

# 2022 Member Survey

Oklahoma Bar Association



OKLAHOMA CENTER FOR NONPROFITS

# Methodology

The 2022 Oklahoma Bar Association Member Survey was conducted for a three-fold purpose: 1) to engage the membership in providing feedback on its services, 2) to solicit from its members their ideas on the future direction of the organization as it enters into a strategic plan, and 3) to align the future direction with members' perspectives on characteristics of a new Executive Director.

The survey was amply reviewed by the strategic planning committee and ratified by the board prior to its distribution to its members. The survey was anonymous and all data was reviewed in aggregate. The survey was open for over three (3) weeks and generated 1,841 responses. The majority of the responses came in during the week of March 6 and March 21, indicating that the efforts OBA staff did to support the survey responses and remind members to take the survey made a difference in the collection process.

The survey was constructed to allow respondents to answer questions both quantitatively and qualitatively and participants could choose which questions to complete. This structure allowed for there to be a reduction in respondents who might potentially bail on the survey, and provide data for the questions that were completed. This gave a more thorough response to the data set, but meant that there may be variations on each question as to the number of responses for each question. Standardizing, or requiring each question to be answered would have increased a standard size for each question data set, but would have decreased the likelihood that respondents would not have completed the survey. Even with the variation, there is not a statistically significant deviation in the data per question response. Quantitative questions (numerical) received more responses than qualitative (write in) questions, but this is to be expected. Because answering a qualitative question takes more thought and time, OBA can reliably consider these responses as members who wished for their voice to be heard. The result was a survey with a 78% completion rate for all questions – which is good.





# Executive Summary

Oklahoma Bar Association  
2022 Member Survey



# Summary of Themes

## Overview

The OBA is in a strong position with its members. It received a **3.9 overall rating** – or 4 out of 5 stars. It has an overall strong reputation, and under the stellar leadership of John Williams, and the highly capable board of directors, it is benefiting from well-run programs that go beyond professional compliance and offer direct support and relevance to its diverse membership and broad geographic reach.

The OBA commitment to customer service is apparent throughout the data. In almost every incident where an encounter with OBA personnel was mentioned, it was a positive comment. And each time an OBA staff person was mentioned by name it was a positive comment. There is appreciation for the helpfulness, promptness, knowledge, skills, integrity, and reliability of the staff. In many ways, it is this excellent reputation as a role model for excellence that is paving the way for some of the themes that will be explored throughout this report.

Though the survey collected responses from 61 of the 77 counties in Oklahoma, and responses from members outside of Oklahoma, the density is located in a small portion of counties that include the metropolitan areas and other communities that follow the population density of Oklahoma. The data suggests that legal services in non-metro communities is primarily provided by small practice firms distributed across the state. Private practice makes up 64% of OBA's membership. The data suggests that there is a greater need for OBA membership among lower-capacity (smaller) practices, and more targeted marketing and communication from OBA towards this same group. Small private practices in non-metro communities are especially in need of the supportive services OBA provides its members such as education, information, supportive administrative service, and connection to colleagues in the practice.



# Summary of Themes

## Themes

**Maximizing Benefits:** There are members who responded to the survey and do not utilize OBA membership benefits, or do not understand what they are. Some of this may be proximity to the services (in-person training for out of state participants, for example), and redundancy in services provided by other states (especially true for out-of-state responders), and retired professionals reduced need for services. However, others may not utilize services due to lack of access through hard-to-use websites, or a need for close-captioning in meetings. In almost all examples where members accessed services through a technology platform their perception of the OBA was directly related to their perceived functioning of the technology. As more members access OBA services through technology, it will be important to invest in technology as a matter of managing their overall reputation and value of membership. As more members connect to OBA through software platforms, rather than through human-to-human interaction, it creates a new frontier for OBAs excellent customer service to shine.

**Navigating politics:** There is a portion of the membership that expresses conservative or moderate views on social issues, especially around the topic of race/race equity and more inclusion and diversity efforts, but there is a far greater majority that would like to see the OBA be a leader in the state on this topic and advocate for more inclusion in the practice throughout the field, from law schools, to court rooms, private practice firms with more than 5 employees, and policy makers like judges and the legislature. There is a considerable section on this in the report. The membership base is encouraging OBA to embrace more diversity and advocate for represented groups, but at the same time not be too political about it.



# Relevance for Strategic Plan

The next 3-5 years the leadership of OBA can support its members by focusing on:

- 1. Technology upgrades:** throughout the survey responders noted that technology is increasingly becoming the method by which members engage OBA, it is also a system that accommodates for disabilities through features like close-captioning in virtual meeting platforms, support for members newer in their practice through form databases, links to other legal services, and a reporting system and access point for CLEs. This was especially used during the pandemic when other research options were closed. Upgrading the website and building out popular features will help to equip busy professionals with the practical tools that make membership in OBA meaningful and valuable.
- 2. Diversity and Inclusion:** the members engaged in this survey are overwhelmingly supportive of OBA becoming a leader on matters of DE&I. 84% of responders expressed positive regard for OBA's current efforts or would like to see even bolder measures to advocate for the needs of underrepresented populations throughout the legal profession. This includes modeling inclusion efforts by hiring and recruiting more diverse candidates, advocating for the needs of diverse populations where people practice law (including courtrooms, law schools, and firms); and adjusting its own practice to accommodate more inclusiveness with reduced/free CLEs. Though there is a vocal segment of OBAs membership that does not see this as relevant to its mission or as a political topic best avoided, that perspective is 8% of OBAs membership.
- 3. Professional Standards:** there is correlation between OBAs reputation and its commitment to ethical standards. Members who had an unfavorable view of OBA were more likely to also feel that the OBA was not doing all it could to police the practice. This includes advocating for diversity and inclusion, but it also included issuing licenses to people convicted of felonies, and not holding lawyers to professional standards of conduct (civility, fairness, nondiscrimination), and ethics of practice. This may have been unnecessary at one point in the development of the profession, but members recognize that it creates safety (psychological, emotional, professional) within the practice. There is an opportunity for OBA to adopt or more thoroughly utilize a Code of Conduct or Ethics (much like a Hippocratic oath) in order to define what "good" looks like in professional conduct. Developing this standard with an eye toward greater diversity and inclusion will be an essential element to remain vital in the minds of its members.



# Relevance for Executive Director Search

## Overview

The survey showed that OBA has benefitted from strong leadership. There was clear appreciation for the management and leadership style John Williams brought to the organization and many responders asked for more of the same. The survey questions that are relevant to this question will be important for the search committee to review. In general, the members would like to see the same integrity of leadership which is represented by listening, communication, sincerity, and willingness to build relationships with staff and members, as well as a person who understands the demands, of practicing law and the particulars of the profession.

In summary, members are looking for a *Leader* and an *Advocate*. At this stage in OBAs development the members are expressing a desire to have a person who “gets” them and can support the changes in the practice of law – especially around technology. Representation matters when it comes to lived experiences and “getting” a diverse population of people, and many responders specifically asked for women and minority candidates.

There is a common perception in hiring practices that diverse candidates will mean sacrificing qualifications for the position, and this was expressed in the responses. There was also responses who asked for more effort to find qualified candidates who were also diverse in order to broaden the perspective and growing edges in the practice of law.





