'd like to extend heartfelt thanks to our former President, Sara Huber, for her dedication and leadership during her time with the Association. Her positive spirit and teamwork made a lasting impact, and we wish her all the best in her new endeavors. I'm excited for what's ahead and truly believe that, together, we can accomplish great things. Thank you for your continued support and involvement.

### 2025-2026 Executive Committee

#### PRESIDENT (Interim)

*Autumn Nelson, ACP*

[AutumnN@HalbachLawFirm.com](mailto:AutumnN@HalbachLawFirm.com)

#### 1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT

(Interim)

*Rebecca Goeken*

[GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com](mailto:GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com)

#### NALA LIAISON

*Grace Collum, ACP*

[Grace@hpsLawFirm.com](mailto:Grace@hpsLawFirm.com)

#### SECRETARY

*Jennifer X. Frederick, CP*

[Jen@SchoenbeckLaw.com](mailto:Jen@SchoenbeckLaw.com)

#### TREASURER

*Carrie Reider, CP*

[cjReider@fnbsf.com](mailto:cjReider@fnbsf.com)



## Mission Statement

To establish good fellowship among members, NALA, and the legal community.

To encourage a high order of ethical & professional attainment.

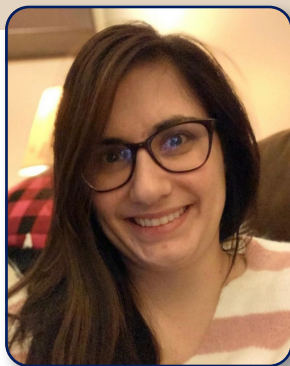
To further the education of members of our profession.

To cooperate with bar associations.

To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims, and goals of NALA.

# NALA Liaison's Report

Grace Collum, ACP



Hello all,

Thank you all for the opportunity to allow me to serve as the NALA Liaison. I'm honored to have been nominated to this position and look forward to helping our organization be the best it can be!

Our annual meeting this year took place in Rapid City on June 20, 2025. We had 33 attendees register for the seminar with 19 of those appearing in person. Also at our seminar, Clara Kiley, CP, our NALA Liaison from 2024-2025, was kind enough to get us some NALA swag. I still have some available so if you are interested in seeing what we have, please let me know. And now, we approach our fall semi-annual seminar! The Education Committee has finalized the venue and agenda and those details were emailed to the membership by President Autumn Nelson, ACP. If you didn't receive that email, please contact the Education Committee co-chairs, Rebecca Goeken and Courtney Vanden Berg.

There have now been some changes to the CP exam. Effective July 10, NALA transitioned the administration of its Knowledge and Skills Exam to Prometric, which is an organization that offers 8,000 in-person testing centers worldwide, and remote testing. In addition, Sioux Falls now has a testing center available, with its proctor being the wonderful Vicki Blake, ACP. SDPA has also formed two study groups for those studying to take the tests. If you need additional study materials, please let me know and I can assist in getting that to you.

Rewinding to July, I had the privilege of attending NALA'S 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference & Expo in Atlantic City, New Jersey, with Interim President Autumn Nelson, ACP. This was my first in-person NALA conference and it was absolutely incredible! One of the most memorable moments for me was accepting the 2025 Affiliate Award honoring our Newsletter Committee. It was a great honor to accept this award on our organization's behalf. We also had many opportunities for networking--the affiliate showcase, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala, and round table sessions. Of the many different CLE sessions available were CP Exam reviews, a Legal Ethics Quiz Show (which was a really fun fill-in-the-blank game), international law, criminal law, legal research, and AI. The 2025 charity partner is Avanzar, a nonprofit organization that helps victims of domestic and sexual assault. They also provide state-level services for human trafficking victims who are under the age of 21.

I am very eager to attend my next in-person conference in 2026. NALA has announced that next year's conference will be held July 16-18 in Denver, Colorado, at the Grand Hyatt Denver. I hope to see all of you there!

## Careers

The details for these positions are on our [website](#). If you are aware of open positions to post, please contact Laura Stewart, Job Bank Chair, [here](#).

### Paralegal SIOUX FALLS

Davenport, Evans, Hurwitz & Smith  
7-11-2025

### Paralegal / Legal Assistant BELLE FOURCHE

Butte County State's Attorney  
9-9-2025

## CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

- 16 + State Bar CLE: Law for Lunch..... 12:30-1:30pm  
FinCEN Real Estate Reports for Cash Transactions  
*Zoom* ([Register here](#))
- 19 + State Bar CLE: Estate Planning.... 8:30am-12pm  
Sioux Falls - Minnehaha ([Register here](#))  
Country Country Club
- 26 + State Bar CLE: Nuts & Bolts ..... 9am-2pm  
Fort Pierre - Drifter's ([Register here](#))
- 29 + USD Knudson School of Law/ ..... 8am-5:00pm  
Native American Law Student Assn  
Fall Symposium ~ Registration not required (public)  
Vermillion - Knudson School of Law

### OCTOBER

- 7 \* Science of Marijuana in Impairment Cases.... 12pm
- 9 SDPA Semi-Annual Social ..... 6:30pm  
Sioux Falls - Dablia Kitchen + Bar ([Register here](#))
- 10 SDPA Semi-Annual Seminar & Meeting  
Registration/Light Breakfast ..... 7:30-8:00am  
Seminar ..... 8am-5pm (end time TBD)  
Membership Meeting ..... 11:20am (start time TBD)  
Sioux Falls - The Steel District
- 15-16 NESD Family Violence ..... 8am-5:00pm  
Prevention Conference ~ Justice Against  
the Powerful: A Prosecutor's Guide to  
High-Profile Cases ([Register here](#))  
Aberdeen - Dakota Event Center

### NOVEMBER

- 5 \* Science of Opioids ..... 12pm

## NALA ON-DEMAND

- Leadership Courses^ ..... [Register Here](#)
- On-Demand Webinars^ ..... [Register Here](#)
- Self-Study Courses ..... [Register Here](#)
- ACP Courses (now available to non-CP members!) ... [Register Here](#)
- NALA Affiliate Live Webinar Calendar ..... [Click Here](#)

SDPA events - if registration was not available at the time of publication, watch for postings [here](#).

+ SD State Bar seminars/webinars: CST/CDT.

\* NALA live webinars: CST/CDT. Course info and registration available [here](#). ^ Some NALA on-demand education/leadership courses free to NALA members. Check [here](#).





## NOTICE OF SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING of the SOUTH DAKOTA PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Pursuant to the Bylaws (Article VI, Section 2), notice is hereby given of the South Dakota Paralegal Association's 2025 Semi-Annual Meeting. The 2025 Semi-Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, October 10, 2025, commencing at approximately 11:20am CT / 10:20am MT at The Steel District, 505 N. Metli Place in Sioux Falls. The meeting will also be broadcast online for members to attend virtually. Members who have registered to attend the seminar virtually will receive the meeting invitation via email the week of the meeting. The purpose of the semi-annual meeting is to hear reports of officers and committee chairpersons, to adopt a budget for fiscal/calendar year 2026, to elect officers for the 2026-2027 Executive Committee, and to transact such other business that may come before the members, including the second part of the proposed bylaws amendments.

Pursuant to the Article VIII of the Bylaws, the Nominations & Elections Committee has submitted a slate of officers for 2026-2027 for election at this meeting. As of the publication of this newsletter, the committee is welcoming volunteers or nominations for the positions indicated below. If there are no volunteers or nominations prior to the meeting, volunteers or nominations will be requested from the floor. Please review the bylaws regarding the duties of these positions. If you feel you are capable of performing these duties, please consider volunteering your time for SDPA. Serving on the Executive Committee is a personally rewarding and is a professionally worthwhile experience!

- Autumn Nelson, ACP -- President  
(no vote necessary - incumbent)
- Rebecca Goeken -- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
(no vote necessary - incumbent per  
October 2024 Semi-Annual Meeting election)
- Nominee TBD -- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President -- VOTE REQUIRED
- Nominee TBD -- NALA Liaison -- VOTE REQUIRED
- Carrie Reider, CP -- Treasurer  
(no vote necessary - incumbent for 2<sup>nd</sup> of two-year term)
- Nominee TBD -- Secretary -- VOTE REQUIRED

### AFTER WORK

### SDPA MIXER

**WHO'S INVITED?** SDPA Members & Your Non-Member Colleagues!

**WHERE IS IT?** Dahlia Kitchen + Bar @ 150 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Place, Suite 100  
Steel District, Sioux Falls ~ PARKING: The District Lofts Ramp

**WHEN?** Thursday, October 9 ~ 6:30pm

**ATTIRE?** Casual, but come as you are (straight from work?!)

**WHO'S PAYING?** SDPA pays for appetizers and one drink per person.  
You're welcome to open your own tab after that :)

**RSVP?** Please, it would help us plan for enough table space, but  
if you didn't RSVP and you're able to join us after all,  
PLEASE DO! (Email Rebecca Goeken @ [GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com](mailto:GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com))

### *The Reporter*

#### **SUBMISSIONS**

This newsletter published quarterly. Content and ad submission are due to [ReporterSubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:ReporterSubmissions@gmail.com) by:

Jan. 31 -- March

Apr. 30 -- June

July 31 -- September

Oct. 31 -- December

#### **ADVERTISING**

Rates-per issue,  
sales tax included:

Full Page..... \$53.<sup>25</sup>

Half Page.... \$31.<sup>95</sup>

Quarter Page \$21.<sup>30</sup>

Business Card \$15.<sup>98</sup>

Advertising Inquiries:  
Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS  
@ [JessiStucke@outlook.com](mailto:JessiStucke@outlook.com)



# 2025 Semi-Annual Meeting

Friday, October 10, 2025 -- approx. 11:20am CST / 10:20am MST  
The Steel District ~ 505 N. Metli Place, Sioux Falls (+ live online)

## AGENDA

- Call to Order ..... President ~ Autumn Nelson, ACP
- Roll Call ..... Secretary ~ Jennifer Frederick, CP
- Approval of Minutes of June 20, 2025, Annual Meeting. .... Secretary ~ Jennifer Frederick, CP
- Treasurer's Report. .... Treasurer ~ Carrie Reider, ACP
- NALA Liaison's Report ..... NALA Liaison ~ Grace Collum, ACP
- Committee Reports
- Old Business ..... President ~ Autumn Nelson, ACP
- New Business. .... President ~ Autumn Nelson, ACP
- Acknowledgements. .... President ~ Autumn Nelson, ACP
- Announcements. .... Education Committee Co-Chairs ~ Courtney Vanden Berg, CP | Rebecca Goeken

## Absentee/Virtual Attendee BALLOT

If you are an active member and cannot attend the SDPA Semi-Annual Meeting in person, or you will be attending online and prefer to not cast your ballot in the virtual chat, please complete this ballot for the 2026-2027 Executive Committee nominations and return it to Nominations & Elections Committee Chair, Carrie Reider, CP at [cjReider@fnbsf.com](mailto:cjReider@fnbsf.com) by October 3, 2025.

