

## Affiliated Mentoring Model

*The American Inns of Court has developed several mentoring models for Inns to adapt, implement, and maintain mentoring programs of their own. This model is based on integrating Inn mentoring efforts with existing local and state mentoring programs.*

### Overview

There are some Inns that do not have a mentoring program or activities because their local or state bar has a robust—and sometimes mandatory—program, in which their members participate. While certainly not the only method available, this mentoring model is a way to work in concert with existing state or local bar mentoring programs. It is a good approach for Inns whose members are already involved with such programs and can be managed using a straightforward format of administration, operation, and scheduling that can be adapted to meet the needs and personalities of individual Inns and the affiliated programs.

### STEP 1: Establish an Inn Mentoring Committee

Administration of the mentoring program should fall under the purview of an Inn Mentoring Committee. Inn officers should establish a mentoring committee of three to four members, one of whom is an Inn officer to serve as the Mentoring Chair. In addition to general operational oversight of mentoring efforts, the committee's responsibilities should include the following tasks:

- Communicating the existence and organization of the mentoring program
- Providing a liaison to work with the affiliate program(s)
- Determining ways in which the Inn might work with the affiliate organization, such as:
  - Hosting meetings
  - Providing mentees or mentors
  - Training or orienting mentors
  - Facilitating programs
  - Holding joint programs
  - Provide content for meetings
- Encouraging members to participate, both as mentors and mentees
- Utilizing appropriate accountability mechanisms, in conjunction with established parameters of the affiliate program
- Evaluating success and areas for improvement
- Troubleshooting

**A sample Mentoring Chair job description is available on our website:** [http://home.innsofcourt.org/AIC/AIC\\_For\\_Leaders/AIC\\_Leadership\\_JobDesc/Sample\\_Job\\_Description\\_Mentoring\\_Chair.aspx](http://home.innsofcourt.org/AIC/AIC_For_Leaders/AIC_Leadership_JobDesc/Sample_Job_Description_Mentoring_Chair.aspx)

### STEP 2: Organize your Mentoring Operations

- Determine the contact for the affiliate program and designate a liaison from the Inn.
- Work with the liaison to determine eligibility to participate; try to streamline the join process for Inn members.
- Have clearly stated roles and responsibilities for participants at the start of the year.
- Communicate the opportunity to Inn members early and often.

### STEP 3: Focus on Professionalism

In any mentoring program, it is important to make professionalism the centerpiece. The transmission of American Inns of Court professional values to mentees should be the ultimate goal, regardless of who is running the mentoring program. Ensure that your members have a strong picture of what professionalism includes:

- High competence in legal skills.
- Adherence to ethical obligations.
- Appreciation of the importance of civility and professional demeanor in all dealings.
- The importance of pro bono representation and access to justice issues.
- The importance of participation in bar organizations at the local, state and national levels.
- The transmission of professional values and standards to members of the legal profession.
- Balance of self-interest with the interests of clients, the justice system and the public interest.
- Accountability for one's actions.

### STEP 4: Continually Assess your Efforts

Knowing what is working and what is not is the only way to improve. Assess whether or not affiliating with existing mentoring programs is working. Do members need or want additional mentoring opportunities?

An online survey is the easiest way to gather assessment information, but the mentoring committee should establish the evaluation format for all assessments. Have a process in

place for using the data from one year to inform and assist the following year's mentoring committee.

More valuable data is collected if the assessments are done in an anonymous fashion. Anonymous aggregate information can help your Inn become data-driven, making decisions about how to improve the program that much easier. Continuous improvement is the goal.

If you would like to keep the national office apprised of your efforts, please send an email to [mentoring@innsofcourt.org](mailto:mentoring@innsofcourt.org)—we'd love to hear about them. We are always looking for new ideas to share with other Inns.

Mentoring samples, tools, and templates are available on our website: <http://home.innsofcourt.org/Mentoring>

**Be bold. Be creative. Be successful.**

Have a story you want to share? We want to hear it!  
Have a question about mentoring? We're here to help answer it!  
Running out of ideas? We're here to help!  
[mentoring@innsofcourt.org](mailto:mentoring@innsofcourt.org)

---

© **2017 AMERICAN INNS OF COURT.** The American Inns of Court Mentoring Models were developed for individual American Inns of Court to adapt, implement, and maintain mentoring programs of their own. If you are interested in reproducing this document for use outside of the American Inns of Court, please contact Rita Zimmerman at [rzimmerman@innsofcourt.org](mailto:rzimmerman@innsofcourt.org) to request permission.