# Question Response Detail

Oklahoma Bar Association  
2022 Member Survey

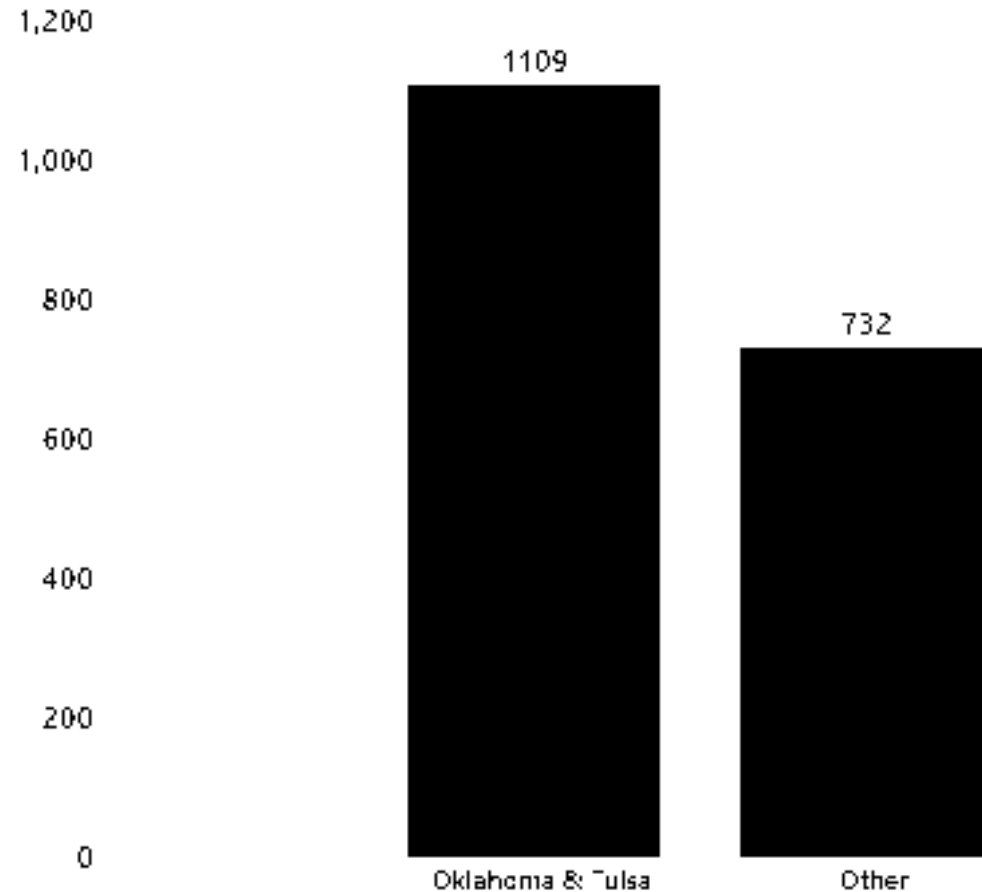




## Q1. In which County are you located?

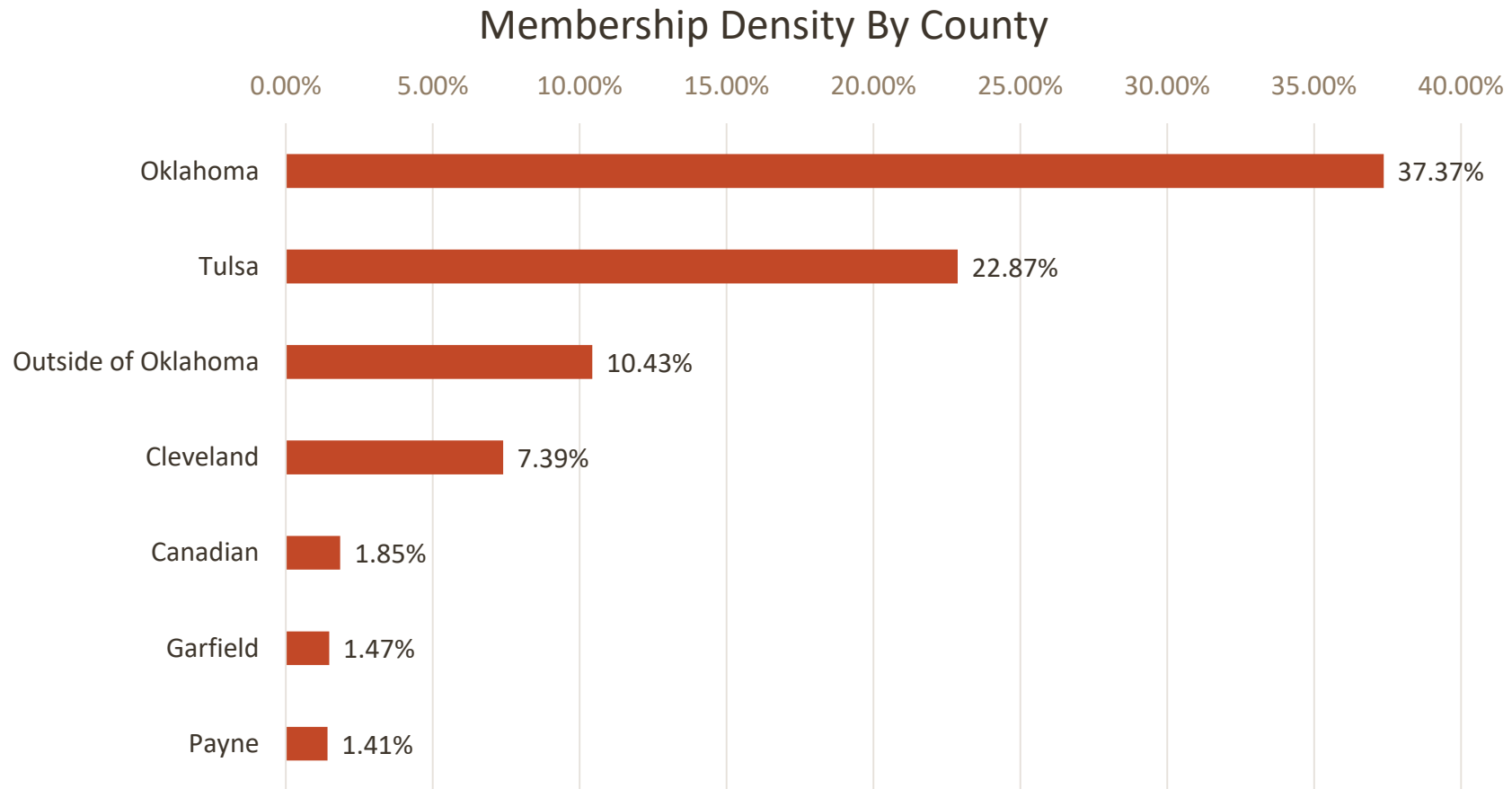
### Overview of all data

- Oklahoma County - 37%
- Tulsa County - 23%
- Non-Metro - 29%
- Outside Oklahoma - 10%



## Q1. County detail for top 1% or more

Data was collected in 61 of the 77 counties, plus Outside of Oklahoma. However, most counties represented less than 1% of the responses. The following counties received a ranking of 1% or more:



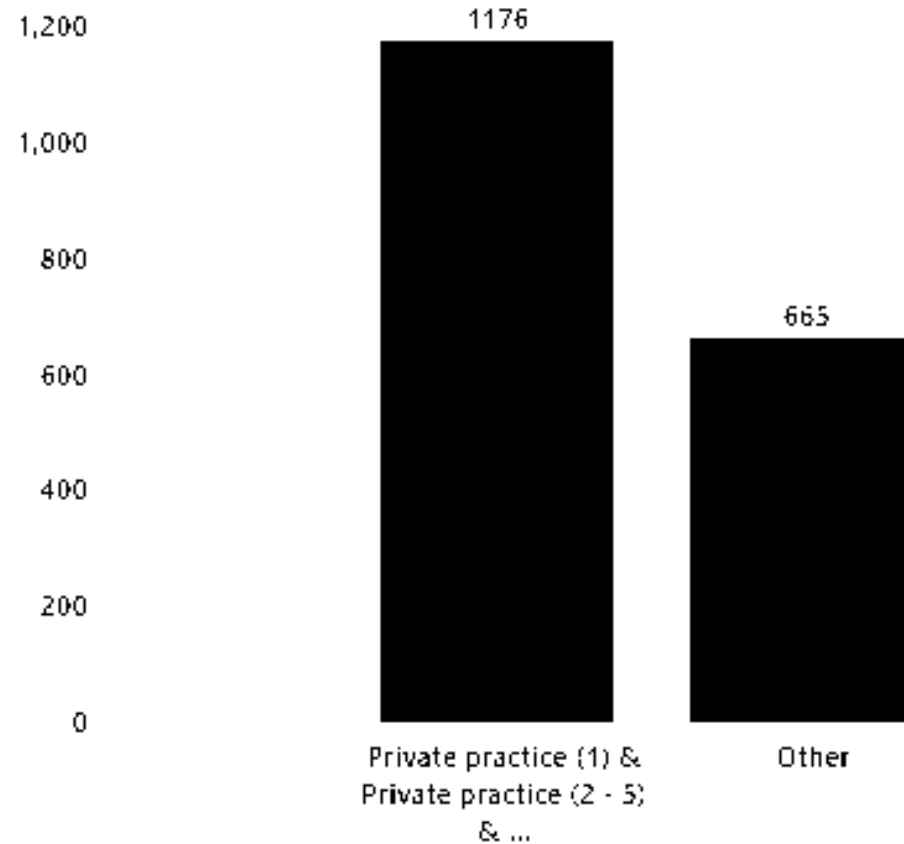
## Q2. What is the setting for your practice?