If you are emailing this ballot and nominating someone other than yourself for any position, you must obtain the nominee's consent and indicate that consent has been given when you email this ballot. (Please see the Bylaws, Article IX, Section 1).

Circle Nominee:

OR

Write In:

Incumbents:

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President\* ... TBD/floor nominations \_\_\_\_\_

NALA Liaison ..... TBD/floor nominations \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary ..... TBD/floor nominations \_\_\_\_\_

President ..... Autumn Nelson, ACP

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President .... Rebecca Goeken  
(Per October 2024 Semi-Annual Mtg election)

Treasurer ..... Carrie Reider, CP  
(2<sup>nd</sup> year of two-year term)

\*The member elected to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President position will succeed to the  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President position for 2027-2028 and President position for 2028-2029.

MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_





## Congratulations to our NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE!



Our Newsletter Committee received a NALA Affiliate Award this year! Each year, NALA recognizes members or committees from affiliated associations for their exceptional contributions to their association's programs and goals.

You can read the nomination in the June 20, 2025, minutes on page [14](#). Thank you also to our NALA Liaison, Grace Collum, ACP for accepting the award on the committee's behalf in Atlantic City during NALA's annual convention in July!

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair/Layout: Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS

Layout/Content Contributor: Jen Frederick, CP

Layout: Stephanie Bahr

Proofreader: Karen Armstrong, PP, PLS

Content Contributor: Rebekah Mattern

South Dakota Unified Judicial System @SDUJS  
Attorneys, justice partners and the public can now request court calendars from UJS' website. Previously, people had to request court calendars from a clerk of courts office. Learn more: [bit.ly/4cthkXd](https://bit.ly/4cthkXd) #SouthDakotaCourts



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**[pcbachand@pie.midco.net](mailto:pcbachand@pie.midco.net)**





## *SDPA Member of the Year*

### *2024-2025*

### *Vicki Blake, ACP*

The 2024-2025 Executive Committee named Vicki Blake, ACP as South Dakota Paralegal Association's 2024-2025 Member of the Year on June 20. Vicki received this nomination:

Autumn Nelson, ACP, Interim President: "I am nominating Vicki Blake, ACP for SDPA's Member of the Year award. Since joining the association in 2015 at the start of my paralegal career, Vicki has exemplified the values and qualities that define this honor. Vicki demonstrates outstanding leadership and advocacy within SDPA, consistently taking initiative and supporting the association's mission. Her commitment to professional development and ethical practice is evident in the way she stays engaged with current issues in the field and she encourages other to do the same. Over the years I've personally benefited from her willingness to share knowledge and offer thoughtful guidance--she is a trusted mentor and a steadfast support of her colleagues. Beyond individual mentorship, Vicki contributes meaningfully to the advancement of the paralegal profession. Her dedication, integrity, and active involvement have made a lasting impact both on our association and on the broader legal community. Vicki Blake is not only a valued member of SDPA, she is also a true ambassador for the paralegal profession. I can think of no one more deserving of this award!

### *Congratulations, Vicki, and THANK YOU!*

Vicki joined Duncan Law Firm in Sioux Falls in July 2009. She assists attorneys Drew Duncan and Amanda Engel. After 25 years of working with attorneys, Vicki achieved a personal goal of earning her Certified Paralegal designation in May 2007 through the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) and later obtained the Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) designation in Family Law in 2022. She was voted SDPA's Member of the Year for 2008-2009. She has also served on various SDPA committees as well as representing the association as NALA Liaison, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President prior to serving as President. She has attended two national NALA education conferences.

Vicki is a member of NALA, Second Circuit Women in Law, and South Dakota Trial Lawyers' Association. She works primarily in the areas of governmental and regulatory business, business law, and domestic relations. Vicki enjoys spending time with family and friends, and enjoys watching hockey in the winter and riding motorcycle in the summer.

Vicki's philosophy is to provide each client with the best personal, professional service as possible, and treat them as she would wish for her family.

## SDPA MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

2024-25 .....	Vicki Blake, ACP
2023-24 .....	Tasha Altmann, ACP
2022-23 .....	Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS
2021-22 .....	Rebekah Mattern
2020-21 .....	Courtney Vanden Berg, CP
2019-20 .....	Clara Kiley, CP
2018-19 .....	Autumn Nelson, ACP
2017-18 .....	Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS
2016-17 .....	Chris Lillo, ACP
2015-16 .....	Cindy Smeins, ACP
2014-15 .....	Jessica Huyck, ACP
2013-14 .....	Karen Armstrong, PP, PLS
2012-13 .....	Jackie Hoefener, CP
2011-12 .....	Jennifer Frederick, CP
2010-11 .....	Michael Bultema
2009-10 .....	Valerie Winegar, CP
2008-09 .....	Vicki Blake, ACP
2007-08 .....	Cindy Smeins, ACP
2006-07 .....	Tammy Ackerman, CP
2005-06 .....	Terri Braun, CP
2004-05 .....	Deana Olson, CP
2003-04 .....	Karen Anderson
2002-03 .....	Rhonda Rentz, CP



**Stephanie Johnson**

**BALLARD SPAHR**  
**Sioux Falls**



**Evelyn Gorman**

**EEVEE PARALEGAL**  
**SERVICES, LLC**



## Past President 2024-2025

*Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS*



Photo: Outgoing President Jessi Stucke received her award in June from Sara Huber, Incoming President.

Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS, was born in Sioux Falls, SD, and raised in Sheldon, IA, Sioux Falls, and Aberdeen. After graduating from Aberdeen's Central High School, she attended the University of Minnesota–Minneapolis and later received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Minneapolis College of Art & Design (MCAD). She returned to Aberdeen in 2005 and was the 2011 recipient of the Dale Stein Award upon graduation from Leadership Aberdeen, a program of the Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce. Jessi joined Richardson, Wyly, Wise, Sauck & Hieb in 2014 and works primarily with Jack H. Hieb, Zachary W. Peterson, and Brianna J. Haugen.

Jessi became a Certified Paralegal (CP) in 2016, and obtained the ACP cre-

dential in 2021 in Trial Practice, and in E-Discovery in 2023. Jessi became a Certified E-Discovery Specialist (CEDS) in 2023 and has led two CEDS exam study groups in the past year for the Association of Certified E-Discovery Specialists (ACEDS). In May 2025, she was a panel member on a national webinar for the Center for Legal Studies (CLS by BARBRI)'s Paralegal Studies student body.

She is a Savant Level Member of Reveal Academy, holding multiple certifications in Logikcull, Reveal, and Brainspace. She completed CLS by BARBRI's Advanced Legal Research & Writing course in early 2024, and is currently working to enhance her eDiscovery skillset by obtaining her eDiscovery Technology Certificate (eDTech).

Jessi and her husband, Chris, have two children, Evin and Addy. Away from the office, she enjoys art, curling, trapshooting, archery, gaming, and the family furbabies.

## PAST PRESIDENTS

2024*	..... Sara Huber
2024-25^	..... Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS
2023-24+^	..... Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS
2023*^	..... Jessica Huyck, ACP
2022-23	..... Autumn Nelson, ACP
2021-22^	..... Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS
2020-21^	..... Dixie A. Bader, CP
2019-20	..... Vicki Blake, ACP
2018-19	..... Jennifer X. Frederick, CP
2017-18	..... Jessica Huyck, ACP
2016-17*^	..... Janet Miller, ACP
2015-16^	..... Janet Miller, ACP
2014-15	..... Becky Purington, ACP
2013-14	..... Christi M. Weideman, Esq.
2012-13	..... Dixie Riter, CP
2011-12	..... Tammy Ackerman, CP
2010-11	..... Cindy Smeins, ACP
2009-10	..... Kayne Larimer, ACP
2008-09^	..... Dixie A. Bader, CP
2006-07	..... Jennifer Pravacek, ACP
2005-06	..... Michelle Schmidt, ACP
2004-05	..... Rhonda Rentz, CP
2003-04	..... Rosie Kean
2002-03	..... Chris Lillo, ACP
2001-02	..... Don Bender, CP
2000-01	..... Shiloh MacNally, JD
1999-00	..... Cherly Brewer, CP
1998-99	..... Terri Miller, CP
1997-98	..... Joan Gillespie, CP
1996-97	..... Dennyce Korb, CP
1995-96	..... Michael Bultema
1994-95	..... Dory Maks
1993-94	..... Pam van Engelenhoven, CP
1992-93	..... Debra Niemi, CP
1991-92	..... Louise Peterson, CP
1990-91	..... Cindy Johnson, CP
1989-90	..... Karen Jaqua, CP

\*Partial service ^Interim service ^Two or more terms

## A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

### SARA HUBER

SDPA wants to wish Sara Huber, our former President and formerly of Bantz, Gosch & Cremer in Aberdeen, all the best in her new endeavors. Sara, although not officially retired, has retired from the paralegal profession and is moving on to new career adventures. Sara joined SDPA several years ago and became active early on, ending her time with SDPA on the Executive Committee. She always had a positive attitude and was a real team player, and she will be sorely missed.

**THANK YOU, Sara, for sharing your time and talents with SDPA for so many years, and WE WISH YOU THE BEST as your new adventure continues!**





# 5 Litigation Support

## Trends and Tips for 2025

Reprinted with permission of NALA – The Paralegal Association. This article originally appeared in the Q2 2025 issue of FACTS & FINDINGS, the quarterly journal of NALA. Inquiries should be directed to NALA, 6450 S. Lewis Avenue, Suite 250, Tulsa, OK 74136, or by email to [nalanet@nala.org](mailto:nalanet@nala.org).

**A**ri Kaplan Advisors' recent survey of top litigation support directors reveals key trends and insights into how firms are preparing for the future. *Advancing Litigation Support to Fuel Growth in a Changing Legal Market* is based on interviews with directors of litigation support at midsize and large law firms throughout North America.<sup>1</sup> The participants shared their views on the challenges of rising caseloads and data volumes, their firms' use of technology and generative artificial intelligence (gen AI), and the need to drive innovation to stay ahead of competitors. If you work in litigation support, here are five trends you need to know and five tips for success in 2025.

