

Board of Bar Commissioners Election 2025



State Bar of
New Mexico
Est. 1886

Voting
begins online
Nov. 5

Voting in the 2025 election for the State Bar of New Mexico Board of Bar Commissioners begins **Nov. 5 and closes at noon on Nov. 30**. Voting is being conducted electronically. For voting procedures, see page 12. The following districts have contested elections. See the candidates' photos, bios and Q & A below.

Second Judicial District (Bernalillo County) – Two candidates submitted petitions for one position. The term is three years, and the candidates are Tierra N. Marks and Steven S. Scholl.

Third and Sixth Judicial Districts (Dona Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, and Luna Counties) – Four candidates submitted petitions for three positions. There are two three-year terms and one one-year term, and the candidates are Amy B. Bailey, Israel Chávez, Connie J. Flores and Chrystian J. Gonzalez.

The following district was uncontested:

Fifth Judicial District (Chavez, Eddy and Lea Counties) – *There was one position in this district for a three-year term and one nomination petition was received from Parker B. Folsie, so he is elected by acclamation.*

The following districts didn't receive any nomination petitions. A notice was published in the Bar Bulletin, and the Board of Bar Commissioners will make the appointments at its December 10th meeting.

Seventh and Thirteenth Judicial Districts (Catron, Sierra, Socorro, Torrance, Cibola, Sandoval, and Valencia Counties) – Two vacancies

Eleventh Judicial District (McKinley and San Juan Counties) – One vacancy

Twelfth Judicial District (Lincoln and Otero Counties) – One vacancy

Second Judicial District



► Tierra N. Marks

My name is Tia and I am a Senior Associate at Barnhouse Keegan Solimon & West LLP in Albuquerque. I am a member of the Navajo Nation and spent my early years on the Nation before moving to a small town in southern Arizona, and then to the Big Island of Hawai'i where I attended a remote Hawaiian culturally driven charter school. I then moved to Farmington, New Mexico where I graduated from Navajo Preparatory School. I obtained my undergraduate degree at CU Boulder, completed the Pre-Law Summer Institute, and graduated from UNMSOL in 2017. I was then hired as an associate at my firm (although first as an independent contractor reviewing thousands of documents for a large case). Eight years later, I've never looked back. Beyond law, I go to hot yoga as much as possible, I hike, and since my first home purchase, obtained another hobby, yard work.

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Bar Commissioners?

I want to give back to the community that has taught and guided me so much. The New Mexico legal community is incredibly special and looking back at the last eight years I have practiced law in New Mexico, it is difficult to express the gratitude I have for those who have taken time to mentor and guide my legal development. I am eager to be in a role where I can give back all that was provided to me. I am also eager to serve on the BBC to contribute to the growth of our legal community and to be part of discussions of what our legal community will look like in the future and how our future is shaped by the past.

2. Give your perspective on any important issues that you believe the profession and the State Bar should be addressing.

I believe it is important to address feelings of invisibility and exclusion in our profession, data gaps, recruitment, hiring and retention issues, and to identify and change ineffective standards that have become normalized in our profession. It is also important to address ongoing educational needs for our communities and in a manner that acknowledges the unique legal framework that exists in New Mexico as affected by federal, state, local, and tribal law. Finally, I believe it is important to acknowledge the work done by those who came before us, to make room for all of our unique histories, to expand cross-generational mentoring and to understand how we must work together for the success and health of our profession, clients, and communities.

3. How well do you think the State Bar is fulfilling its mission and objectives?

The SBNM works very hard to provide services and resources to its members, the New Mexico legal community and others. The over 15 different practice sections of the SBNM is just one example of the unique and varied interests the SBNM balances. SBNM staff and other representatives are incredibly helpful, and I often see them going above and beyond to help fulfill needs of its members and sections. The SBNM's recent work to expand its content in the Bar Bulletin and other sources is exciting and in furtherance of the SBNM mission to be more united and inclusive. In this manner, the SBNM is very successful. However, constant monitoring, evaluation and careful and persistent work is critical to maintaining the SBNM's success and continued growth.

4. What has been your involvement in the State Bar and/or other law-related organizations, such as national, local and voluntary bars?

