



COVID-19

Response for Prosecutors and Courts



Virtual Discussion: Mental Wellness of Prosecutors and Court Staff

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020
Time: 2:00-3:00 PM EDT

The COVID-19 pandemic and the societal changes that followed have led to increases in stress for many individuals. Prosecutors' have been especially impacted as they have had to find new and innovative ways to carry out their duties over the last four months. CNA and NDAA will host a virtual discussion focusing on the mental wellness of prosecutors and court staff during this trying time. Panelists will respond to attendee questions, submitted in advance, concerning how aspects such as returning to the office; expected workload pressure; and the current perception of the criminal justice system are affecting the mental wellness of their staff. Panelists will also discuss what steps their offices are taking to address these problems.

Please join us on **Thursday, September 17, 2020** from **2:00-3:00 PM EDT** for this an interactive session featuring:

- Sarah Hill, Assistant District Attorney in Johnson County, Kansas
- Matt Jennings, Chief Criminal Deputy County Attorney in Missoula, Montana
- Cynthia Nakao, Professional Responsibility Advisor in Los Angeles, California

To ensure that we are addressing your concerns, please share any specific topics that you would like addressed during the virtual discussion (e.g., specific questions on peer support programs). Please enter your questions when you register.

Note: There is no cost of attendance for this webinar. NDAA will be applying for CLE credits in the state of Virginia.

Register



Sarah Hill

Sarah Hill started in the Johnson County Kansas DA's office in 2003. She is currently in charge of the drug section but also prosecutes a wide spectrum of cases. She initiated a peer support team in her office in 2017, and is currently serving as the peer support team coordinator. She is also on the board of directors for FRST Midwest, which is a non-profit established in 2019 to provide educational programs to promote healthy development following stress and critical incidents experienced by first responders and their families, including collaboration with culturally competent mental health professionals.



Matt Jennings

Matt Jennings is the Chief Criminal Deputy County Attorney in Missoula, Montana. Mr. Jennings has practiced both as a prosecutor and as a civil litigator in State and federal courts defending Missoula County in section 1983 litigation. Prior to joining the Missoula County Attorney's Office, Mr. Jennings clerked for the Honorable Karen Townsend in Montana's Fourth Judicial District and was a Legislative Assistant in the United States Senate. He earned his law degree from the University of Montana. During his time in the Missoula County Attorney's Office and under the leadership of County Attorney Kirsten Pabst, the Missoula County Attorney's Office has been a leader in developing a secondary trauma program to proactively work with attorneys and staff to prevent and mitigate the negative effects associated with working with victims of violent crime.



Cynthia Nakao

Cynthia Nakao graduated from the University of Southern California in 1985 and Loyola School of Law in 1988. Since joining the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (LADA) in 1988, Ms. Nakao has served in a variety of assignments and leadership positions. In her current role as the first appointed Professional Responsibility Advisor, Ms. Nakao acts as the liaison for LADA employees, new hires, law clerks, and volunteers who seek professional guidance for misconduct hearings and State Bar inquiries. In order to educate employees about their ethical and professional responsibilities, Ms. Nakao launched a department-wide implicit bias training and created an internal video log series entitled Ethics #WWYD, which offers several approaches on handling potential legal matters. She advises, teaches and supports a department-wide understanding and practice of ethical and professional conduct by conducting ongoing Wheeler, Ethics, and Unconscious Bias trainings. Amid the current pandemic, Ms. Nakao leads an expansion of peer support to address vicarious trauma in the office and ensures that employees have the necessary resources and supplies to maintain a sanitary workplace.

We want to hear from you! If you would like to submit questions or have other concerns, please email us at covid19_courts@cna.org.

COVID-19-related news articles and resources, and past bulletins will be posted on the [NDAA website](#). Continue to check the website for updated information.