### 5 KEY LITIGATION SUPPORT TRENDS

- 1. Sifting Through More Data for the Same Facts:** Nearly all the survey participants (93%) reported that the volume of data they manage for an average dispute is increasing, yet half say the number of documents, records, or exhibits they use at trial remains the same. This means teams are spending more time to get the same results. The frequent introduction of new data types will likely continue to compound this issue throughout 2025.
- 2. Data Proliferation Could Threaten Growth:** Four out of five respondents (80%) said that litigation department revenue growth is a priority for their law firm. Consequently, 83% expect their case portfolio to grow in the next 12 to 18 months. However, meeting the law firm's goals while managing exponential data volume growth could present challenges, with 60% of respondents agreeing that these factors are a concern.
- 3. Outdated Technology May Become a Barrier to Innovation:** Almost one-third of respondents (30%) reported using a case management solution that is at least 10 years old. Additionally, 20% of the participants acknowledged that they have insufficient technology for their teams to succeed. Nearly half (47%) rated their case management tools' adoption and consistency levels below average.
- 4. Case Management Upgrades are Top of Mind:** More than two-thirds (70%) of participants stated they use a dedicated case management system that helps legal teams centrally manage all litigation and arbitration information and workflows. However, among firms using dedicated case management tools, over half (57%) have evaluated different tools in the past year, and 43% said they could save time by investing in a different solution.
- 5. AI is Overwhelmingly Viewed as an Advantage:** Nearly nine out of 10 participants (87%) said AI-assisted case management software gives them a competitive advantage, with half of the participants saying their firms already use gen AI to support their litigation processes. The respondents agree that gen AI will have the most significant impact on document analysis (100%), transcript management (90%), chronology creation (87%), and case strategy (77%).

### 5 LITIGATION SUPPORT TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- 1. Proactively Prepare for the Data Deluge:** Collecting and producing increasing amounts of data is not the only challenge facing litigation teams. They must also consider how to use these new media types effectively at trial. When developing your legal case strategy, consider the role of new data types in telling your story. Plan how this evidence will be

presented and authenticated at trial.

- 2. Streamline Your Case Management Approach:** If your litigation department struggles to achieve case management consistency across teams, it may be time to review your technology stack. Stand-alone tools may be causing a disconnect. The research shows that some litigation teams routinely use six or more tools for litigation support tasks like annotation, task management, case chronology, deposition preparation, and transcript management. Consider a cloud-based platform that can centralize these processes within one solution.
- 3. Offer Ongoing Technology Training and Resources:** Only 57% of the trial lawyers at the surveyed law firms use the available case management tools. Increasing litigation support and lawyer adoption enhances productivity and promotes higher overall adoption. One survey participant said, "Once paralegals and associates become avid users, the partners follow suit."
- 4. Make Innovation More Approachable with Incremental Change:** One of the most significant barriers to innovation is overcoming resistance from reluctant users. Several survey participants reported success using an incremental approach focusing on delivering targeted solutions rather than wholesale change. If you can solve an acute problem with a new solution, you can demonstrate its immediate, tangible value while building trust. One practitioner described this mindset: "We are just trying to help our attorneys provide the best service they can, so our litigation support team is more focused on providing concierge-level service to the firm's lawyers rather than driving rapid technological change."
- 5. Take Advantage of Built-In AI:** In 2025, litigation professionals will shift from asking each other, "Do you use AI?" to "How do you use AI?" While some firms will invest in broad, stand-alone AI solutions, others will take advantage of AI capabilities within their current technology stack, giving users the benefits of AI without the burden of learning a new tool. This approach offers simplicity and familiarity for reluctant users. It also gives tech-savvy users access to powerful tools to manage the growing waves of incoming data effectively by accelerating annotation, chronology creation, document analysis, summarization, and transcript management. Another benefit is that lawyers and partners are more likely to adopt a case management tool if they can quickly dive into essential and relevant case documents using built-in AI chat or query capabilities.

### CONCLUSION

Over the next year, law firms must find the right balance of talent, training, technology, and adaptability. Doing so will empower their litigation teams to manage increasing data volumes while meeting growth goals and driving slow but steady innovation that will set them apart from the competition.

### RESOURCES

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.opus2.com/litigation-support-industry-research/>



Kim Bookout is a Director of Solution Consulting at Opus 2, a leading legal software and services provider. Relying on 20 years of experience as a senior litigation paralegal, she is committed to finding the best technologies to help law firms and their clients develop optimal outcomes.

# *Annual Meeting Minutes ~ June 20, 2025*

**Call to Order:** The Annual Meeting of the South Dakota Paralegal Association was called to order by President Jessi Stucke, ACP, on June 20, 2025, at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, in Rapid City, South Dakota. President Stucke welcomed those in attendance and those attending virtually. President Stucke then introduced the other members of the Executive Committee, which included Sara Huber (First Vice President), Autumn Nelson, ACP (Second Vice President), Clara Kiley, ACP (NALA Liaison), Tasha Altmann, ACP (Interim Treasurer), and Jennifer Frederick, CP (Secretary).

**Roll Call:** Roll call was taken by Jennifer Frederick, CP, Secretary. There were 18 members present, with 4 of those attendees present virtually. President Stucke declared there was a quorum present to proceed.

**Approval of Minutes of October 11, 2024, Semi-Annual Meeting:** Minutes were published in the December 2024 SDPA Reporter. A motion was made and seconded to waive reading of the minutes (Paula Haight and Courtney Vanden Berg). Motion carried. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes (Tasha Altmann and Dixie Bader). Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Tasha Altmann, ACP, presented the Treasurer's Report.

Savings: As of June 20, 2025, the SDPA Savings account balance is \$xxx.

Checking: As of June 12, 2025, the SDPA Checking account balance is \$xxx. Included in the balance is membership dues and June Seminar fees collected. Expenses include the flight, and registration reimbursement for the NALA conference. Other NALA expenses will be reported after the conference. Other payments include our website hosting, Website Domain, Treasurer's Bond and Sales/Use tax.

Credit Card: The credit card currently has a balance of \$917.26. This includes purchases for door prizes, swag, and new equipment for the SDPA Annual Meeting. The next credit card payment is due July 10 and scheduled to be paid on July 8.

The 2025 budget with income and expenses through June 16 are detailed in the budget handout. It's been a privilege to be a part of SDPA over the last 17 or so years, but this year was a little extra special one in that I had the honor of being nominated and ultimately chosen as the SDPA Member of the Year so, thank you for that!!

I would also like to thank our President, Jessi Stucke and Vicki Blake for asking me to serve and as interim Treasurer for the last year. It truly takes a village and a lot of diligence. It is a rewarding, yet challenging position and I look forward to Carrie Reider taking the reigns as I'm sure she'll do a fantastic job!

Treasurer Altmann also provided updates after June 16, 2025. A question was posed by a member as to her recent membership fees paid online. The Membership Committee and the Treasurer will check the status and get back to that member. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report (Carrie Reider and Paula Haight). The motion carried and the Treasurer's Report was approved.

**NALA Liaison's Report:** Clara Kiley, CP presented the NALA Liaison's Report:

I have really enjoyed my time as NALA Liaison this past year. I would like to thank the SDPA membership for granting me the opportunity to serve in this position. My main responsibilities

# *Annual Meeting Minutes ~ June 20, 2025*

were to keep SDPA informed about NALA goings on and to keep NALA informed about what SDPA is doing, as well as promoting the paralegal profession.

Right out of the box I attended the NALA conference in Louisville, KY. It is a great educational and networking opportunity held annually in different places throughout the US. I would encourage all of you to attend a conference at least once during your career. Attending this event inspired me to be more active in SDPA.

In my capacity as NALA Liaison, I was able to get some great "swag," (stuff we all get), for the October semi-annual meeting and seminar (t-shirts) and an \$80 NALA voucher to be used for a door prize. There are still t-shirts available and this time we also have NALA key chains. Stop by my table during a break and pick one up.

At the October seminar, several SDPA members approached me about the CP exam and how to get started with the testing process. I reached out to the membership to see what interest there was in organizing study groups. Two different study groups were ultimately organized and started studying in January 2025.

In addition, due to the large amount of interest, we pursued setting up a more local testing site and obtained approval for long time SDPA member, Vicki Blake, ACP, to be our test proctor. Through these efforts six members took the Knowledge portion of the exam last Saturday and five received passing scores.

Current SDPA secretary, Jennifer Frederick, CP, was the first to volunteer to lead a CP study group. Jen led a group in northeast South Dakota in the Watertown area with additional participants from Aberdeen "zooming" in to learn with the group. Jen went the extra mile and created outlines and additional quizzes to use with the NALA CP Study Guide which she shared with the Sioux Falls study group. She has provided her materials to the Executive Committee for the use of future study groups. As a result of these efforts, Jen was nominated for and received a NALA Volunteer of the Year Award. The announcement of this award was included in the most recent SDPA newsletter.

The SDPA Newsletter Committee was also nominated for and received an Affiliate Award for all their hard work creating the newsletter four times a year. Not every NALA affiliated association publishes a newsletter. Our Newsletter Committee puts in a tremendous amount of work to keep the membership informed.

In addition to filing reports with NALA and getting CLE approval for seminars, as a member of the Executive Committee, I also participated in preparation of the bylaw revisions and discussions about the future direction of SDPA. Please consider becoming more involved with SDPA. The organization needs ordinary people to help steer the ship and keep it on course.

I am hopeful that the incoming NALA Liaison, Grace Collum, ACP, will be able to continue the efforts to increase the number of members who successfully complete their certification process. If you don't yet have your credential, it is certainly a great investment in yourself. I would like to encourage each of you to consider obtaining your CP designation and/or an ACP designation. If you have these designations already, please consider helping with a study group.

For more information about how to obtain your CP or ACP credential, please feel free to visit at my table today or check out the NALA website.

Clara Kiley also announced that prometric testing in Sioux Falls and Rapid City will be available for the CP Exam beginning July 10. A motion was made and seconded to approve the report (Dixie Bader and Grace Collum). The motion carried and the report was approved.

## **Committee Reports:**

Audit: None.

CLE Luncheons: None.

Education: Report presented by Rebecca Goeken:



# *Annual Meeting Minutes ~ June 20, 2025*

The Education Committee has been working hard to prepare for this Annual Seminar and Conference. We are excited to report that 33 attendees have registered for the conference, with 19 attendees in person.

What a great seminar, so far. We really enjoy the opportunity afforded to us to put on these seminars the past few years. We hope you are enjoying the seminar and find it to be informative. However, we know that all of this is not possible, nor could we do it, without the generous help from our sponsors. If you, your firm, or anyone you know would like to sponsor an upcoming seminar please complete a Sponsor Form. The form can be found in your packet or on the SDPA Website. If your firm or organization would like to donate/sponsor in other ways, please do not hesitate to contact a committee member.