For the past three years I have served on the Indian Law Section of the SBNM, first as a liaison, then Chair, and I currently serve as past Chair. I also serve on the New Mexico Indian Bar Association and am part of the Navajo Nation Bar Association. I have twice served as an adjunct professor at the UNMSOL, presented at various Indian Law and Natural Resource classes at UNMSOL and elsewhere, and at other SBNM events including the Natural Resources, Energy and Environmental Law Section's 2024 annual CLE. I am also honored to be an alumna of the Pre-Law Summer Institute. I also currently serve on Law360's 2025 Native American Editorial Board which is a national board that provides feedback on Law360's coverage.

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► Steven S. Scholl

I seek reelection to the BBC for a second term representing the Second District. I am a 1989 grad of UNMSOL; and, an Adjunct there since 1991 teaching court room skill classes, including Evidence/Trial Practice; the Deposition Program; and, coaching the NTC mock trial team. My practice is doing civil trials, on both sides of the "v" representing Plaintiffs and Defendants in a variety of case types. I often consult with other lawyers in both civil and criminal cases to help them prepare for trial. I grew up in Silver City and am married to my high school sweetheart, Chris. I have spent my entire adult life involved in the law, first as a Dallas Police Officer, and then as a lawyer. In both roles, I worked to "do the job," and teach others how to do them well.

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Bar Commissioners?

In my first term, I was surprised to discover how broad and deep the reach and role of the Bar is. In my first term, I worked to bring the perspective of small firms and solo practitioners into the conversation on the many issues the BBC addresses. I look forward to continuing my work as one of your voices on the BBC.

2. Give your perspective on any important issues that you believe the profession and the State Bar should be addressing.

I am a staunch believer in and defender of the Rule of Law. It is what the Founders enshrined in the Constitution and what makes America the beacon of freedom and liberty. We lawyers have unique responsibilities in preserving and protecting it. We must work to ensure that all our citizens know, value and protect our system in our pursuit of a more perfect Union.

3. How well do you think the State Bar is fulfilling its mission and objectives?

I believe the New Mexico Bar does a really good job of meeting its charge under Rule 24-101. In sum, its role is to nurture the needs of the members of the Bar and the citizens of New Mexico. Many programs are administered to accomplish both. Some are large scale, and some small, but all seem effective in ensuring that legal needs and services are provided to all segments of society by competent practitioners.

4. What has been your involvement in the State Bar and/or other law-related organizations, such as national, local and voluntary bars?

Prior to my election to the BBC two years ago, I was, like most members of the Bar, a casual participant in it. I attended CLEs and the Annual Meeting. During Jerry Dixon's Presidency, I saw first hand how much the Bar actually does, and wanted to pitch in and help. After nearly thirty years as a member, and two terms as President of the Albuquerque Bar, stepping into the state-wide Bar was the natural next step for me.

Third and Sixth Judicial Districts



► Amy B. Bailey

Born and raised in West Virginia, I relocated to New Mexico 25 years ago and ended up at the UNM School of Law. Since graduation in 2006 I worked at a few firms in Albuquerque where I practiced primarily family law and learned several other areas of civil law. I moved to Las Cruces six years ago and continue to practice all areas of family law. I'm also currently serving as Guardian ad Litem in family, involuntary commitment, and guardianship cases, as well as doing Special Master work. I'm currently serving on the Family Law Section Board and have previously served on the Boards of the Southern NM Bar, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the NM Lottery Authority. I am also a Bridge the Gap mentor.

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Bar Commissioners?

The Board of Bar Commissioners is an integral part of the legal community and all of our individual communities. It is important for attorneys to serve not only their communities but also support our profession with education, professional support, and recruiting new attorneys to serve in different aspects of the law all over the state. Serving on the BBC will allow me to continue my investment in supporting young attorneys and continuing to promote continued high standards in the practice of law in New Mexico.

2. Give your perspective on any important issues that you believe the profession and the State Bar should be addressing.

The State Bar should be working to provide broader access to attorneys in our smaller communities, continuing to provide a high level of continuing education, working to assist attorneys with understanding rapidly changing technology for our profession, and supporting our colleagues and their teams with serving our clients while protecting our own well being.

3. How well do you think the State Bar is fulfilling its mission and objectives?

The State Bar does a fine job at fulfilling its mission and objectives, but there is always room for improvement. I would like to see more support in the well being aspects of our practices and connecting the various different sections of the bar.

4. What has been your involvement in the State Bar and/or other law-related organizations, such as national, local and voluntary bars?

