



# Virginia State Bar

**Date:** June 3-4, 2026

**To:** The Virginia State Bar Executive Committee and Council

**From:** K. Brett Marston, President  
DaVida M. Davis, Acting Deputy Executive Director

**RE:** Virginia State Bar Strategic Plan Progress Report

## I. 2024-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

On May 29, 2024, Council approved the Virginia State Bar’s 2025–2028 Strategic Plan which centers on strengthening the VSB’s long-term sustainability, supporting our members, and improving access to legal services across the Commonwealth. The strategic plan seeks to promote creative, accountable, and collaborative governance emphasizing four core goals which are:

### 2025-2028 Strategic Plan

Financial Stability	Member Engagement	Member Services	Access to Legal Services
<b>Operate from a position of financial health</b>	<b>Strengthen cohesion among current and future members and advance pathways for service in VSB activities</b>	<b>Serve members and advance solutions designed to navigate a changing legal landscape.</b>	<b>Advance access to legal services for all Virginians.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Maximize revenue generation (<i>Increase bar dues, pursue alternative revenue streams, and improve future flexibility</i>).</li><li>- Contain expenses.</li><li>- Educate members on the need for and benefits from VSB financial stability.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Pursue an inclusive bar, recognizing diverse perspectives.</li><li>- Prioritize leadership development.</li><li>- Improve engagement highlights.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Implement proactive solutions to assist members with complying with the Rules of Professional Conduct.</li><li>- Assist members navigating the intersection of artificial intelligence, technology, and the evolving practice of law.</li><li>- Explore adding preferred vendor relationships or product recommendations to aid members.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Advance access to legal services for all Virginians.</li></ul>

## II. TWO-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

### A. Goal 1: Financial Stability/Financial Health

The VSB aims to ensure fiscal health by maximizing revenue and controlling costs. This includes evaluating potential fee adjustments and implementing cost-containment measures to maintain a balanced and sustainable budget.

The VSB has taken deliberate steps to strengthen its financial foundation and ensure long-term sustainability.

#### 1. *Key Accomplishments:*

- Increased the statutory dues cap from \$250 to \$350, positioning the VSB for a planned dues adjustment in FY 2028.
- Increased Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) sponsor fees.
- Restored delinquency fees to pre-pandemic levels.
- Reduced reliance on print publications and continued review of printing and mailing costs with a focus on leveraging technology for greatest accessibility of resources.
- Transitioned the four former conferences (Young Lawyers, Senior Lawyers, Diversity, and Local and Specialty Bar Associations) into self-funded sections.
- Did not replace the Information and Records Manager.
- For certain events, began charging a fee when attendance was confirmed and the participant had not canceled registration and did not attend.

#### 2. *Impact:*

These actions collectively improve revenue flexibility while demonstrating disciplined cost management which is critical to maintaining fiscal health without compromising services.

### B. Goal 2: Member Engagement/Cohesion and Pathways

The plan prioritizes building an inclusive and diverse legal community while fostering leadership development.

Efforts have focused on building stronger connections with members and expanding opportunities for participation and leadership.

#### 1. *Key Accomplishments:*

- Hired a Deputy Director of Bar Programs & Engagement to lead engagement strategy.
- Launched a Lunch & Learn webinar series to increase accessible programming.

- Expanded communication through increased bulk emails to voluntary groups and greater use of social media and enhanced promotion of VSB-sponsored events.
- Introduced *Sidebar*, an online supplement to *Virginia Lawyer*, creating new publishing opportunities for members.
- Communicated organizational priorities and financial updates in the April 2025 *Virginia Lawyer*.
- Invited local attorneys to Council dinners.
- Highlighted volunteer achievements in the *Virginia Lawyer*.
- Increased visibility and promotion of volunteer opportunities.

2. *Impact:*

These initiatives strengthen member connection, improve transparency, and create more accessible pathways for involvement with the VSB for all our members.

### C. Goal 3: Member Services/Changing Legal Landscape

The VSB seeks to expand and modernize services for attorneys. Key initiatives include supporting the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools into legal practice, developing new vendor partnerships, and offering guidance on ethical issues related to emerging technologies.

The VSB has prioritized equipping attorneys with tools, guidance, and resources to navigate rapid changes in the legal profession, especially in technology and AI.

1. *Key Accomplishments:*

- Established the Entry, Growth, and Distribution of Virginia Attorneys (EGAD-VA) Study Committee, driving research and insights on technology and the legal profession – the report of its findings and recommendations was published in December 2025.
- Conducted statewide surveys of attorneys and court personnel to inform decision-making.
- Released the “Technology and the Future Practice of Law 2025 Report,” addressing technology’s impact on legal practice and access to justice.
- Published ongoing AI-focused columns in the *Virginia Lawyer*.
- Proposed Unauthorized Practice of Law rule amendment to expand assistance for self-represented litigants.
- Legal Ethics Opinion 1901 was approved by the Supreme Court of Virginia and provides guidance on legal fees in a technology-driven environment.
- Revised MCLE rules to allow CLE credit for pro bono service.
- Collaborated with ALPS to modernize the Malpractice Avoidance Hotline.
- Offered Smokeball trust accounting and billing software, free to all VSB members, and educational webinars to support its adoption.

- Provided alerts on email scams and cybersecurity risks.
- Delivered ongoing CLE programming on AI and regulatory developments, including the VSB Techshow which provided members with 7 hours of CLE focused on legal technology.

2. *Impact:*

These efforts position the VSB as a forward-looking, resource-rich organization that actively supports attorneys in adapting to technological and professional change.

**D. Goal 4: Access to Legal Services/Advance Access**

Addressing gaps in legal access remains a central focus. The VSB plans to confront legal deserts and respond to the decline in the number of practicing attorneys in Virginia, with the goal of ensuring broader access to legal representation.

The VSB has expanded infrastructure and partnerships to improve access to justice across Virginia.

1. *Key Accomplishments:*

- Conducted a Virginia Lawyer Referral Service (VLRS) mission analysis with a June 2026 recommendation to Council to change the VLRS Rules to assist with panelist recruitment and retention.
- Transitioned the VLRS software platform to improve control and efficiency
- Launched Paladin, a Commonwealth-wide pro bono portal that enhances pro bono engagement by facilitating connections between volunteer lawyers and Qualified Legal Service Providers to provide legal assistance
- Leveraged EGAD-VA research to better understand how technology can expand access to justice – the report of its findings and recommendations was published in December 2025.

2. *Impact:*

These initiatives strengthen the delivery of legal services, increase pro bono participation, and address gaps in access—particularly in underserved areas.

Across all four strategic pillars, the Virginia State Bar has moved from planning to execution. We have implemented structural, financial, and programmatic changes that position the VSB for long-term success. The work to date reflects a clear trajectory to (i) stabilize the VSB’s finances, (ii) deepen member engagement, (iii) modernize services provided to our members, and (iv) expand access to legal services throughout the Commonwealth.