The committee is currently looking at venues in and around the Sioux Falls area for our Fall semi-annual meeting and seminar. We are tentatively looking at October 17th or October 24th so place a hold on your calendars today. We hope to have more information and a confirmed date/venue in the upcoming weeks. Please share your thoughts on topics/education you would like to see presented in our upcoming seminar.

The Education Committee looks forward to working with our members each year to grow our organization while providing next level education to all, members and non-members, who attend.

We desire to create an educational platform that helps us grow in our legal knowledge and the professionalism. The Education Committee is looking for additional committee members to help grow our organization and who have passion for education to help take our seminars to a whole new level including raising funds and searching for national speakers. Only by working together will we be able to continue growing our organization. As always, we welcome any recommendations on ways to improve our seminars and hope YOU will consider joining the education committee. Please email any recommendations for the upcoming seminar to Courtney (Courtney@strangelaw.com) or Rebecca (GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com).

**Ethics:** Report presented by Jennifer Frederick:

The Ethics Committee continues to provide ethics information in SDPA's Reporter. Please check it out. We welcome suggestions for content.

**Finance:** See Treasurer's Report.

**Job Bank:** Report presented by Jennifer Frederick:

Currently, there are 2 positions available on the SDPA Job Bank. We have 1 in Sioux Falls, and 1 in Mitchell. For specific details on these positions, please check out the SDPA website under the careers tab. The Job Bank changes frequently so please check the website for the latest updates and available positions throughout the state. If you are an employer or know of an employer seeking paralegals and/or legal staff, please contact us.

**Librarian:** Report presented by Courtney Vanden Berg:

(Summary): One member has a CLA book checked out, otherwise there have not been requests for library materials recently.

**Membership:** Report presented by Autumn Nelson:

As of June 12, 2025, we have 78 members. If you work with or know any paralegals or legal assistants who are interested in joining SDPA, please have them contact Jessi at jessistucke@outlook.com. Also, please remember to update any changes in your employment, home or work contact information and email address so that you receive timely notices, newsletters, and other important emails. All changes can be sent Jessi.

We are still interested in discussions on events the Membership Committee could execute for 2025. If you have any ideas, or are interested in hosting a mixer or any other type of event that would promote membership in the SDPA please contact Jessi.

**Newsletter:** Report presented by Jessi Stucke:

I want to thank my fellow committee members for their constant contributions to this committee. Rebekah Mattern has contributed various materials, and Jen Frederick continues to alternate with

# *Annual Meeting Minutes ~ June 20, 2025*

me on the layouts. Then Stephanie Bahr jumped in to start taking over layout for some of the pages each quarter -- we are so fortunate that she comes with design experience and is already familiar with some of the programs that we use. Last, but not least, Karen Armstrong remains our steadfast and phenomenal proofreader, and I want to give special thanks to her for her years in writing her Grammar Check article. Those were so valuable and we will miss reading those.

Finally, as always, we welcome contributions and ideas for content from everyone in SDPA. If you have something in mind, please contact me at [JessiStucke@outlook.com](mailto:JessiStucke@outlook.com), as I will be using only my personal email account after today.

## **Nominations & Elections:** Report presented by Carrie Reider:

If you've ever thought about getting more involved with SDPA, now's a great time! We're currently accepting nominations for positions on the Executive Committee. Open roles include 2nd Vice President and NALA Liaison for the 2026–2027 term, and Secretary for the 2026–2028 term. If you're interested—or even just curious—feel free to talk to someone from the Nominations and Elections Committee, or reach out to any current Executive Committee member. We'd love to hear from you!

## **Professional Development:** None.

## **Public Relations:** Report presented by Jennifer Frederick:

The Public Relations Committee continues to advertise to attorneys about our association and the value of employing paralegals. We hope to have a few more ads in the State Bar Newsletter. If you have any ideas for our ads or suggestions on where we can get the word out to increase our member numbers and obtain more attorney support, please contact our committee.

## **Website:** Report presented by Jennifer Frederick:

Job postings continue to be added to the Careers section of SDPA's website. A reminder that the website contains important information, including SDPA's By-laws and handbook. If there are other items you would like to see included on the website, please contact a member of our committee.

## **Old Business:**

- Newest members are not on the abbreviated roster and they will be asked about the opt-out option. A question was posed whether you have to login to the portal to access the abbreviated roster that is member-only. President Stucke answered that members do need to login and the password was provided—no username required. The updated abbreviated roster will be available in the next week or so.

## **New Business:**

- **Special Election of Officers:** The following officers were nominated to fill positions on the Executive Committee—Grace Collum, ACP for NALA Liaison and Carrie Reider, CP for Treasurer. President Stucke then requested nominations from the floor for these two positions—no nominations were received. President Stucke noted that no absentee ballots were received from the membership. A motion to accept the nominations and elect Grace Collum, ACP for NALA Liaison and Carrie Reider, CP for Treasurer was made and seconded (Paula Haight and Clara Kiley). The motion passed.
- **Transfer of Authority Over SDPA's Accounts:** President Stucke noted on the record that Sara Huber was elected SDPA President and Carrie Reider, CP was elected SDPA Treasurer, and that both have authority beginning at the end of the June 20, 2025, Annual Meeting to access and use SDPA's financial accounts.
- **Bylaws Amendments:** President Stucke announced that the membership cannot do a vote on the full amendments at this meeting due to the NALA Affiliated Association Bylaws requirements raised by Jessica Huyck, but that a vote would be taken on Article IV, Article X, and Article XIII.

- **Article IV – Membership:** President Stucke walked through the proposed amendments. No questions. A motion to accept the proposed changes was made and seconded (Michelle “Shelly” Tyndall and Grace Collum). The motion passed.
- **Article X – Standing and Special Committees:** President Stucke discussed the intent of the amendments were to combine committees since there is lower membership, to make a better use of the current members, and that similar efforts from committees were being combined, but committees still set their own guidelines as to the number of chairs and the duties. Questions were posed by the Education Committee regarding the requirement for seminars to be held in conjunction with the State Bar. The committee had no objection to hosting in the same city, but at the same hotel they don’t get the same amenities. The committee wants to know if they have to continue to do that? The committee raised concerns about the hotel in Pierre and the low turnout for the annual seminar. It was noted by a member that in the early years, the seminar was not at the same hotel, but in the same city. Discussion were held about the benefits of staying aligned with the State Bar, and that the Bylaws do not clarify what “in conjunction” means. Education Committee requested more time to review the language of the proposed amendments as to expectations on the Education Committee. No questions posed or concerns raised by or about the other committees being combined. A motion to approve amendment to Article X with the exception of Article X(1)(b) Education Committee was made and seconded (Courtney Vanden Berg and Clara Kiley). Motion passed.
- **Article XIII – Code of Ethics...:** President Stucke noted the membership will not proceed with a vote on this section until October.

## **Acknowledgements:** President Stucke noted the following:

- **2025 New Members:** President Stucke announced and welcomed SDPA’s newest members – Lori Van Pelt, Evelyn Gorman, and Stephanie Johnson.
- **Retirement Announcement – Clara Kiley, ACP:** President Stucke expressed heartfelt appreciation to SDPA member and outgoing NALA Liaison, Clara Kiley, ACP, for her hard work, dedication, and compassionate leadership of fellow members. Clara Kiley officially retired June 13, 2025, but President Stucke extended an invitation to her to be an Honorary Member of SDPA going forward.
- **CP Exam, Part 1 – Knowledge:** President Stucke acknowledged the following SDPA members who passed part one of the CP Exam, Knowledge, on June 14, 2025: Heidi Anderson, Anna Sorenson, Erika Fox, Araceli Jimenez Magdaleno, and Taylor Hageman. President Stucke thanked Amber Woldt for initially leading the Sioux Falls study group and Jennifer Frederick for leading the Watertown/Aberdeen study group.
- **ACP Scholarship Recipient – Clara Kiley, ACP:** President Stucke acknowledged Clara Kiley, ACP, as this year’s recipient of the ACP Scholarship, and congratulated her on earning her ACP credential, especially in light of her retirement.
- **2025 NALA Volunteer of the Year – Jennifer Frederick, CP:** Clara Kiley, ACP, summarized her nomination of Jennifer Frederick for her work in creating and organizing leadership materials to be used by SDPA with future CP Study Groups.
- **2025 NALA Associated Affiliations Award – SDPA’s Newsletter Committee:** Clara Kiley, ACP, read her nomination of the Newsletter Committee:
  - Our small but mighty South Dakota Paralegal Association has published a quarterly newsletter since the association was formed in 1989. Many larger associations do not generate newsletters for their members. Over the past 25 years, the newsletter has gone from being sent to a print shop for printing and mailing, to being created and produced in-house by members and emailed



to members. Current members of the newsletter committee include Chairperson, Jessi Stucke, Karen Armstrong, Stephanie Bahr, Jennifer Frederick, and Rebekah Mattern.

**Frederick** started working on the newsletter in 2011 and was one of the first members to work on the in-house newsletter format. She has been on the committee ever since, along with the many other hats she has worn in the association over the years.

**Armstrong** joined the newsletter committee in 2013 and chaired the committee until 2017. Since 2018, she has authored a grammar check segment included in every newsletter. The content of her grammar articles are a great CP study material resource. She also proofs and edits every issue.

**Stucke** has many untapped talents including a graphic design background. She joined the committee in 2016 and upgraded the look of the newsletter soon after. She took over chairing this committee from Armstrong, as well as helping with other committees and holding executive committee offices. She regularly reports on appellate decisions and provides tech tips in the newsletter.

**Mattern** regularly contributes content and filler items as needed to round out newsletter issues.

**Bahr** is the newest committee member and has used her graphic design background to assist formatting the last two issues.

- **Member of the Year – Vickie Blake, ACP:** Autumn Nelson read her nomination of Vicki Blake, ACP:
  - I nominate Vicki Blake for SDPA's Member of the Year award. Since I joined the association in 2015 at the start of my paralegal career, Vicki has exemplified the values and qualities that define this honor. Vicki demonstrates outstanding leadership and advocacy within SDPA, consistently taking initiative and supporting the association's mission. Her commitment to professional development and ethical practice is evident in the way she stays engaged with current issues in the field and encourages others to do the same. Over the years, I've personally benefited from her willingness to share knowledge and offer thoughtful guidance—she is a trusted mentor and a steadfast supporter of her colleagues. Beyond individual mentorship, Vicki contributes meaningfully to the advancement of the paralegal profession. Her dedication, integrity, and active involvement have made a lasting impact on both the association and the broader legal community. Vicki Blake is not only a valued member of SDPA but also a true ambassador for the paralegal profession. I can think of no one more deserving of this award.
- **2025-2026 Executive Committee – Welcome:** President Stucke welcomed the incoming Executive Committee – Sara Huber (President), Autumn Nelson, ACP (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President), Rebecca Goeken (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President), Grace Collum, ACP (NALA Liaison), Carrie Reider, CP (Treasurer), Jennifer Frederick, CP (Secretary). President Stucke personally thanked each member of the 2024-2025 Executive Committee for their hard work and support during her presidency. President Stucke was presented with a plaque by incoming President, Sara Huber, as a “Thank You” for her service to SDPA during her presidency.