### Private Practices

- (1) 26%
- (2-5) 16%
- (6-20) 9%
- (21-50) 8%
- (50+) 5%

#### Researchers Note:

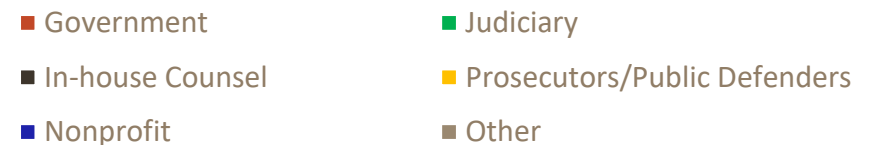
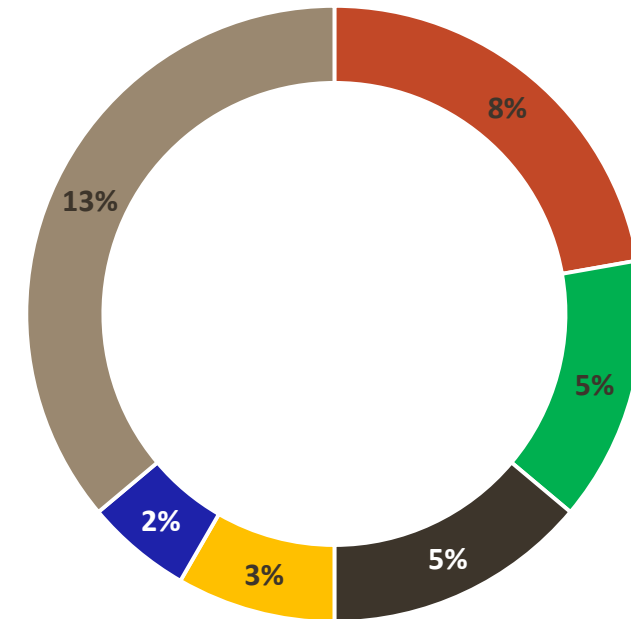
Private practice is a natural grouping to look at as compared to other settings. It accounts for 64% of memberships. There is a negative relationship between staff size and number of members implying either a greater need for OBA membership among lower capacity practices, or more targeted marketing from OBA towards lower capacity practices.



## Q2. Segmentation of all responses for non-private practice

### ■ Non-Private Practice

- Governmental 8%
- Judiciary 5%
- In-House Counsel 5%
- Prosecutors/Public Defenders 3%
- Nonprofit 2%
- Other 13%



# Analysis of Q1 and Q2: Practice setting and geographic location

## Overview

The following pages segment data by practice setting and geographic location data points combined. In almost every instance, the setting of the practice was largely located in one of the two metro communities. The exception for this were in the categories of Military, Nonprofit, and Other.

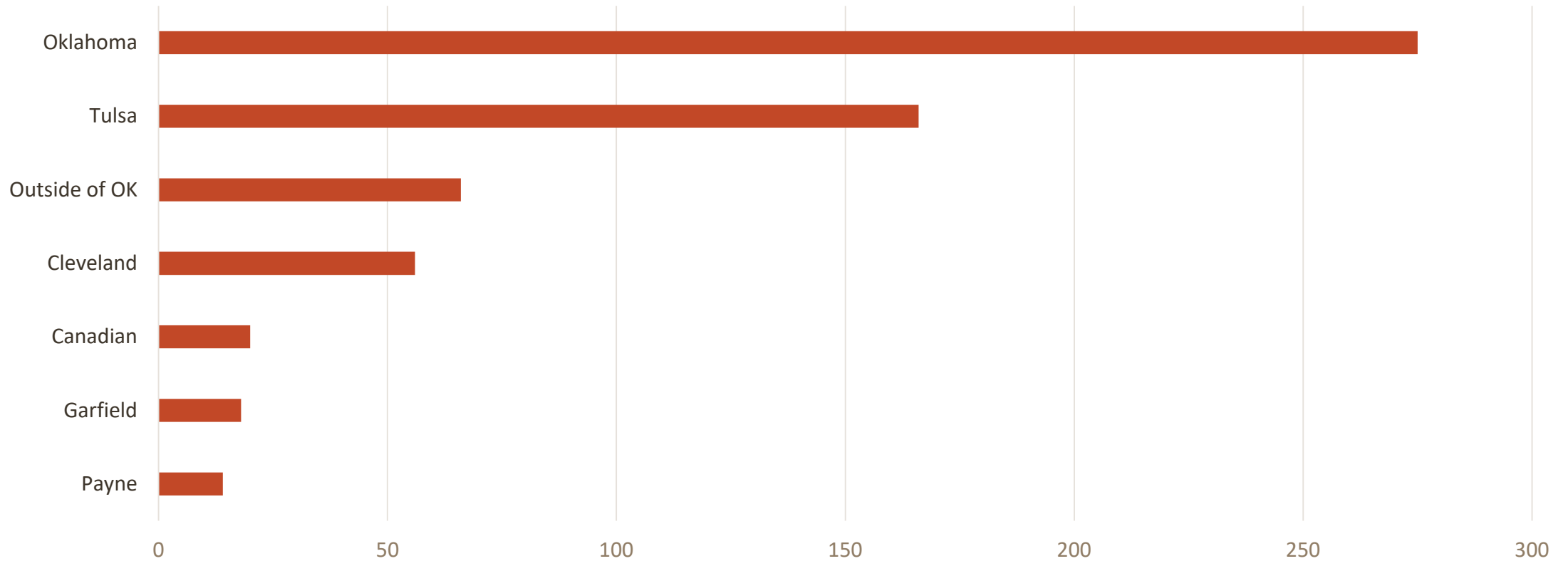
The largest representation of non-metro practices were in the category of private practice with 1-5 employees. This suggests that legal services outside of Oklahoma and Tulsa counties are largely met by small private practices.

The data also suggests that OBAs effectiveness and value for membership outside of the metro areas will be largely met by serving the particular needs of this group.



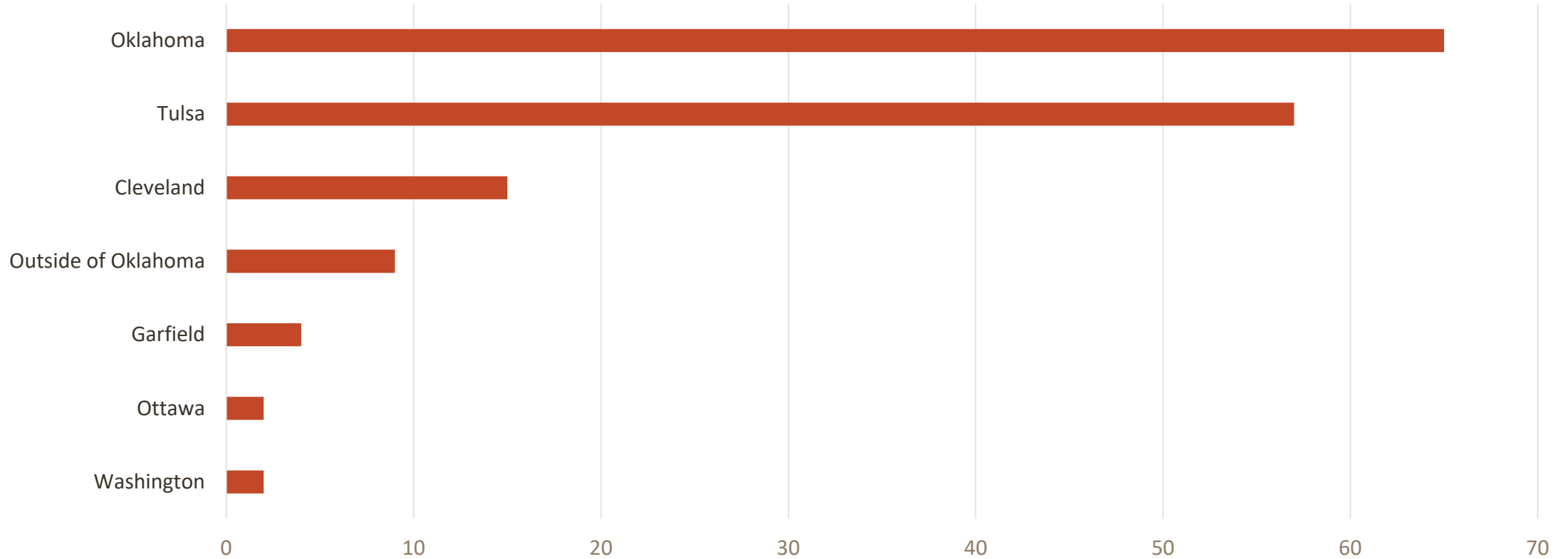
Private practice in the 1-5 employee size category is largely held in a handful of counties. There was not a statistically significant difference in county size when filtered by 1 employee or 2-5 employees and the data was combined in this chart. There were responses from 54 of the 77 counties in this group, however this chart represents only the counties with 2% or more of this group. Other counties received less than 1% of this grouping. However, this group received the largest county representation when compared to the other practice settings. This data indicates that rural populations are most served by small practices with less than 5 employees. Data is listed by count of this category.

