



Illinois Association of Healthcare Attorneys Mentoring Guide

Getting Started

Arrange to meet in person, if possible within the first month or so, to introduce and learn about each other. Although your pairing is a formal assignment, many components of the mentoring relationship are informal. The development of the relationship is up to both of you.

<p>Meetings and Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss when, where, and how often to meet. • Set up regularly scheduled meetings with each other (if possible). • Look for opportunities to check-in between planned meetings by phone and email. • Identify potential activities or events you could attend together. • The mentee is encouraged to reach out to the mentor throughout the year as the mentor and mentee deem appropriate. The mentor need not initiate all communications or discussions.
<p>SMART Goals and an Action Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mentee is encouraged to develop 3-4 SMART goals s/he wants to achieve during the mentoring year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S – Specific – The goal should be concrete and action-oriented M – Measurable – The goal should have a standard to determine it has been achieved. A – Achievable – The goal should require effort but be attainable. R – Realistic – The mentee should have the ability and commitment to reach the goal. T – Timely – Assign a time-frame for achieving the goal. • The mentor and mentee should develop an action plan to achieve the goals.
<p>Mentor - Be a Resource</p> <p>Even if your mentee doesn't ask specific questions, consider offering what you know about these areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest questions a mentee should ask when receiving a work assignment. • Suggest resources that are available in the legal community relevant to the mentee's practice area or interests • Give the mentee practical information, e.g. how to use a secretary or how to prioritize work. • Introduce the mentee to others in your network that seem logical. • Think of what you wish someone had told you as a new health care attorney and share the information. • Ask open-ended questions to elicit detailed responses about what they are working on and how they are doing so they are encouraged to respond fully.

Suggested Topics and Discussion

- **Career Development** – Discuss a particular practice area, such as how it weathers certain economic cycles, what typical clients are like, if work tends to be many small projects or a few larger ones, etc.
- **Writing and Oral Communication Skills** – Discuss different writing styles, e.g. law school, firm, or in-house, and how to transition from one to another. Include briefs, contracts, and other legal documents. Discuss good communication tactics, including with clients, opposing counsel, and other attorneys or staff within a firm or organization.
- **Work Style** – Share lessons learned about time management, problem solving, organization, issue spotting, judgment, initiative, reliability, building an internal and external reputation, etc.
- **Practice Development** – Explore what the mentee is good at and interested in, and how that can grow within a practice group. Encourage the mentee to attend closings, hearings, depositions, and other worthwhile events and meetings the mentor may be involved in.
- **Ethics** – Describe a real situation that arose with a case or client.
- **Nuts and Bolts of Daily Working Life** – Discuss how to supervise and motivate staff, how to resolve conflicts, how to work on a team, methods for keeping colleagues and clients informed, etc.
- **Get to Know Each Other** – Learning personal details will help to solidify your professional relationship. Ask about life outside of the office - hobbies, what drew them to the law, whether they have pets or family, etc. and share lifework balance experiences and tips.
- **Feedback** – Mentor, provide as much feedback as you can. Share information on how a mentee can improve or what the mentee does well. Ask your mentee if they would like you to examine and evaluate some of their writing in draft form and offer constructive criticism/edits/revisions, so long as it may not compromise client confidentiality or privileged work product.