## Announcements:

- Seminar attendees were reminded to complete the seminar evaluation forms.

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded (Dixie Bader and Courtney Vanden Berg) to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Jennifer Frederick, CP  
Secretary

## AUDIT

Chair: Vicki Blake, ACP  
[vicki@ddlaw.com](mailto:vicki@ddlaw.com)

EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken

No report, but see the following report from Carrie Reider, CP, Treasurer. Account balances have been removed due to this newsletter being available to the public. If any member would like a copy of the unredacted report, please contact Carrie. The official Treasurer's Report will be provided in advance of the Semi-Annual Meeting.

Savings: As of July 31, 2025, the savings account balance is XXX. Checking: As of July 10, 2025, the checking account balance is XXX. Included in the balance are additional fees collected for the June seminar. Expenses include meal and travel reimbursements for the NALA conference. Other expenses include catering services for the June seminar, an ACP scholarship, and the Member of the Year Award plaque. Credit Card: The July credit card statement showed a balance of \$XXX, which included purchases for new seminar equipment and the total cost of the June seminar social. Payment was due and paid in full on August 10.

I want to sincerely thank Tasha Altmann, ACP, Past Treasurer, for her ongoing support as I navigate this new role. Her guidance has been invaluable while I learn the ins and outs of being Treasurer.

I also want to thank our former President, Sara Huber, for asking me to consider serving. The thought had crossed my mind when we (the Nominations & Elections Committee) were searching for a nominee—all I needed was that nudge, and the timing couldn't have been more perfect. While I'm still learning, it's been an incredible experience so far, and I look forward to growing not only in this role, but also as a member of the Executive Committee.

## CLE LUNCHEONS

Chair: Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS  
[JStucke@rwwsh.com](mailto:JStucke@rwwsh.com)

Members: Vicki Blake, ACP  
Jennifer Frederick, CP  
Paula Haight, CP  
Jessica Huyck, ACP  
Carrie Reider, CP  
Laura Stewart

Please see the committee report in the minutes of the June 20, 2025, Annual Meeting.

## ETHICS

Chair: Jennifer Frederick, CP  
[Jen@SchoenbeckLaw.com](mailto:Jen@SchoenbeckLaw.com)

EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken

Member: Dixie Bader, CP  
Rebekah Mattern

Nothing to report.

## EDUCATION

Co-Chairs: Rebecca Goeken  
[GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com](mailto:GoekenR@GoosmannLaw.com)  
Courtney Vanden Berg, CP  
[Courtney@StrangeLaw.com](mailto:Courtney@StrangeLaw.com)

EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken  
Members: Dixie Bader, CP  
Paula Haight, CP  
Rebekah Mattern

The Education Committee is excited to announce that we have secured a date and location for the upcoming SDPA Semi-Annual Meeting and Seminar. Block your calendars and hold October 10 to join us in Sioux Falls, South Dakota at the new Steel District in downtown Sioux Falls. We are working hard to secure our lineup of speakers, including ending the day with ACEs training. If you are traveling to Sioux Falls, you can call today and book a room at the Canopy by Hilton. A block of rooms has been reserved under the SDPA Meeting. As always, you do not have to be a member of the SDPA to attend the seminars, so bring all your paralegal/legal assistant friends and co-workers with you and let's get our learn on. Our seminars are not only educational, but they are also a great way to network and meet other legal minded individuals from all over the state. We hope to see you all there!

Please check out and share the Facebook event posted on the SDPA's page.

We really enjoy the opportunity to put on these great seminars; however, we cannot do it without the generous help from our sponsors. If you, your firm, or anyone you know would like to sponsor an upcoming seminar, please complete a Sponsor Confirmation Form. The form can be found on the SDPA Website or you can email the committee for a copy of the form.

As always, the Education Committee always welcomes recommendations on topics, speakers, and ways to improve our educational seminars and ourselves within this amazing career. So, do not hesitate to share your thoughts or ideas with us and we will work on implementing them in our upcoming seminars. Please email any recommendations for upcoming seminars to Rebecca and Courtney. Also, there is a lot of work that goes into planning these events. If you want to help or be a part of the Education Committee, please consider joining the Education Committee and helping make the next seminar even better.

## LIBRARY

Courtney Vanden Berg, CP  
[Courtney@StrangeLaw.com](mailto:Courtney@StrangeLaw.com)

Please see the report in the March 2025 newsletter, and the report in the minutes of the June 20, 2025, Annual Meeting.

## JOB BANK

Chair: Laura Stewart  
[LStewart@FullerAndWilliamson.com](mailto:LStewart@FullerAndWilliamson.com)

EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken  
Members: Kayne Larimer, ACP  
Ashly Luke

Open positions are available on our website [here](#).

## MEMBERSHIP

Co-Chair: Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS  
[JessiStucke@outlook.com](mailto:JessiStucke@outlook.com)  
Autumn Nelson, ACP  
[AutumnN@HalbachLawFirm.com](mailto:AutumnN@HalbachLawFirm.com)

EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken  
Members: Stephanie Bahr

As of September 12, 2025, we have two new members for a total of 72 members, and one new member application pending.

**RECRUITMENT:** If you work with or know any paralegals or legal assistants who meet membership qualifications and are interested in joining SDPA, or if you would like us to contact them, please email Jessi or encourage them to email her. If you visit with the potential member yourself, we recommend providing them with a copy of the membership application, which you can download [here](#).

**MEMBERS:** Please remember to update any changes in your employment, home/work contact information, and your email address so that you receive timely notices, newsletters, and other important emails. All changes should be sent to Jessi.

**UPCOMING SEMI-ANNUAL SEMINAR:** Our seminars are the most effective way to learn more about the type of legal work you do, learn about other areas of the law, spend a day out of the office to focus on personal development, and network with people who understand your passion, dedication, and hard work, no matter what.

**RENEWALS:** Members can renew/alter their membership status by paying online, or by mailing the 2026 form with a check payment. Renewals will be available on the website in early December, and the paper form will be in the December newsletter. The paper form will also be a link in the online renewal page so you can download and print it. Watch for an email from the President in December, and please make sure to turn in renewal on or before December 31.

## NEWSLETTER

Chair: Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS  
[JStucke@rwwsh.com](mailto:JStucke@rwwsh.com)  
Members: Jennifer Frederick, CP  
Members: Karen Armstrong, PP, PLS  
Stephanie Bahr  
Rebekah Mattern

We hope you enjoyed this edition of SDPA's *Reporter*. If you are interested in contributing information or articles for future issues, please contact us! We welcome tips and suggestions!

# Committee Reports

## NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

Chair: Carrie Reider, CP  
[cjReider@fnbsf.com](mailto:cjReider@fnbsf.com)  
EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken  
Member: Jennifer Herr, ACP

### STEP INTO LEADERSHIP – SDPA NEEDS

**YOUR VOICE!** The strength of SDPA is built on the varied experiences, skills, and insights of our members. As we move forward, we're looking for leaders with fresh ideas, collaborative spirit, and a dedication to shaping the future of our association.

### OPEN POSITIONS:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (2026–2027 term)
- NALA Liaison (2026–2027 term)
- Secretary (2026–2028 term)

Whether you're a seasoned member or newer to SDPA, your perspective can make a real difference.

### IMPORTANT DATES AND VOTING OPTIONS:

- The election will take place at our October Semi-Annual Meeting.
- Can't attend in person? No problem! We offer absentee and virtual ballots to ensure all voices are heard—whether you'll be present or participating online.

If you've been thinking about stepping into a leadership role—or simply have ideas you'd like to bring forward—now is the perfect time >>>

<<< To learn more or submit a nomination, please reach out to the Nominations and Elections Committee or contact any current Executive Committee member.

**Your voice matters—help us shape the future of SDPA.**

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Vacant

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chair: Jennifer Frederick, CP  
[Jen@SchoenbeckLaw.com](mailto:Jen@SchoenbeckLaw.com)  
Member: Taylor Hageman

We hope to get one more ad in the Bar Newsletter before the end of the year.

## WEBSITE

Chair: Jessica Huyck, ACP  
[Jessica.Huyck@SDstate.edu](mailto:Jessica.Huyck@SDstate.edu)  
EC Liaison: Rebecca Goeken  
Members: Stephanie Bahr  
Carrie Reider, CP

The Website Committee continues to update job openings on SDPA's website and has updated the current Executive Committee information. Please take the time to review this information to learn more about the leaders of our organization.

## Q&A

If you would like to submit a question to our members on a legal or administrative issue, please email it to the President. The President will email your question to the membership and ask that members respond directly to you (or if you would like the request to be anonymous, let the President know and the President will forward responses to you).

If a member would like to respond anonymously, please send your response to the President, indicate that you would like your response to be anonymous, and the President will email your anonymous response in a new email without your information.

If a member would like to get a copy of any information received, contact the person who posed the question. Q&A emails go to all members unless one chooses to opt out. Members can opt in again at any time by emailing the Membership Committee Co-Chair, Jessi Stucke, ACP, CEDS @ [JessiStucke@outlook.com](mailto:JessiStucke@outlook.com). Opting out of the Q&A group doesn't remove you from the all-member group.



## *South Dakota Law Review*

The *South Dakota Law Review*, a publication of the University of South Dakota's Knudson School of Law, is always available online.

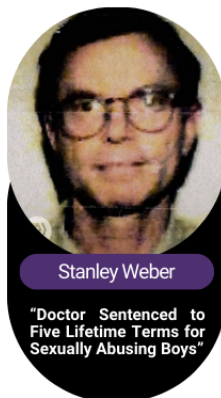
This year's symposium issue, Vol. 70, Issue 3 has been published. You can read it/locate previous issues [here](#).