### Population of Private Practice 1 - 5



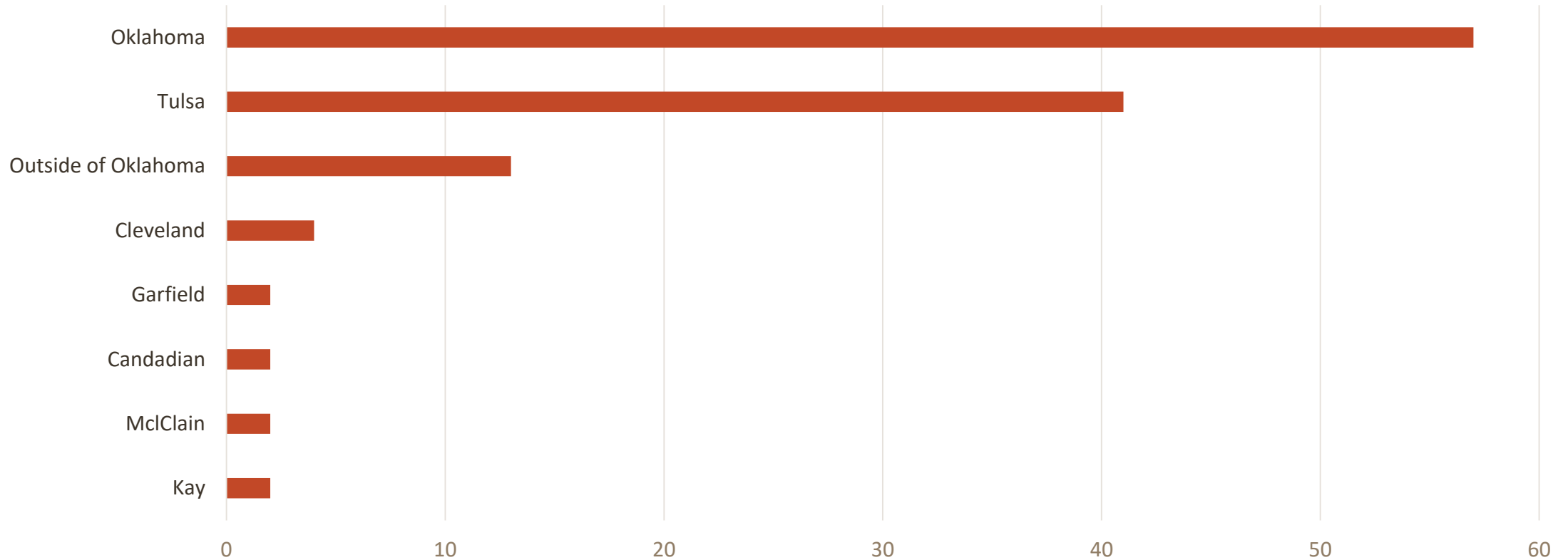
Private practice in the 6-20 employee size category is largely held in a handful of counties. Unlike the 1-5 employee size group, which had a wider geographic reach, this grouping is primarily located in these counties. Chart lists counties with 2% or more of this group. Data is listed by count of this category.

### Population of Private Practice 6-20



Private practice in the 21-50 employee size category is largely held in a handful of counties. Unlike the 1-5 employee size group, which had a wider geographic reach, this grouping is primarily located in these counties. The data suggests that private practices larger than 6 employees, especially in the 21-50 group, follows population density in the state of Oklahoma. Chart lists counties with 2% or more of this group. Data is listed by count for this category.

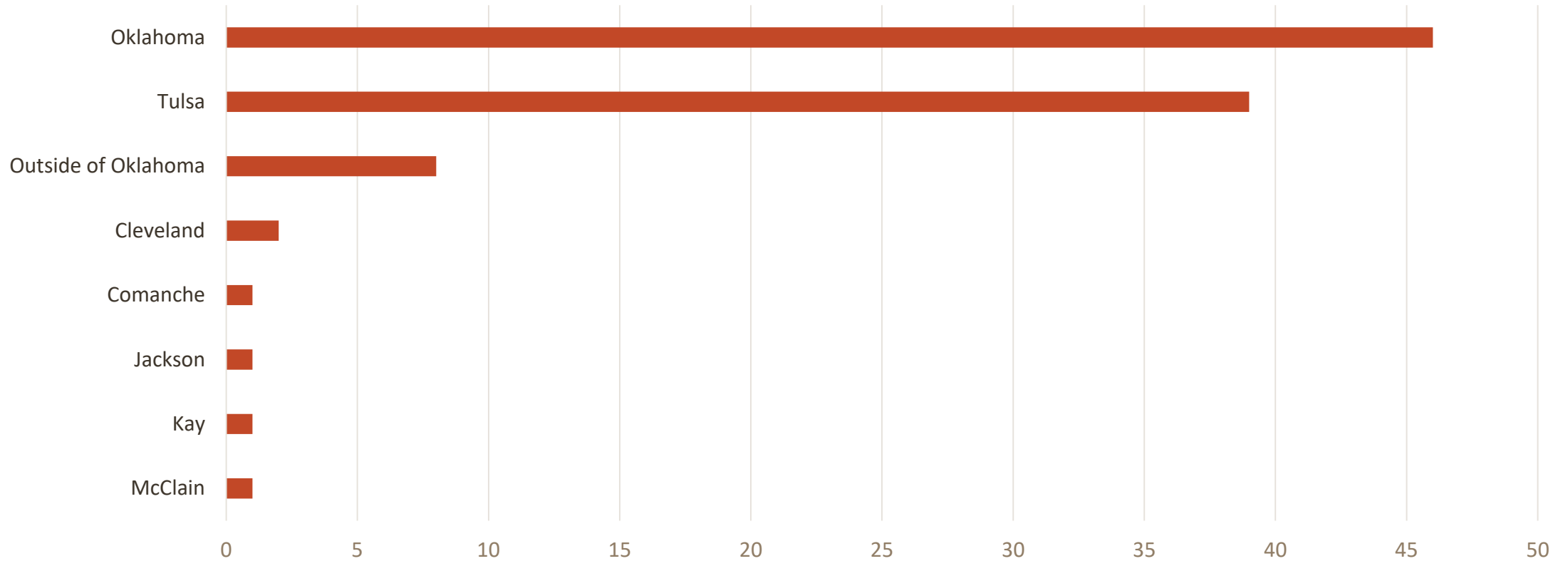
### Population of Private Practice 21-50