I am currently serving on the Family Law Section board and have been a member of the Albuquerque Bar and the Southern New Mexico Bar. I have also been a Bridge the Gap mentor for many years.



► Israel Chávez

Israel Chávez is an attorney based in Southern New Mexico. He is a 16th generation New Mexican and owns and operates his own firm specializing in civil rights litigation, criminal defense, and personal injury. He is a founding member of the New Mexico LGBTQ Bar Association and the Southern New Mexico Bar Association and is a member of the New Mexico Trial Lawyers and New Mexico Criminal Defense Lawyers.

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Bar Commissioners?

Southern New Mexico has seen a huge growth in participation in our local bar, through the Southern NM Bar and that is in no small part due to the staffing and financial support of our State Bar. I want to continue the work of our past Commissioners by bringing state resources to southern New Mexico and usher in the next generation of leadership for our Bar. That means thinking creatively about how the Bar supports its members and how we attract talent to our small rural communities.

2. Give your perspective on any important issues that you believe the profession and the State Bar should be addressing.

The State Bar should be evaluating how smaller towns who sometimes have only one or two attorneys (or maybe no attorneys at all) will be able to access legal services. This evaluation should be combined with how we ensure that attorneys are seeing the value in practicing in smaller jurisdictions, where competition is often less but mentorship is also difficult to find.

3. How well do you think the State Bar is fulfilling its mission and objectives?

I think the State Bar does a lot very well and we have such excellent leadership at the helm of the Commission but I think there are some things that have lacked innovation with our State Bar and haven't seen much revamping in many years. I think we are often too focused on the larger city centers and forget that our bench and bar in rural New Mexico is struggling. As an example, the State Bar has seen declining attendance at its Annual Meeting and is considering getting rid of that event - the question becomes how is the State bar supporting its membership? I think that is the next step for our Bar.

4. What has been your involvement in the State Bar and/or other law-related organizations, such as national, local and voluntary bars?

I am heavily involved in many local bars, including as a founding member of the LGBTQ Bar Association and as the Founding President of the Southern New Mexico Bar Association. SNMBA is now the largest regional bar and the only voluntary bar presided over by a federal judge. We boast large numbers of members and an active presence across our region, unlike any other part of New Mexico. I also served for many years on the Diversity Committee for the State Bar where I advocated for innovation related to the Bar Exam and other membership criteria. I would be honored to serve the State Bar as a commissioner.



► Connie J. Flores

Connie J. Flores is partner at Flores Mendez, P. C., specializing in cases involving personal injury to include on the semi-truck accidents, on the job injuries, premises liability, Dram Shop, nursing home and representing victims of sexual abuse in civil lawsuits. Her mission is to help injured people that have been treated unjustly by insurance companies. As a fluent Spanish speaker, Ms. Flores enjoys representing individuals who otherwise would not be able to effectively communicate their issue to an attorney. Ms. Flores attended the University of Denver and graduated in 2003. She attended UNMSOL graduating in 2008. She was admitted to practice law in New Mexico in September 2008, Texas in May 2009 and Arizona 2022. Ms. Flores, who became a teenage mother at the age of 15, has been asked on numerous occasions to be a keynote speaker at local area high schools addressing the issues surrounding teenage pregnancy, in an effort to encourage teenage parents to continue their education and attend college.

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Bar Commissioners?

I have had the honor to serve as a Commissioner for the Third and Sixth Judicial District since January 2020. As we all know, COVID came and changed our lives in 2020. Although my initial involvement started by zoom, I made it a point to personally attend most live meetings in Albuquerque and Santa Fe to properly represent my districts. Through my involvement as a Commissioner, I realized how much time and true dedication the Commissioners give to make our New Mexico legal profession an exemplar one. I want to continue to improve my knowledge as a Commissioner to better serve Southern New Mexico. I have assisted in organizing events to have the State Bar of New Mexico leadership visit Las Cruces to meet and learn from our Southern New Mexico members and welcome any conversation its members have speaking directly to leadership in their hometown.

2. Give your perspective on any important issues that you believe the profession and the State Bar should be addressing.

An important issue that the profession and the State Bar should address is exposure to free legal services for the underprivileged. Through continuously volunteering at free legal clinics in the Dona Ana community, it became apparent to me that many do not understand legal correspondence they receive or how to begin to respond to legal issues that arise. Being the daughter of an immigrant mother who lost her son to a criminal act, I remember how confused and overwhelmed my mother felt dealing with the legal system. As a State Bar, we need to strive to have all our legal professionals give back to our communities especially the underprivileged. Volunteering to provide our services is a very rewarding experience. Even one hour of volunteer work can change an individual's life.

