

January 2025

# THE CLIENT PROTECTION WEBB\*



*A Publication of the  
National Client  
Protection Organization*



*\*The Client Protection Webb is published in memory of Gilbert A. Webb, Esq., who served as Assistant Client Protection Counsel for the American Bar Association's Center for Professional Responsibility. Mr. Webb was dedicated to protecting the welfare of clients victimized by their attorneys and served as an editor of the ABA's first client protection newsletter.*

*Submissions to the Webb are always welcome. Please send them to the editor, Mike McCormick at [Michael.McCormick@judiciary.state.nj.us](mailto:Michael.McCormick@judiciary.state.nj.us).*

# National Client Protection Organization, President's Corner



Dear Members,

I am honored to introduce myself as the new President of NCPO. It is with great excitement that I take on this role. I'm eager to build on our strong foundation and to ensure that we continue to be an educational resource for the exchange of information among law client protection funds throughout the United States and Canada.

While I look forward to the future, I must also acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of outgoing President, Mike McCormick. Mike has been a tireless advocate for NCPO, and his efforts have left an indelible mark on our organization and the membership we serve.

I am excited about the journey ahead, and I look forward to working closely with all of you to advance our shared goals. In the coming months, I will be reaching out with updates on our initiatives and opportunities for you to get involved.

Thank you for entrusting me with this role. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to serve as your President, and I look forward to connecting with many of you in the near future!

Warm Regards,

*Gabe Huertas*

*Deputy Counsel, Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection of the State of New York,  
NCPO President*

[info@ncpo.org](mailto:info@ncpo.org)



## **NCPO Heads to Portland, Maine for 2025 Workshop!**

We are excited to announce that registration is opening soon for the 2025 NCPO Workshop, to be held in Portland, Maine on September 25 and 26, 2025. This event promises to be an invaluable opportunity for professionals in the client protection field to come together, share expertise, and tackle the most pressing issues in our field. An added bonus: the sessions will qualify for CLE credits! Please feel free to contact us at [info@ncpo.org](mailto:info@ncpo.org) for more information.



This year's workshop will be held at the AC Hotel Portland which is located in the charming and historic Old Port Neighborhood. Discounted room rates will be available for workshop registrants. The hotel is conveniently located close to the scenic waterfront and downtown museums, shops and restaurants, and is less than 30 minutes from Portland International Jetport. September in Portland is a particularly beautiful time of year, as it coincides with peak fall foliage, offering an extra bonus for attendees looking to explore the area during their stay.

# NCPO Workshop Assistance Program

The Workshop Assistance Program is an award program established by NCPO to assist its members in attending and participating in NCPO sponsored workshops and the annual ABA Client Protection Forum. The workshop assistance award will be evaluated based upon financial need. The maximum award to be granted is \$1,000 for each event. The award recipient will also receive a waiver of the registration fee to the NCPO workshop. Factors to be considered by NCPO in awarding workshop assistance may include, but not be limited to:

- assets of the organization;
- operating budget for the organization;
- inability to obtain approval by the governing body for attendance at the workshop or similar conferences;
- prior attendance at NCPO workshops;
- length of time applicant has held the position indicated on the application;
- individual's or organization's prior award of workshop assistance; and
- circumstances forming the basis of the organization's inability to fully pay for the applicant's attendance at the workshop.

## Workshop Assistance Grants Available

Client protection may be the ultimate “boutique practice” in law. NCPO’s workshop offers an opportunity not to be missed for networking and fund-specific learning. That’s why NCPO is offering Workshop Assistance Grants to help you attend this year’s program in Portland, Maine. Don’t let your budget stand in the way of this opportunity. Apply today at <https://www.ncpo.org/workshop-assistance>



# Membership Roundup

To date, NCPO's membership hails from 37 U.S. states and 5 Canadian provinces. It's never too late to join NCPO or renew your membership. Our goal (of course) is to have every U.S. state and Canadian province represented within NCPO's ranks. Can you help? Here's a list of the 16 states who do not yet have an NCPO membership:

*Alaska*  
*Arkansas*  
*Connecticut*  
*Indiana*  
*Mississippi*  
*Nevada*  
*New Hampshire*  
*North Dakota*  
*Oklahoma*  
*Oregon*  
*South Carolina*  
*South Dakota*  
*Utah*  
*Washington*  
*West Virginia*  
*Wyoming*



If you're part of one of these funds, please join us. NCPO offers a free one-year introductory membership. After that, individual membership is just \$35 per year, while an organizational membership (which covers everyone associated with a given fund) is just \$200 annually. The benefits are many, starting with this newsletter and also including NCPO's website resources, grant eligibility and speakers' bureau. Most of all, your participation in NCPO helps all of us become better client protection professionals. We want your fund to succeed – to be able to serve as “the conscience of the bar” and, through your service, to maintain the public and client trust in the practice of law which is essential to the administration of justice.