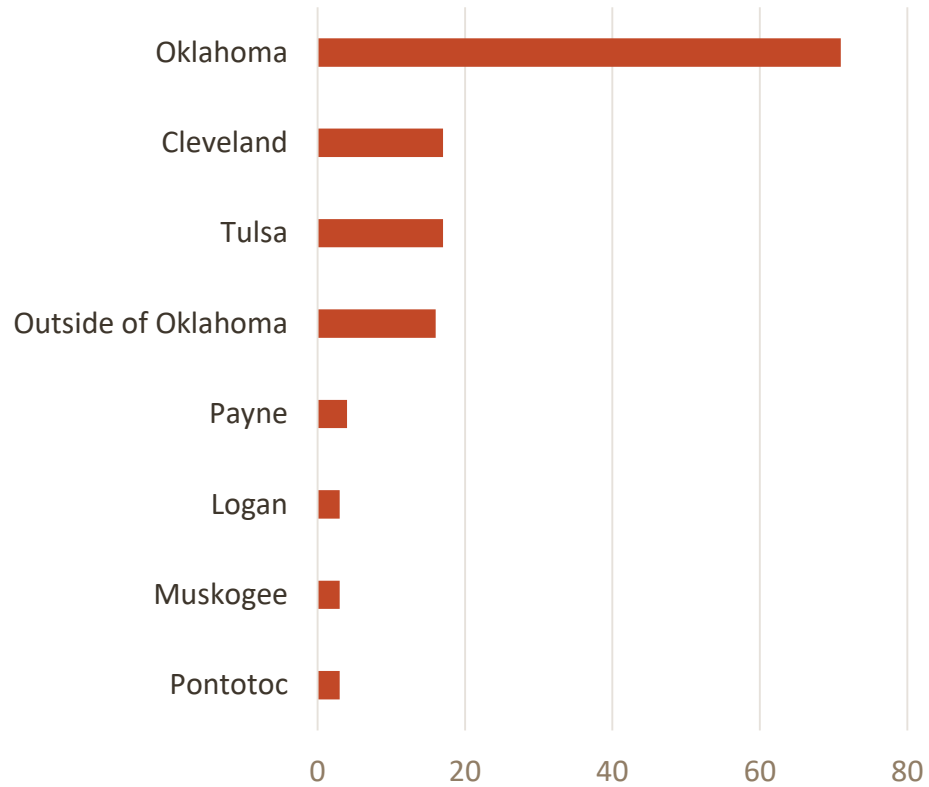
Private practice in the 50+ employee size category is only in 8 counties in Oklahoma with a significant difference between metro and non-metro areas within Oklahoma. Chart lists counties with 2% or more of this group. Data is listed by count for each category.

### Population of Private Practice 50+

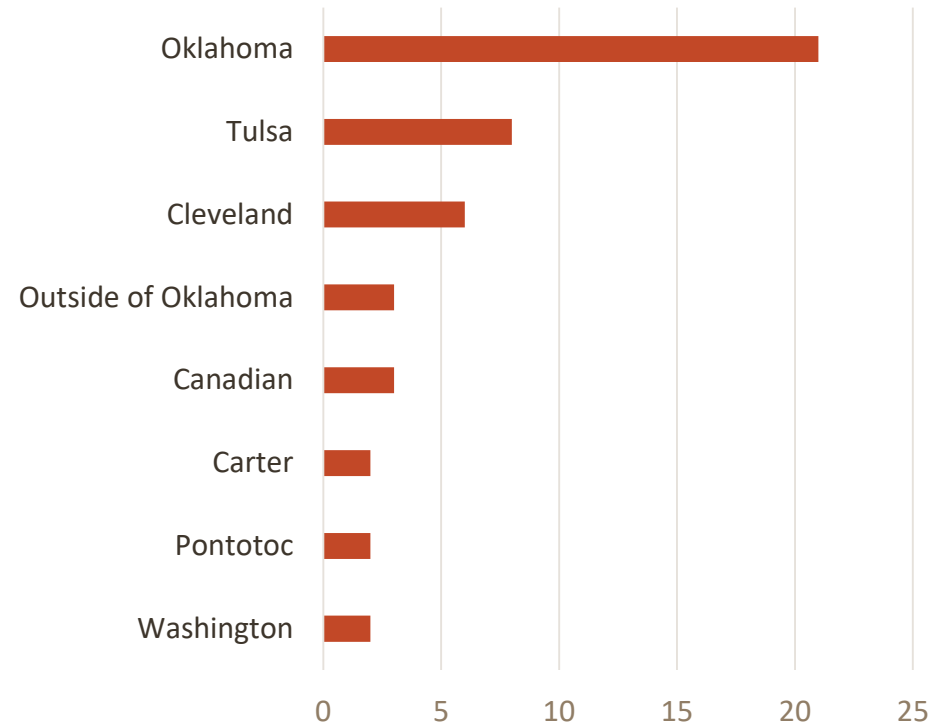


Respondents who selected government as their setting for practice follows population density of the state, while those that selected prosecutors and public defenders are geographically more distributed. Chart lists the counties with 2% or more of the population for these groups.

### Population of Government

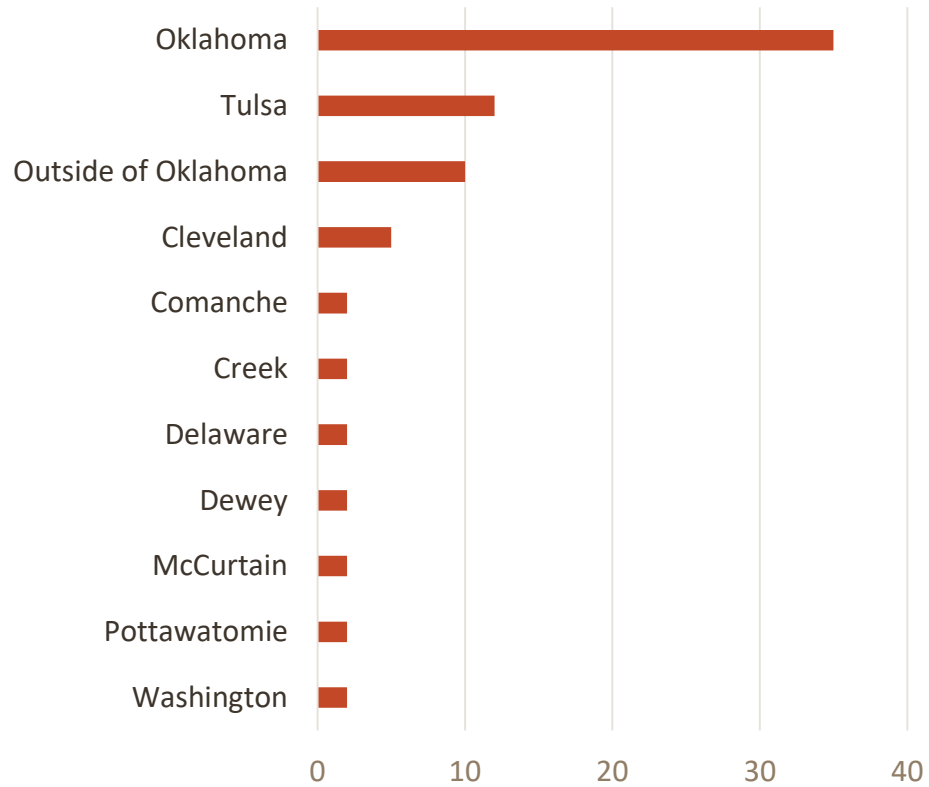


### Population of Prosecutors/Public Defenders

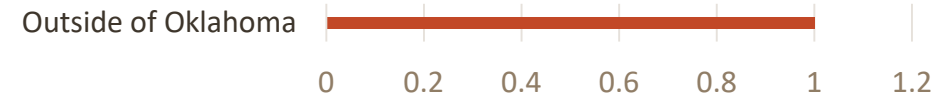


Respondents who selected judiciary, military, and nonprofit as their place of practice. Chart lists the counties with 2% or more of the population for these groups. Data is listed by count for each category.

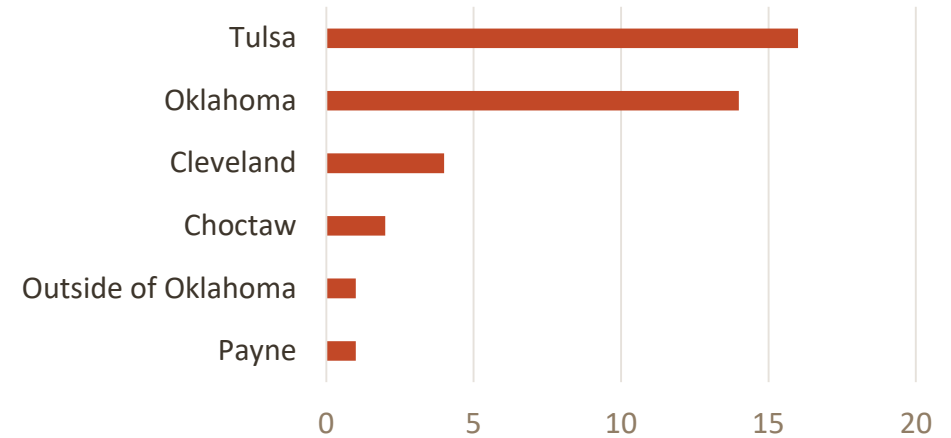
### Population of Judiciary



### Population of Military

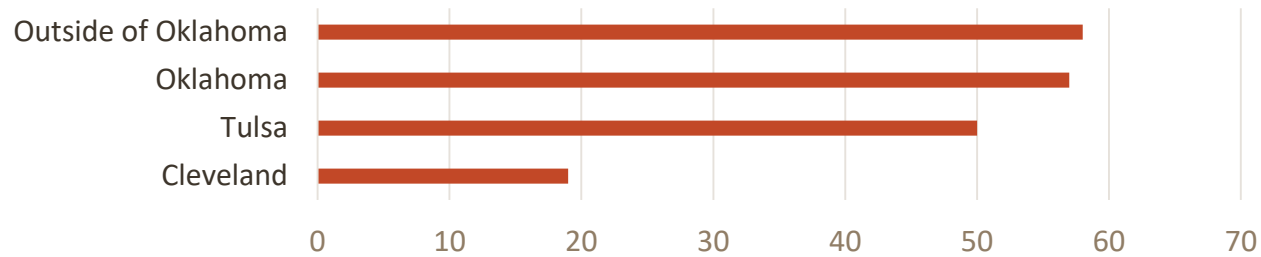


### Population of Nonprofit



Location of those who selected “other” as their setting for their practice. Chart represents counties with 2% or more of this group