Northeast South Dakota  
**FAMILY  
VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION**  
Conference

## JUSTICE AGAINST THE POWERFUL: A PROSECUTORS GUIDE TO HIGH-PROFILE CASES

Gain Insights from Real-World Prosecutions of Trusted Figures



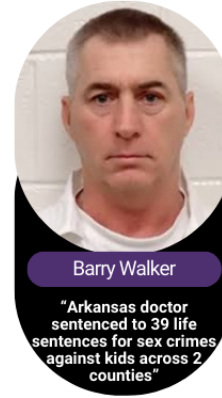
Stanley Weber

"Doctor Sentenced to Five Lifetime Terms for Sexually Abusing Boys"



Jerry Sandusky

"Coach and Founder of Second Mile sentenced to 30 to 45 years in prison."



Barry Walker

"Arkansas doctor sentenced to 39 life sentences for sex crimes against kids across 2 counties"

Dive deep into the hidden layers of institutional betrayal — from silenced victims to systemic cover-ups. These sessions will unpack how prosecutors unraveled decades of deception, exposed abuse cloaked in authority, and overcame barriers designed to protect the powerful. Learn how to pursue truth when the truth is buried beneath layers of influence, fear, and denial.



OCTOBER 15-16 | ABERDEEN, SD | LEARN MORE AT [NESDFAMILYVIOLENCE.COM](https://nesdfamilyviolence.com)



IN THE SUPREME COURT  
OF THE  
STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

\* \* \* \*

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION        )                    RULE 25-07  
OF A NEW RULE TO BE PART OF        )  
SDCL 15-6-58                        )  
  )

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A hearing was held on February 18, 2025, at Pierre, South Dakota, relating to the adoption of a new rule to be part of SDCL 15-6-58, and the Court having considered the proposed adoption and written and oral presentation relating thereto, now, therefore, it is

ORDERED that an adoption of a new rule to be part of SDCL 15-6-58 be adopted in its entirety as follows:

A party directed by the court to prepare an order or Judgment without findings of fact and conclusions of law shall prepare a proposed order or judgment and provide it to all parties within five days of being directed.

Thereafter, the parties shall have five days in which to confer in an effort to agree upon the form of the proposed order or judgment. If all parties agree as to the form of the proposed order or judgment, or if no objection to the form of the order or judgment is timely received from any opposing party, then the party preparing the proposed order or judgment shall insert "NO OBJECTION AS TO FORM BY COUNSEL" in the lower left-hand corner of the final page of the proposed order or judgment. If any party timely objects to the form of the order or judgment and the parties are unable to reach an agreement as to form during such five-day period, then each party shall submit a proposed order or judgment to the court within two days after the expiration of the five-day confer period.

Any objections as to form are waived by a party's failure to timely submit a proposed order or judgment to the court as provided in this rule, unless the party's failure is excused by the court for good cause shown.

This procedure may be modified by the court.

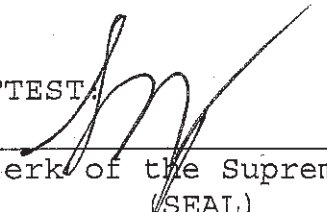
Rule 25-07

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this rule shall become effective April 1, 2025.

DATED at Pierre, South Dakota, this 5th day of March, 2025.

BY THE COURT:

ATTEST:

  
Clerk of the Supreme Court  
(SEAL)

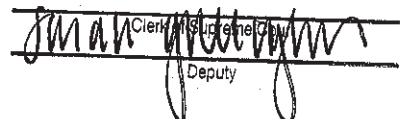
  
Steven R. Jensen, Chief Justice

SUPREME COURT  
STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
FILED

MAR - 5 2025

  
Clerk

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
In the Supreme Court  
I, Shirley A. Jameson-Fergel, Clerk of the Supreme Court of South Dakota, hereby certify that the within instrument is a true and correct copy of the original thereof as the same appears on record in my office. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said court at Pierre, SD, this 5 day of MARCH, 2025.

  
Deputy



[CLICK HERE for COMPLETE INFORMATION](#)



[CLICK HERE for COMPLETE INFORMATION](#)

ACP certification is available for Certified Paralegals and is focused on mastery of any of the following law specialties. Courses are self-study, web-based modules. The courses include presentations(s), detailed exercises, and a final assessment exam. Courses average 20 hours to complete.

**NEW! NALA members can take an ACP course at any time. If you pass the CP exams within one year of successfully completing the ACP course prior to passing the CP exams, you will automatically be awarded the ACP credential!**

#### Online Module / Self-Paced Study

Chapter exercises/assessments. Upon passing, applicants submit a letter of intent to incorporate content into practice.

**BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS:** Incorporated Entities **Updated!**

**CONTRACT MANAGEMENT** **Updated!**

**DISCOVERY** **Updated!**

**CALIFORNIA ADVANCED SPECIALIZATION IN DISCOVERY** **BACK!**

**E-DISCOVERY**

**FAMILY LAW:** Adoption & Assisted Reproduction

**LAND USE**

**PERSONAL INJURY** **Brand New!**

**REAL ESTATE PRINCIPLES**

**UNAVAILABLE: (COURSE UPDATES IN PROGRESS)**

**CRIMINAL LITIGATION**

**FAMILY LAW:**

- Child Custody, Child Support, Visitation
  - Dissolution Case Management
- Division of Property & Spousal Support

**TRIAL PRACTICE**

SDPA has two copies of the current edition of the CP exam manual, available for checkout from the library!

SDPA also offers one CP exam reimbursement and two ACP exam reimbursements each year for any member whose employer did not pay for the exam. These are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Get more information [here](#) (CP) and [here](#) (ACP).

#### Part 1

#### KNOWLEDGE Exam

Available year-round at PSI testing centers. Contact your chosen testing center for availability.

- Administered on-demand, year-round at testing centers with preliminary results upon completion.
- 120\* multiple-choice questions covering the topics listed in Appendix A online. *Only 100 questions will be scored.*
- Subjects addressed:
  - Bankruptcy
  - Civil Litigation
  - Contract Law
  - Corporate/Commercial Law
  - Criminal Law & Procedure
  - Debtor/Creditor
  - Estate Planning & Probate
  - Family Law
  - Professional & Ethical Responsibility
  - Real Estate & Property
  - Torts
  - U.S. Legal System

Candidates must successfully complete the Knowledge Exam in order to be eligible to take the Skills Exam.

- Candidates must wait at least two weeks after passing the Knowledge Exam to take the Skills Exam.

#### Part 2

#### SKILLS Exam

Candidates are eligible two weeks after passing the Knowledge Exam.

- Administered four times each year: February, April, July, and October.
- Written assignment (see Appendix A online).
- Written submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

##### WRITING

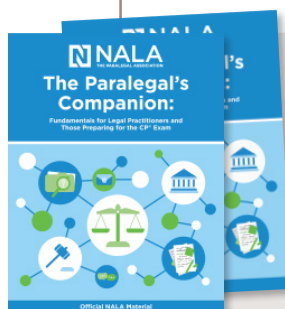
- Grammar, Spelling & Punctuation
- Clarity of Expression

##### CRITICAL THINKING

- Reading Comprehension
- Analysis of Information
- Decision Making

#### Re-Testing

Candidates who do not pass the Knowledge Exam must wait 90 days before re-taking it. Candidates must pass each exam within the first three attempts at each exam during a 365-day period or wait 365 days before trying again.





## **BYLAWS OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION, INC.**

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this association shall be South Dakota Paralegal Association, Inc. (SDPA). This association shall be affiliated with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA).

### ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES

The objectives and purposes of this association are:

- a. To establish good fellowship among association members, NALA, and members of the legal community.
- b. To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment.
- c. To further education among members of the profession.
- d. To cooperate with bar associations.
- e. To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of NALA.

### ARTICLE III. POLICY

This association shall be nonsectarian, nonpartisan, nonprofit, and nonunion. No actions or programs may be initiated or undertaken (now or in the future) in conflict with the bylaws of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., or of the policies of that association.

### ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

*Section 1. Classes of Membership.* There shall be five classes of membership: Active Member, Student Member, Associate Member, Sustaining Member, and Honorary Member.

*Section 2. Active Member Qualifications.* Active membership in this association shall be open to any individual who is employed by a licensed attorney as a legal assistant or paralegal or otherwise meets the definition of a legal assistant under SDCL 16-18-34, who has a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) or Degree, and who meets at least one of the following requirements:

- a. Successful completion of Certified Paralegal (CP) examination of NALA (reference here to the CP credential is inclusive of its predecessor, the Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) credential), or
- b. Graduation from an ABA approved program of study for legal assistants, or
- c. Graduation from a course of study for legal assistants which is institutionally accredited, but not ABA approved, and which requires not less than the equivalent of 60 semester hours of classroom study, or
- d. Graduation from a course of study for legal assistants other than those set forth above, plus not less than 6 months of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant, or

- e. Baccalaureate degree in any field, plus not less than 6 months of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant, or
- f. Minimum of 3 years law-related experience under the supervision of a licensed attorney, including at least 6 months of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant, or
- g. Minimum of 2 years of in-house training as a legal assistant, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a legal assistant.

Active members will maintain their active status upon renewal each year if they continue to be employed by a licensed attorney. In the event a member is no longer employed by a licensed attorney, that member will be required to renew under Associate status, or upon review by the Membership Committee, will automatically be moved to Associate status.

*Section 3. Student Membership.* Student membership shall be open to any individual who meets and submits the following criteria:

- a. A student who is enrolled at any university, college, junior college, or other educational institution on a course of study as a legal assistant/paralegal and who has completed one-half of the required curriculum for graduation from that program; and
- b. Submits (1) an attestation from the director of the program that the individual is a student in good standing (or the course professor in the event the student is in the process of completing a certificate course of study); (2) proof of enrollment at their respective educational institution; and (3) verification of the course(s) completed. These submissions must be made each time a student's membership is renewed. Student membership may not be renewed if that person is eligible for active membership.

Student members will maintain their student status upon renewal each year, as long as they continue to meet the requirements and are not yet eligible for active membership. SDPA will allow student members who have graduated to remain a student member up to the expiration of the current fiscal year, or for six (6) months following December 31 of the current fiscal year, whichever is later. The SDPA provides this grace period to students during their transition to the paralegal profession.

*Section 4. Associate Members.* Associate membership shall be open to any individual who meets the following qualifications:

- a. Members of the State Bar of South Dakota who endorse or are involved in the promotion of the legal assistant/paralegal profession.
- b. Members of the educational field who endorse or are involved in the promotion of the legal assistant/paralegal profession.
- c. Members of the law office management field who endorse or are involved in the promotion of the legal assistant/paralegal profession.
- d. Membership shall be open to any individual qualified in the past for active membership under Article IV, Section 2.

