

Court Information Release



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Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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Northern District of Illinois Trial Bar members urged to renew by April 17, 2017

Chicago, Ill.- The full court for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois recently approved changes to Local Rules, which now include a provision requiring the court's Trial Bar members to renew their Trial Bar membership every three years. All current Trial Bar members must renew their membership by April 17, 2017. The renewal fee is currently a modest \$25.00, one-half of the current fee for admission to the Trial Bar.

The new provision was motivated by feedback provided to the court by the Northern District of Illinois Pro Bono Advisory Committee and by Trial Bar members in a survey the court conducted at the end of 2015.

"The Committee, after reviewing the surveys, made recommendations to the court on how to improve Trial Bar membership and the court's pro bono program. This new renewal requirement is critical because it will allow the court to better track Trial Bar members and more effectively make pro bono assignments," said Bob Glaves, Chair of the Northern District of Illinois Pro Bono Advisory Committee and Executive Director of the Chicago Bar Foundation.

"Admission to the Northern District of Illinois Trial Bar is a distinction of prestige and experience. Trial Bar members provide an incredible benefit to our court and to the greater community through their pro bono service. Thank you to all Trial Bar members for your continued membership and service," said Chief Judge Rubén Castillo.

"We especially appreciate the outstanding work of the Pro Bono Advisory Committee in assisting the court in turning feedback into real improvements," added Chief Judge Castillo.

Trial Bar renewal fees collected will be deposited into an account used to reimburse expenses for attorneys providing pro bono representation. In 2016, the court moved, also as result of survey feedback, to increase the pro bono expense reimbursement caps in order to allow pro bono lawyers to more effectively represent their clients.

A Trial Bar membership renewal form is available on the [court's web site](#). All registration and payment can be made electronically.

The Trial Bar was created to raise the level of quality and professionalism at proceedings in the Northern District of Illinois. In order to appear as lead at testimonial proceedings in the Northern District of Illinois, an attorney must be a member of the court's Trial Bar. Among the responsibilities of Trial Bar attorneys is the duty to be available for assignment by the court to represent and assist in the representation of those who cannot afford counsel

In order to become a member of the Northern District of Illinois Trial Bar, an attorney must be sponsored by one current member of the Trial Bar who has known the applicant for at least one year, must be a member in good standing of the Court's general bar, and must provide evidence of requisite trial experience.

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