### Population of Other



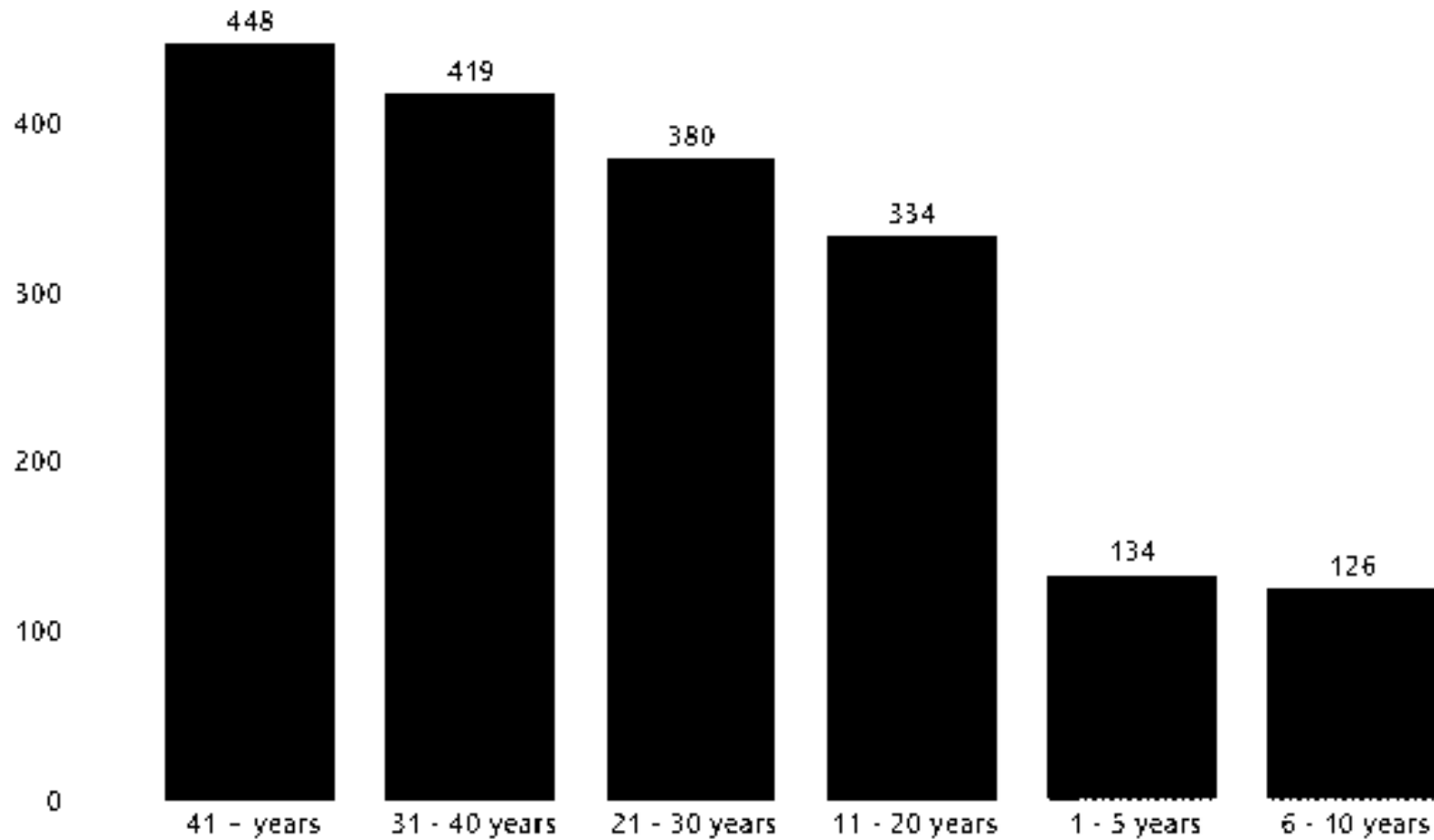
Write in responses for other:

- Contract
- Retired
- Semi-retired
- Not practicing
- Financial services
- Oil and gas
- Consulting
- Academia

Retired or Semi-retired represented the majority of responses in this group



### Q3. How long have you been a member of the OBA?



## Q3. Segmentation of all responses for years as a member

Disaggregated data on membership range suggests that OBAs membership engagement is highest among those who have been in practice for more than 10 years.

Years	Overall (1841)	White (1527)	BIPOC (222)
1-5	7%	7%	11%
6-10	7%	6%	12%
11-20	18%	17%	24%
21-30	21%	21%	17%
31-40	23%	23%	18%
41+	24%	26%	18%

### Overall

Nearly half of all OBA members have been members for over 30 years while only 14% have been members for less than 10.

### Filtered for Race

BIPOC members on average have less years of membership than White members.



## Q4. What age decade are you in? (CHECK Q#)

Age	Overall	BIPOC
20s	2%	4%
30s	11%	14%
40s	16%	24%
50s	20%	18%
60s	31%	24%
70s	17%	14%
80s	4%	4%
90s	0.30%	0.50%

### Overall

The average distribution of members by age shows a bell curve peaking in the 60s.

This may indicate a trend in choosing the practice of law as a career choice. Or, it may indicate a survey completion rate suggesting that OBAs most engaged members are between the age of 40-60.

It may be relevant to look more into:

- Does 40 represent a career stability point that allows for more engagement with OBA? Or, does it take a number of years of practice to value OBA membership?
- OBA consider members in their 20s and 30s as part of the pipeline for engagement.

### BIPOC

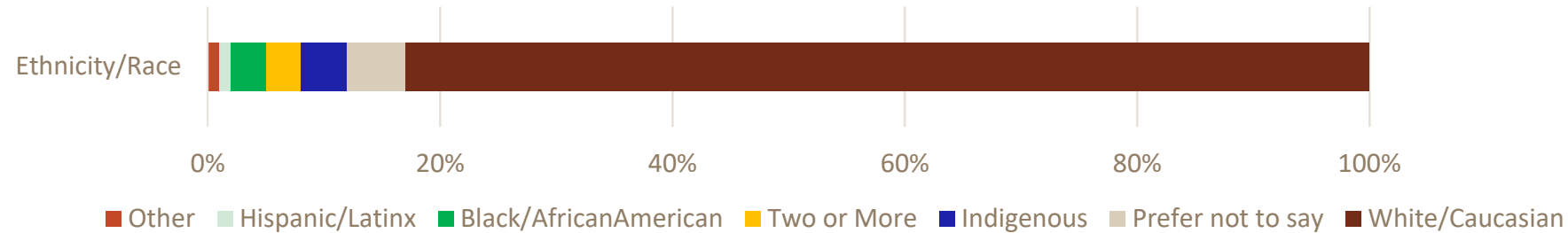
The distribution of members by age is a perfect mirror U shape with a mean age slightly lower than the overall age



## Q5. What race or ethnicity do you most identify with?

### Overall

- White (83%)
- Indigenous (4%)
- Two or more races (3%)
- Black (3%)
- Hispanic (1%)
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1%)
- Asian (.5%)
- Arab (.1%)
- Other (1%)
- Prefer not to say (5%)



- The overwhelming majority of OBA membership is White/Caucasian
- BIPOC members make up ~12%





Q6. [If Indigenous/Native American] Which indigenous groups or tribes do you belong?