3. How well do you think the State Bar is fulfilling its mission and objectives?

I believe the State Bar offers a variety of essential programs and services to its members. In particular, the bar created the Bridge the Gap Mentorship (BTG) program. The BTG was created in order to assist new attorneys in the transition from law school to the actual legal practice by providing real-world information and best practices from tenured attorneys. Having been fortunate enough to have mentored at least 10-15 newly licensed attorneys through this program, I realized the benefit of having a mentor who provides guidance as a newly licensed attorney transitions from law school to the legal profession. I firmly believe this program accomplishes its mission in assisting attorneys to become successful practitioners.

4. What has been your involvement in the State Bar and/or other law-related organizations, such as national, local and voluntary bars?

- Accident Attorneys - Member
- Attorneys of Truck Accident Academy - Member
- State Bar of New Mexico Bar Commissioner for 3rd and 6th District
- State Bar of New Mexico Certified Mentor for Bridge the Gap Program
- New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association, Member
- El Paso Trial Lawyers Association, President
- Southern New Mexico Bar Association – Board Member
- In Her Element Foundation – Board Member and Mentor
- El Paso Bar Association, Member
- Mexican American Bar Association, Member
- Hispanic National Bar Association, Member
- Texas Trial Lawyers Association, Member
- Sisterhood of the Eight- Member
- American Association for Justice – Member
- American Bar Association - Member



► Chrystian J. Gonzalez

I currently serve as a Children's Court Attorney for the Children, Youth, and Families Department in Las Cruces. My background includes work in Social Security, Family, and Criminal law. I have also dedicated significant time to pro bono efforts in southern New Mexico, by assisting in organizing legal fairs, offering bilingual consultations, and helping individuals navigate complex legal issues. This commitment to service led me to join the Board of Bar Commissioners, where I have had the honor of serving this past year. The Board plays a truly vital role in supporting New Mexico attorneys, promoting access to justice, and strengthening the legal profession. I have been proud to bring a southern New Mexico perspective to the Board, and I am seeking your vote to continue serving on the Board and to keep advancing initiatives that support our

legal community and the public we serve. Thank you for your support and for the work you do each day as part of our legal community.

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Bar Commissioners?

I want to continue serving on the Board to advocate for greater access to justice, attorney support, and outreach for underserved communities. My experience in public service and pro bono work has given me a grounded perspective that I am committed to sharing with the Board. I believe the Board plays a critical role in strengthening our profession, and I want to continue contributing to that mission by representing the voices and needs of attorneys in our region.

2. Give your perspective on any important issues that you believe the profession and the State Bar should be addressing.

Access to justice remains a critical issue, particularly in rural and underserved communities where legal services are scarce, or nonexistent. The State Bar should continue prioritizing outreach, as well as attorney well-being, and efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, in order to ensure the profession reflects the communities we serve and that all members feel supported in their practice.

3. How well do you think the State Bar is fulfilling its mission and objectives?

The State Bar has made meaningful progress in fulfilling its mission, particularly in expanding access to legal resources, supporting attorney wellness, and assisting the Bar with staying up to date on changes that affect attorney practice, such as advancements and integration of A.I. in the legal field. Continued focus on outreach to rural areas, increasing diversity, and enhancing member engagement will ensure the Bar remains responsive to the evolving needs of attorneys, the courts, and the public.

4. What has been your involvement in the State Bar and/or other law-related organizations, such as national, local and voluntary bars?

In addition to currently serving on the Board of Bar Commissioners, I am Treasurer of the Southern New Mexico Bar Association. I am also an active member of the Third Judicial District Court Pro Bono Committee and support the District Court's monthly Family Law Pro Bono Clinic on a monthly basis. Through these roles, I stay connected to both the Bar's mission and the needs of the communities we serve.

Electronic Voting Procedures

A link to the electronic ballot will be emailed on Nov. 5 to all active status members with a principal place of practice (address of record) in the Second Judicial District and the Third and Sixth Judicial Districts (which includes El Paso County, Texas).

**The election will close at noon (MT) on Nov. 30,
and the election results will be certified on Dec. 1.**



**State Bar *of*
New Mexico**

Est. 1886