## Happy New Year –

### Do you know where your annual report is?

Does your fund issue an annual report? If not, 2025 is the perfect year to start! Annual reports provide your court, the bar and public with up-to-date information on claims paid, resources available, operational expenses, subrogation received and a host of other data crucial to your fund's mission. They are also excellent source documents to produce when challenges arise. Changes in assessments, other funding issues, proposals to implement loss prevention mechanisms such as payee notification and more can all be effectively addressed by the information in your annual report.

Generating your annual report need not be a trial unto itself. NCPO (with thanks to New York's Mike Knight) has an easy to use template on its website at

[https://www.ncpo.org/files/ugd/289ac3\\_6d8cae30b36b4d70b0f53872aedfef1f.pdf](https://www.ncpo.org/files/ugd/289ac3_6d8cae30b36b4d70b0f53872aedfef1f.pdf). If you have questions or need help, feel free to call Mike McCormick at (609) 815-3030, ext. 52215. Once your report is done, be sure to send it to NCPO so that it can be added to the website. Reports can be emailed to NCPO President Gabe Huertas at [info@ncpo.org](mailto:info@ncpo.org)

## On the Docket – Your NCPO at work

Your NCPO is a busy advocate for client protection across the U.S. and Canada. Here's an overview of some current initiatives.

- NCPO's Northeast Regional Vice President, Linda Bauer, has opened the lines of communication with the American Immigration Lawyers' Association to address the growing number of claims involving immigration lawyers and their clients. These particularly vulnerable clients may suffer losses which are not compensable because they arise in a State in which the respondent attorney is not admitted to the State bar, but can still represent clients before federal immigration courts. The concept of a "federal fund" has been suggested before, but its time may have come, given the large immigration case backlog and the potential for growing numbers of claims.
- NCPO is working towards the establishment of new funds in American territories, including the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and the Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico. The process is ongoing to enlist the support of local courts and bar associations to bring client protection to these important areas.
- Although there are no funds in Mexico, good relations with our southern neighbors is critical. NCPO is working to engage with Mexican attorneys through the U.S. – Mexico Bar Association. We have much to learn from each other and share the common interest of protecting clients and the integrity of the practice of law.
- From North America's oldest fund – in Vermont – to the few remaining U.S. states and Canadian provinces which have not yet joined the NCPO family, NCPO's outreach group "works the phones" to stay in touch and identify areas in which NCPO help will make the difference. Initiatives may be eligible for NCPO grants, and proposals are always welcome.

Please email [info@ncpo.org](mailto:info@ncpo.org) if you are able to help with any of these projects.

# Nominations Open for 2025 Isaac Hecht Award



*The Hecht Award is granted annually to recognize an individual, law client protection fund, or other professional organization that has demonstrated excellence in the field of law client protection.*

NCPO will also once again present the Isaac Hecht Award as part of the 2025 Workshop program. Named in honor of one of NCPO's founders and its first (and long-time) treasurer, the Isaac Hecht award honors the memory of one of NCPO's co-founders, who practiced law in Maryland for 64 years before his death in 2003 at the age of 89. Mr. Hecht also served as Treasurer of Maryland's Fund since its creation in 1967. He was committed to the belief that the trust of law clients is the essential linchpin in every lawyer-client relationship, and that the reimbursement of innocent victims of lawyer dishonesty represents the legal profession at its best. Mr. Hecht was especially focused on the financial foundations of client protection funds, the initiatives of fund leaders, and their receptivity to techniques to deter and detect dishonest conduct in the practice of law. Join us in Portland to find out who will be honored with the 2025 Isaac Hecht Award.

## 2024 Isaac Hecht Award Recipient:



NCPO is proud to announce that Eileen Donahue was selected as the 2024 recipient of the Isaac Hecht award. Eileen served as NCPO's membership chair for over 20 years and is the administrator of the Illinois Client Security Fund. Her dedication, passion, and tireless efforts have made a lasting impact on the client protection field, and it is with great pleasure that we recognize her outstanding contributions. Thank you Eileen for your service!