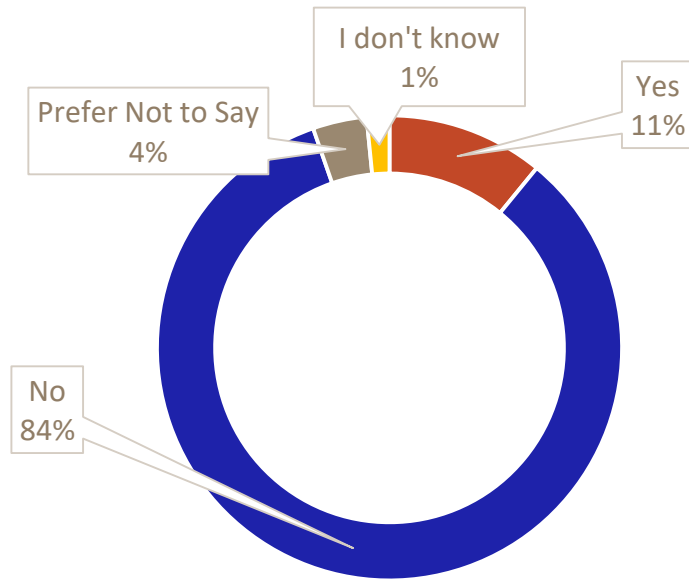
Summary

Nation Oklahoma Potawatomi Nation Comanche  
Cherokee Nation Tribe Cherokee Indian  
Choctaw Muscogee Creek Chickasaw

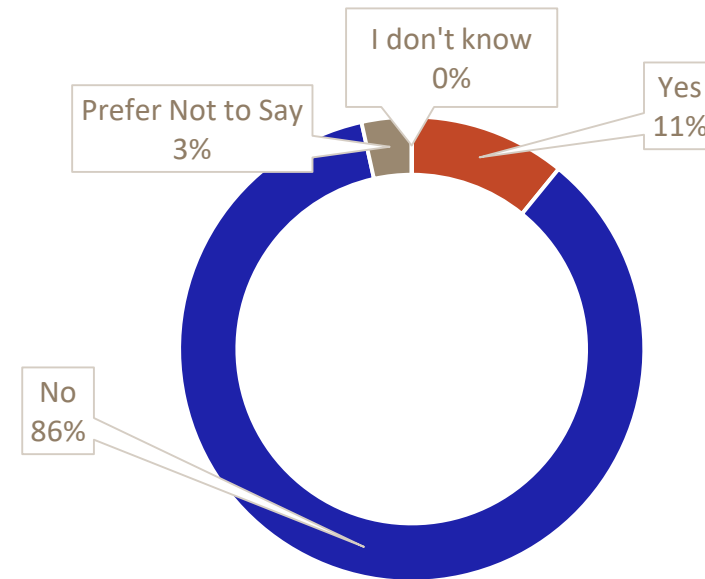


# Q7 & Q8. Disability

**Are you a person experiencing one or more disabilities?**



**[If yes] Do you experience a disability that makes it challenging for you to access the OBA's services?**



## Q9. [If yes] How can the OBA assist differently abled members in their practice?

### Summary of Responses

- **Hearing/Visually Impaired:** use close captioning in meetings and online trainings, bigger fonts in publications, a website that meets with ADA standards, and audio readings of visual information in training and meetings (this is a picture of a pie chart that shows...), and advocate that courts and other public houses utilize microphones, adopt ADA accessible ramps, elevators, classrooms, and courtrooms.
- **Geography:** while geographic distribution is not a disability per se, comments recommended sensitivity to non-metro and out-of-state members by increasing access to distance learning opportunities and more electronic meetings.
- **Health:** immune compromised individuals asked to remain sensitive that the pandemic remains, may not go “back to normal”, reduce the stigma of continuing to wear a mask as it cuts down on other common illnesses like colds and flu which also effect people with compromised immune systems.
- **Mental Health:** increase sensitivity to the psychological tolls of the profession, the prevalence of mental health issues which lead to abuse (self-abuse: drugs/alcohol/suicide) and abuse of others (verbal abuse to colleagues, physical harm to self or others); increase counseling visits available in the program, expand Lawyers helping Lawyers.
- **Advocate:** advocate for its members throughout the state, especially in court rooms for:
  - **Breastfeeding rooms in court houses**
  - **All documents from county counts uploaded to the website**
  - **Searchable options on the OBA website for court records**
  - **Increase awareness of the use of ableist language**
  - **Require/offer sensitivity training for its members specifically on the topics of disability awareness, race equity, and unconscious bias as an ethics of practice topic. For some this is a matter of increasing civil discourse among peers.**
- **Socio-economic Disparity:** support members who do low-wage or pro-bono work with scholarships for dues and CLEs and economic support if they personally have financial crisis; increase an awareness that lower-income clients issue complaints as a tactic to avoid paying attorney’s fees, being under investigation is wearisome; increase lawyers helping lawyers and other support systems for small-practices. Providing no/low cost CLE options for all members reduces stigma of asking for financial aid.
- **Age:** younger members expressed need for salary fairness across industry, form banks for those new to the practice, and no/low cost trainings for CLEs; create education tracks in CLEs for those new to the practice, and adopt a mentoring program. Older attorneys asked to age-out of CLE requirements altogether, to remove fees after a certain age, or offer more free/low cost trainings for CLEs; this age group was the most likely to share that they kept their license for pro-bono work and habit.



## Representative Quotes

“Advocating for increased accessibility measures in law schools such as recorded lectures with subtitles, recorded lectures for asynchronous learning, and similar measures for court proceedings as necessary for the deaf or hard of hearing; advocating for more accessible learning, exam, and practice options for pregnant and breastfeeding/nursing mothers.”

“Video meetings have been very helpful, I would think, to those who are unable to drive to OKC on a regular basis for committee meetings or other events. The online member groups have been helpful to connect folks who aren’t able to show up for happy hours and the like. I don’t have any suggestions beyond pointing to those things, which I think the OBA is doing very well.”

“Provide scholarships to lawyers like me who work pro bono for the poor and underrepresented people, and who do not earn enough money to afford the costly CLE programs. Also provide annual fee waivers for the same.”

“Although I think Oklahoma lawyers do treat each other with respect in most situations, I think we can improve on civility. Likewise, I think that a required program to expose bar members to the needs of persons living with disabilities and persons who live under the exposed cloud of prejudice could dramatically change how we treat one another.”

“I believe that the OBA should provide far more counseling to members. I believe that counseling and mental health services should be required if the lawyer is in the active practice of law...”



# Q10. Most used OBA services ranked

## Overall

1. Continuing Education
2. Printed/Electronic Communications and Publications
3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. “Find a Lawyer” Directory
5. Website Resources to share with public/clients
6. Answers to questions on Law Practice Management and Technology
7. Fast Case
8. Ethics Council
9. Career Center
10. Annual Meeting
11. Lawyers Helping Lawyers/Counsel Service
12. Solo and Small Firm Conference
13. Hein Online

**Researchers Note:** There are no significant changes in the use of OBA services controlling for County, Race or Disability



# Use of services by practice

There is no difference in top 2 services when filtered by practice. Across practice settings the ranking continues to be:

1. Continuing Education
2. Printed/electronic communications and publications

There is not a statistically significant difference among responses when filtered by practice. However; the subtle differences may be worth noting by staff and board that have oversight of this program.

## Private Practice 1-5 Employees:

3. "Find a Lawyer" directory
4. Answers to questions regarding membership
5. Fast Case
6. Website resources to share with public/clients

## Private Practice 6-20 Employees:

3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Ethics Counsel

## Private Practice 21-50 and 50+ Employees:

3. Website resources to share with public/clients
4. Answers to questions regarding membership
5. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
6. Answers to questions on Law Practice Management and Technology

## Government:

3. "Find a Lawyer" directory
4. Answers to questions regarding membership
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Career Center

## Public Defenders/Prosecutors:

3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Ethics Counsel

**Nonprofit, Military and Other did not produce significant variation from the aggregate data**



# Use of services by age decade

There is no difference in top 2 services when filtered by age decade. Across this group the ranking continues to be:

1. Continuing Education
2. Printed/electronic communications and publications

There are not statistically significant variations in the data when filtered by age or number of years of being a member of OBA, however; subtle changes in the data set indicate that age and/or longevity in their career may play a role in what middle ranked services are utilized.

