

## Frequently Asked Questions about Trial Bar Membership

### Trial Bar Membership

#### **What are the benefits of Trial Bar membership?**

Admission to the Northern District of Illinois District Court's Trial Bar is a distinction of prestige and experience. 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.

Trial Bar members are invited to participate in training programs and networking events, including events led by the Court's judges. Trial Bar members also have access to the Trial Bar attorney work room/lounge in 2302 A of the Dirksen Courthouse and are eligible to enroll their children and grandchildren at the Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow Day Care Center on the second floor of the Dirksen Courthouse.

#### **How do I become a member of the Trial Bar?**

Trial Bar applicants must be sponsored by one current member of the Trial Bar who has known the applicant for at least one year. In order to qualify for the Trial Bar, attorneys must be a member in good standing of this Court's general bar and provide evidence that they have the requisite trial experience. An applicant must provide documentation that they have earned four "qualifying units of credit" through participation in or the observation of trials. An applicant can also receive simulation credits for successful completion of a qualifying trial advocacy class. Further details can be found at

[http://www.ilnd.uscourts.gov/\\_assets/documents/Trial%20Bar%20Instructions.pdf](http://www.ilnd.uscourts.gov/_assets/documents/Trial%20Bar%20Instructions.pdf)

Trial Bar application instructions are available at

<http://www.ilnd.uscourts.gov/TrialBarAdmission.aspx>

#### **What responsibilities come with Trial Bar membership?**

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. Once a Trial Bar member has been assigned and fulfilled the duty to provide pro bono representation, he or she will not be called upon again until each member of the Trial Bar has similarly fulfilled his or her obligation.

Other responsibilities include the duty to maintain current contact information with the Clerk and the duty to be available to supervise attorneys in the process of obtaining observation units

necessary to qualify for membership to the Trial Bar. Trial Bar members are also required to renew their Trial Bar membership every three years.