Associate members will be allowed to maintain their associate status upon renewal each year. Active members are free to change to associate member status upon renewal. In the event an associate member would like to become an active member again, proof that they meet the active member qualifications would be required. Full application would not be required.

*Section 5. Sustaining Members.* Sustaining membership is open to those organizations, law firms, corporations, legal assistant/paralegal education program representatives, and other entities who endorse or are involved in the promotion of the legal assistant profession and contribute dues as set by the Executive Committee. Sustaining members will maintain their status upon renewal each year.

*Section 6. Honorary Members.* Honorary membership is open to any active or formerly active associate members who have retired from the paralegal profession in good standing with this association. An honorary member will not serve on committees and will not have voting privileges. As an honorary member, you will not be charged an annual membership fee, but will receive all communications from SDPA as an active member would, as well as receive member pricing on any membership event.

*Section 7. Members Qualified to Vote.* Only active members in good standing shall be qualified to vote at membership meetings or upon other matters coming to the members for action. No active member who is delinquent in the payment of any dues or other assessments shall be qualified to vote. In no event shall student, associate, sustaining, or honorary members vote.

## ARTICLE V. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Application for membership shall be submitted on forms that clearly state that the association is an affiliated association of NALA and that all active members are bound by the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility in addition to any code adopted by the association. Membership applications and dues shall be submitted to the Treasurer, who shall deposit the funds and forward the application to the membership committee. A membership application may be rejected by the Chair of the Membership Committee or by the Executive Committee if the qualifications of membership are not met, or if the applicant has been convicted of a felony or been disbarred or suspended from the practice of law in any jurisdiction.

## ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

For purposes of this article, “meetings,” “seminars,” and “workshops” are intended to reference in person gatherings, circumstances permitting. They shall also be streamed live through the hosting platform designated by the Executive Committee. In the event in person gatherings are not possible or are not advised, they will be held solely through the hosting platform.

*Section 1. Annual Meeting.* The annual membership meeting shall be held in conjunction with the State Bar Convention in June each year, the actual date, time and place to be determined from year to year by the President, with written notice to all members not less than thirty (30) days before the date of the meeting. The notice will also contain the slate of officers. The purpose of the annual meeting is to hear reports of officers and chairpersons, and to transact such other business as may come before the meeting.



*Section 2. Semi-Annual Meeting.* A semi-annual membership meeting shall be held in the fall of each year. The actual date, time and place of the meeting is to be determined from year to year by the President, with written notice to all members not less than thirty (30) days before the date of the meeting. The purpose of the semi-annual meeting is to elect the slate of officers who will take office following the Annual Meeting, to hear reports of officers and chairpersons, to adopt a budget for the ensuing fiscal year, and to transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

*Section 3. Special Meetings.* Special meetings of the members may be called by the President or by the Executive Committee, and shall be called by the President at the request of members having not less than one-twentieth (1/20) of the votes entitled to be cast at such meeting. Written notice stating the place, day, hour, and purpose for which a special meeting is called shall be delivered not less than fifteen (15) days before the date of the meeting.

*Section 4. Seminars or Workshops.* It is required that this association hold a minimum of four (4) educational events or a total of ten (10) hours of education during each fiscal year in order to maintain affiliation with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. These programs may be held in conjunction with a membership meeting. These seminars or workshops will be organized by the Education Committee, as outlined in Article X, Section 1(d).

*Section 5. Voting.*

- a. Each active member of the association shall be entitled to one vote. Absentee ballots may also be used to elect officers, on forms provided by the Nominations and Elections Committee and returned prior to the annual meeting.
- b. At any meeting of the membership of the association, any active member shall also have the right to vote by individual proxy. A member may appoint another member and one alternate as proxy by an appropriate written designation and proxy. Any such individual proxy shall be valid on for that single meeting for which it shall have been given and not otherwise. No person shall solicit any proxies and proxies obtained by such solicitation may not be used at any membership meeting nor shall same be accepted by the secretary. Any individual proxy shall be deemed filed by a member with the Secretary when received ten (10) days prior to the date of the designated meeting.

*Section 6. Quorum.* Those members present and qualified to vote shall constitute a quorum at a membership meeting, and the majority of such quorum shall, for voting purposes, be necessary for the adoption of any matter brought before the meeting. In the event of a vote for dissolution, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and qualified to vote. For purposes of this section, to be “present,” means to be either in physical attendance or in virtual attendance via the web hosting platform designated by the Executive Committee.

*Section 7. Executive Committee Meetings.* A meeting of both incoming and outgoing Executive Committees shall be held each year immediately after the annual membership meeting at which time files will be passed to successors and any other business conducted as determined by the President. The committee will meet at other such times and in such manner as determined by the President or by a majority of the Executive Committee. A majority of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business. Special meetings of the Executive Committee

may be called by the President upon ten (10) days' notice. The Executive Committee may vote by mail ballot, by facsimile, or by electronic transmission, and such vote will be conclusive as if the Executive Committee had personally met.

*Section 8. Meeting Notices.* Any notices of the time, place, and purpose of any meeting as specified in these Bylaws shall be addressed to all Members or Executive Committee at the address appearing on the membership roster and may be given either by mail, email or facsimile. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail. If by email or facsimile, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when electronically transmitted to the individual entitled to receive the same. The manner of giving notice shall be authorized by the Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE VII. DUES AND ASSESSMENTS

*Section 1.* The dues of this association shall be payable by January 1 of each year and are commensurate for the different categories of membership. The amount of dues and any late fee shall be determined by the Executive Committee. Upon failure of a member to pay their dues by January 31, the membership shall be deemed delinquent. Membership renewals postmarked during the month of February will incur a late fee, which shall be included in addition to the annual dues. Upon failure of a member to pay annual dues and late fees by March 1, the membership will be terminated. Any member whose membership has lapsed because of nonpayment of dues shall be required to pay the initiation fee upon application to rejoin the Association and dues in accordance with Section 2 of this Article.

*Section 2.* Dues of new members shall be prorated as follows, according to the date of application for membership:

January 1 through March 31:	100% of the annual membership dues
April 1 through June 30:	75% of the annual membership dues
July 1 through September 30:	50% of the annual membership dues
October 1 through December 31:	25% of the annual membership dues

Dues paid under this section shall constitute payment in full through December 31, at which time annual dues for the next year must be paid in accordance with Section 1 of this Article.

*Section 3.* In addition to the membership dues, a one-time fee shall be charged to the member upon application for membership in the Association. The amount of the initiation fee shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

*Section 4. Budgets.* Monetary budgets will be allowed by the Executive Committee to each committee for its use to help grow the association. The committee chair/s will ensure that the committee is spending within its allocated budget and will work with the acting Treasurer to ensure there is no over-spending.

*Section 5. Sponsors and sponsorship funds.* Each committee will have the opportunity to recruit sponsors and/or sponsorship funds, in cash or in-kind, for their respective committee. Each committee that raises funds will notify the acting Treasurer of any funds raised through

sponsorships so that said funds are available for that committee's sole use. The committee chair/s will notify the acting Treasurer of their intended use for the sponsorship funds and will be required to report such expenditures as a part of their committee report to the members at large. Sponsors will be provided the option of advertisement opportunities with our association (i.e. on our website, in our newsletters, and/or during our seminars). A committee may request from another committee a gift of budgeted and/or sponsorship funds. Each committee reserves the right to allow or decline to gift funds to other committees.

## ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The elected officers shall be the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and NALA Liaison. The President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President shall be from diverse geographic locations within the state, insofar as reasonably possible, and all officers shall be active members. The appointed officer shall be the Parliamentarian. The business and affairs of the Association will be managed by the Executive Committee, who shall discharge their duties in good faith and benefit of the membership. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the elected officers (as set forth in ARTICLE IX). The Executive Committee has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Association that are not inconsistent with other Articles and shall act as a planning committee bringing recommendations to the membership for a vote.

Officers shall be elected at the semi-annual meeting and then shall assume office at the close of the next annual meeting. President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and NALA Liaison shall serve for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. The Secretary and Treasurer shall serve for a term of two years, to be elected in alternating years, or until their successors are elected.

No officer or member shall be compensated for association duties. However, persons may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses in connection with association-related activities, provided the expenses are covered by the budget approved by the membership or as approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE IX. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND VACANCIES

*Section 1. Nominations and Elections Committee.* The President shall appoint a Nominations and Elections Committee consisting of a chairperson and three active members at least sixty (60) days prior to the semi-annual meeting. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall present a slate of officers to the membership thirty (30) days prior to election and perform such other duties as are required under these Bylaws. No name shall be on the slate without the consent of the candidate.

*Section 2. Election Procedure.* Nominations from the floor shall be accepted and election shall be by majority vote of the absentee ballots and members present who are qualified to vote, which shall be by ballot prepared by the Nominations and Elections committee, except that if there is but one candidate for each office, the ballot may be dispensed with and the officers elected by voice vote. If no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, all but the two highest for such



office shall be eliminated and the balloting continued. If the vote remains a tie after the second ballot, the election shall be decided by lot.

*Section 3. Vacancies in Office.* In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the First Vice President shall succeed to the office for the unexpired term and shall continue in the office of President for the following year. In that event, or for any other reason where the office of First Vice President shall be vacant, either the Second Vice President shall succeed to the office of First Vice President, or alternatively, a qualified candidate may be appointed by the executive committee to fill the vacancy until the next election. For any reason where the office of Second Vice President shall become vacant, a Second Vice President shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve until the next election.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Secretary, Treasurer, or NALA Liaison, the Executive Committee shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, who shall be eligible to seek election to the office the following year.

*Section 4. Submission to NALA.* Names of newly elected or appointed officers shall be submitted to NALA headquarters and the Affiliated Associations Director by the NALA Liaison within thirty (30) days after election and/or appointment.

*Section 5. Removal of Officers.* Any officer (elected or appointed)

- a. If absent from three consecutive meetings without good cause, may be removed from office by majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- b. Any officer may also be removed for nonperformance of duties by majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- c. Any officer may also be removed, with or without cause, by (a) vote of majority of the members present at an annual or special meeting called for that purpose, or (b) by a vote of a majority of the members by special ballot prepared by the Nomination and Elections Committee at the request of either the Executive Committee or at the request of members having not less than one twentieth (1/20) of the votes entitled to be cast at such meeting.

## ARTICLE X. STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

*Section 1. Standing Committees.* The standing committees and respective officers who shall chair such committees are as follows:

- a. *Ethics and Oversight Committee.* This committee shall consist of at least two active members, one of whom should preferably be a past Treasurer. This committee is responsible for auditing the Treasurer's books at the close of the fiscal year prior to the annual meeting. Additionally, the committee shall investigate and report any potential violations of SDCL 16-18-34, et. seq., NALA's Code of Ethics and Responsibility, or any code adopted by SDPA to the Executive Committee for appropriate action, which may include censure, expulsion, or discipline of members. Finally, this committee shall be current on general ethics guidance regarding the utilization of paralegals and provide such updates and other information to members through the committee's reports or in any SDPA publication.

- b. *Education Committee.* This committee shall plan seminars and workshops and work with NALA, the State Bar and other organizations, in the event of co-sponsorship of any programs. The committee shall be responsible for fulfilling the educational requirements under Article VI of these Bylaws and its chairperson shall report such educational meetings to the NALA Liaison. The term of this committee shall run from January to December, with each committee planning the annual seminar/workshop in June and a semi-annual seminar/workshop in the fall.
- c. *Membership Committee.* This committee is dedicated to fostering and expanding membership within the association through promotional materials directed to non-members and in coordination with other committees. This committee develops programs aimed at encouraging new membership and evaluates applicants to ensure they meet the qualifying criteria. Once an applicant is assessed, the committee notifies them of their acceptance or rejection and sends out the appropriate materials and membership certificates to new members. In addition, the committee manages all membership renewals starting in January, following up on any outstanding renewals through the end of the termination period. The committee is responsible for maintaining a current membership roster, including updates to membership contact information, making the roster available to all committees as needed for their operational needs, and for creating an abbreviated version of the roster for posting on the Member Portal. The committee will report to the Ethics and Oversight Committee any known or suspected misuse of the membership roster for investigation and for handling pursuant to Section 1(a) of this Article.
- d. *Media Committee.* This committee shall publish and distribute the association's newsletter quarterly and provide assistance with promotional materials in coordination with other committees. In addition, the committee will manage the association's social media platforms and maintain the website, responding to inquiries from both members and non-members. The committee will also post current job opportunities for legal assistants and paralegals as received from the Professional Development Committee and will post additional materials to the Member Portal as operations require.
- e. *Nominations and Elections Committee.* [See Article IX, Section 1.]
- f. *Professional Development Committee.* This committee shall monitor and report current case law relating to the utilization of legal assistants and paralegals, including information distributed by NALA's Professional Developmental Committee regarding case law and other activities affecting the profession. Therefore, the chair of this committee will preferably be a NALA member. This committee will actively promote local professional engagement within the legal community by developing initiatives that cultivate strong relationships with both legal professionals and the public. Key responsibilities include preparing promotional materials for publication with the South Dakota State Bar Association and other media outlets, assisting the Media Committee with social media content, and collaborating with the Education and Membership Committees to promote seminars, workshops, and membership in SDPA to local attorneys and non-members. Through these efforts, the committee aims to enhance the visibility and value of SDPA in the community and educate the community regarding the utilization of legal assistants and paralegals. This committee shall maintain a listing of jobs available to legal assistants in South Dakota as provided by prospective employers.

*Section 2. Special Committees.* Special committees, their chair(s), and their duties may be appointed at any time by the President.

*Section 3. Other duties as requested or assigned.* All committees should be open to undertaking any other duties as discussed or assigned by the Executive Committee, all with the aim of enhancing the member experience and strengthening the association.

## ARTICLE XI. ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

*Section 1. President.* The President shall preside over all Executive Committee meetings and membership meetings. The President shall appoint a Parliamentarian, special and standing committee members and chairpersons as provided in these bylaws. The President shall pass files to the successor immediately upon installation and shall be ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees except the committee on nominations and elections. The President shall serve as the State Bar Liaison, represent the association in its relations with the State Bar, and shall perform other duties incident to the office of President. The President may serve as the Executive Committee's liaison to the Ethics Committee and the Audit Committee.

*Section 2. First Vice President.* The First Vice President shall exercise the functions of President in absence or disability of the President and, when so acting, shall have all of the powers and authority of the President, and shall succeed to the office of President the following term. The First Vice President shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Executive Committee or the President. The First Vice President may serve as the Executive Committees liaison to the Educational Programs Committee and Job Bank Committee.

*Section 3. Second Vice President.* The Second Vice President shall exercise the functions of the First Vice President in the absence or disability of the First Vice President and shall succeed to the office of First Vice President the following term. The Second Vice President shall perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Executive Committee or the President. The Second Vice President may serve as the Executive Committees liaison to the Membership Committee and Professional Development Committee.

*Section 4. Secretary.* The Secretary shall be responsible for minutes for all meetings, keeping permanent minutes and records, and filing the triennial report [once every three (3) years] with the Secretary of State, when appropriate. This officer shall assist the President in any way, including giving notice of meetings. Association minutes of any meeting shall be available to the NALA President upon request. The Secretary may serve as the Executive Committee's liaison to the Newsletter Committee and the Public Relations Committee.

*Section 5. Treasurer.* The Treasurer shall deposit all funds and make all disbursements as provided in the budget. Any over-budgeted expenditure must be approved by the Executive Committee before payment. The Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee, which committee shall prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year, to be submitted to the Executive Committee prior to presentation at the semi-annual meeting, and adopted by the membership at the semiannual meeting. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, the Treasurer may be bonded with the premium paid by the association. All disbursements of association funds must be made by association check, signed by the Treasurer or the President. This officer shall keep the books on a current basis and, in conjunction with the Membership Committee Chair, shall submit a written financial report at each membership meeting to be attached to the official minutes as part of the



permanent record. The Treasurer is also responsible for keeping a current membership roster and reporting the membership annually to NALA with the renewal fee for continued affiliation with NALA.

*Section 6. NALA Liaison.* This officer shall be a NALA member, shall be familiar with the NALA Bylaws and Standing Rules, shall receive minutes of all NALA meetings, and shall represent the association at the NALA annual meeting of affiliated associations. This officer shall report quarterly on association activities to the NALA affiliated associations director on forms provided by NALA headquarters, and shall report all officers' names to NALA headquarters and the NALA affiliated associations director. The NALA Liaison may serve as the Executive Committee's liaison to the Parliamentarian and Library Committee.

This officer may submit items the association wishes to be discussed to the NALA affiliated associations director and shall participate in discussions at NALA annual meetings. A report to association members on the NALA annual meeting will be required.

This officer shall, within sixty days of passage, notify the NALA Parliamentarian and affiliated associations director of any changes in the association's bylaws. This officer shall be the main contact between NALA and the association. This officer shall be a member of the Executive Committee of this association.

*Section 7. Parliamentarian.* The Parliamentarian shall attend all meetings, as referenced in Section 1 and Section 2 of Article VI, and give opinions on parliamentary procedures upon request of the President. This officer shall be familiar with the association bylaws, NALA bylaws, shall receive all proposed bylaw amendments, prepare standing rules and amendments to standing rules and bylaws upon request of the Executive Committee. Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall serve as parliamentary authority for items not covered by these bylaws or the association standing rules.

*Section 8. Librarian.* The librarian shall be responsible for maintaining a library of books, magazines, articles, publications, video and cassette tapes, NALA's Findings of Fact and Career Chronicles, SDPA newsletters, and other written materials related to the legal assistant profession. The librarian shall provide the materials or copies for a fee set by the Executive Committee.

*Section 9. Registered Agent and Office.* The association shall maintain a registered office and agent with the Secretary of State, whose business office is identical with the registered office.

## ARTICLE XII. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of this association shall be from January 1 to December 31.

## ARTICLE XIII. SOUTH DAKOTA SUPREME COURT RULE 97-25, CODE OF ETHICS, CENSURE, EXPULSION OR DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

*Section 1. South Dakota Supreme Court Rule 97-25. Section 1. Statutes and Rules.* Each member of this association shall subscribe to and be bound by any statutes or rules adopted by the South Dakota Legislature or the Supreme Court of the State of South Dakota relating to legal assistants

or paralegals. Rule 97-25, which is S.D.C.L. § 16-18-34, et.seq., otherwise known as the Rule Relating to the Utilization of Legal Assistants.

*Section 2. Code of Ethics.* Every member of this association shall subscribe to and be bound by the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., and any other code so adopted by the membership of this association.

*Section 3. Censure, Expulsion or Discipline of Members.* The right to censure, suspend, expel, call for the resignation of or otherwise discipline any member is vested in the Executive Committee. Any member may be censured, suspended, expelled or otherwise disciplined for conduct discreditable to the association or the profession.

*Section 4. Procedure.* A member charged with misconduct shall be given written notice of the nature of the charges against him/her. He/she shall have 10 days to request a hearing, whereupon the Executive Committee shall set a time and place on 20 days' notice, at which he/she may have an opportunity to be heard in person or by his/her representative. The Executive Committee may refer any charges against a member to a committee for investigation, hearing and report, and may act upon the report of the committee without further evidence, notice or hearing. The Executive Committee may, in its discretion and upon the terms, reinstate the membership of a member.

## ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Bylaw amendments (not in conflict with NALA bylaws) may be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) majority of active members present and qualified to vote at any special or semi-annual or annual meeting. Bylaw amendments must be presented to the membership at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which they will be voted upon. The NALA Liaison must notify the NALA Parliamentarian of any amendments within sixty (60) days of passage.

Automatic grammatical, punctuation and correction changes in these Bylaws which in no way alter their intent, shall be effected by the Parliamentarian, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution, all property and assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit charitable organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, to be selected by a majority vote of the remaining members of the association, notice having been given to members of the association and the NALA affiliated associations director at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. In no event shall any such property and assets be distributed to any member or private individual.

## ARTICLE XVI. RETENTION OF AFFILIATION

Affiliation with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., is renewable each year by payment of an affiliation fee and attached to a current membership roster. In the event of suspension of affiliation, this association may re-affiliate with NALA by submitting a new application with membership roster, bylaws, sample of educational programs, petition and current initial fee.

In addition to the renewal fee, this association must comply with the required reports and requested procedures as outlined in these bylaws.

The annual affiliation fee is payable on October 1 and delinquent November 1. Payment received after due date must be accompanied by a late fee penalty established by NALA.

## ARTICLE XVII. ENACTMENT

These Bylaws and/or amendments thereto shall become effective at the close of the meeting at which adopted, unless otherwise specified, subject to review and approval by NALA.

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Adopted by the Membership October 15, 1999, with revision one adopted June 23, 2000; revision two adopted June 22, 2001; revision three adopted June 20, 2003; revision four adopted June 20, 2014; non- substantive revisions (as approved by the Executive Committee and Parliamentarian) effected 8/21/2017; revision five adopted October 6, 2017; revision six adopted; revision seven adopted June 19, 2020; revision eight adopted October 21, 2022, revision nine, part 1, adopted June 20, 2025.