## 20s

3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. Website resources to share with public/clients
5. "Find a Lawyer"
6. Career Center

## 30s

3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Career Center

## 40s

3. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
4. Answers to questions regarding membership
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Fast Case

## 50s

3. "Find a Lawyer" directory
4. Answers to questions regarding membership
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Fast Case

## 60s

3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Answers to questions on Law Practice Management and Technology

## 70s, 80s, 90s

3. Answers to questions regarding membership
4. "Find a Lawyer" Directory
5. Website resources to share with public/clients
6. Answers to questions on Law Practice Management and Technology



# Q11. Of the services selected, what did you like or dislike about the service?

## Summary of Responses

- **Like:**
  - Organization and professionalism of the CLE office
  - Courteous and competent OBA staff
  - Easy access to CLE
  - Virtual courses and on-demand training options
  - Updated resources, especially on technology
  - Regular communication and articles that give practical support for running a practice
  - Reduced/no cost CLEs
  - Efficiency in the good standing process
  - Publications: monthly magazine, Bar Journal
  - Fast Case
  - Referrals for mental health
  - Public information available
  - Member Directory
  - Solo and small firm conference
  - Responsive Ethics Counsel

## Representative Quotes

“The CLE is great quality and love the convenience of virtual attendance. It is very important to have access to a responsive Ethics Counsel during times that issues crop up.”

“Education materials are excellent. Meetings and events help us meet colleagues. Ethics Counsel has been helpful for confidential communications.”

“The staff of the OBA is always professional, helpful, friendly.”

### Researchers Comment:

We noted from reading responses that the question was unclear. Responders often did not indicate whether their comment was for what they liked, or didn't like. The summary of this section only lists what can certainly fall into each category.

However, it should be noted that when responders liked an item they referenced it in broad terms; when they disliked an aspect it was usually for a very specific item, and likely effects them personally.





# Q11. Of the services selected, what did you like or dislike about the service?

## Summary of Responses

- **Dislike:**
  - Only digital versions of publications available
  - Fast Case doesn't provide enough for legal research, needs more features
  - More available services in non-metro communities
  - Ethics Counsel
  - CLEs are required and/or offered but do not pertain to some practices of law;
  - Solo and Small Firm conference is cost-prohibitive.
  - Hein Online is great but availability through OBA is limited
  - Lexicology email distributed too often
  - Lawyer directory needs improvement
  - Annual Bar meeting and Law Day create too much paper on topics

## Representative Quotes

"It appears most services are geared toward larger populated areas and very few services are geared specifically toward rural areas. The public in rural areas are being hit hard by retiring older attorneys and very few younger attorneys are moving to rural areas. There is a real "access to justice" problem in rural areas."

"I have not used any of the services in the last 12 months. I tried to use Ethics Counsel, to no avail."

"The website is very confusing, poorly laid out, multiple signing [on] and limited information [when] you do get on."

"Fast Case was very helpful but I would like to see us add more features from Fast Case and more access to Bar Journal articles and other documents outside of Oklahoma."



# Q11. Researchers Observations

## Overview

When given complete anonymity, people will say many – often competing – things. Based on the analysis of this question, our team suggests the OBA focus on these 3 areas:

1. Fast Case – some love it, some wish it were more robust. Education on the program, enhancements to the software, and a build out of other features if possible would be worthwhile for OBA to consider. Those who love it want more of it and desired it had additional features, and those that wished it were better are wanting it to perform as a useable service. This seemed especially important to members when other research institutions, like law libraries, were closed during the pandemic.
2. Website – upgrading the website to a platform that would allow the various functions to provide single-user sign on, ease of use, upgrades to the directory, form bank, notifications of court closings. This is where a lot of members are engaging you. Make it easy.
3. Tell your story – the OBA would benefit from articulating the value proposition to being a member of the OBA. What dues support, what services are provided, and how belonging to the OBA creates a network (you may not need us this year but your friend/colleague does). There is opportunity to rise above the “what do I get out of this” and into a stronger-together message “this is what we make possible for the practice of law in Oklahoma.
4. In making more possible for the practice of law, there are members who would like to see the OBA create more pathways for civil discourse, understanding of people with disabilities, and fairness for women and people with disabilities to be able to practice law. This will be explored more in later questions but it is worth noting here.



## Q12. Satisfaction with OBA customer service

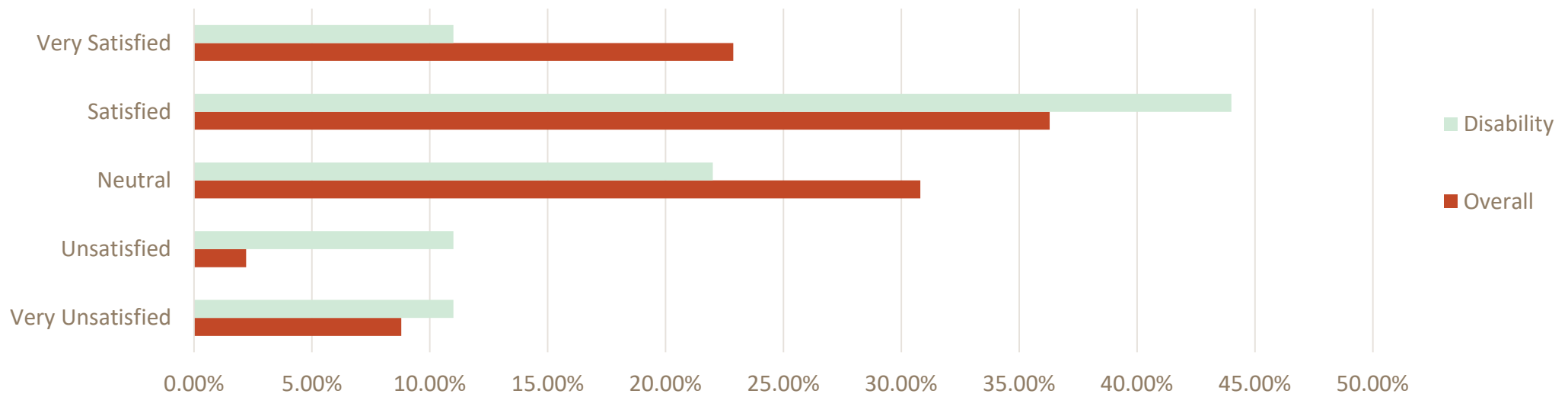
### Overall

- Very Unsatisfied (9%)
- Unsatisfied (2%)
- Neutral (31%)
- Satisfied (36%)
- Very Satisfied (23%)

### Those experiencing barriers due to disability

- Very Unsatisfied (11%)
- Unsatisfied (11%)
- Neutral (22%)
- Satisfied (44%)
- Very Satisfied (11%)

\*There are no significant differences in satisfaction across County, Race, Age, or Practice



## Q13. What additional services or programs can the OBA provide to enhance the professional lives of our members?

Summary of items mentioned that have not already been discussed in this report:

**Transition into Practice:** many responders asked for support in becoming acclimated to the practice of law. A division of OBA devoted to this population, CLEs devoted to this topic, or a section of the website devoted to practical tools such as a form bank were mentioned as suggestions. Also mentioned here are networking opportunities and social events to increase peer-to-peer sharing of resources, and also mentoring options with those more established in the profession.

**Shared Services and Resources:** small practice firms especially asked for more shared services for administrative support such as bookkeeping, administration, and IT services. Group plans for health insurance and retirement benefits available to members would also benefit smaller operations. Shared resources such as handbooks on special areas of practice like Medicaid and Family Law – more of these are needed.

**Items that Effect Practice:** any support OBA can offer to enhance the day-to-day experience of practicing law, such as: more timely alerts for courts that close due to weather; more alerts about changes in technology and reciprocity databases with out-of-state contacts.

**Network Building and Self-Care:** providing infrastructure to strengthen the network of membership through social events, and foster self-care while also increasing relationships through membership supported events (5ks, yoga, outreach events in rural areas, events for affinity groups, family days, etc.)

**Retired Lawyers:** increase awareness of pro-bono opportunities, board service in nonprofits, and other ways of “giving back” for retired attorneys, and reduce fees or CLE requirements for this group.



## Representative Quotes

“Continue expanding programming for the sections. More funding for Women in Law conference.”

“Remove CLE requirements for retired lawyers.”

“I probably need to be more aware of the services offered.”

“Law student division; transitioning to practice mentorship/networking program; practical/skill building CLEs/workshops.”

“Make it easier for young attorneys to understand how to get involved in the Oklahoma Bar Association.”

“Educating, publicizing, endorsing and rewarding civilized behavior among bar members.”

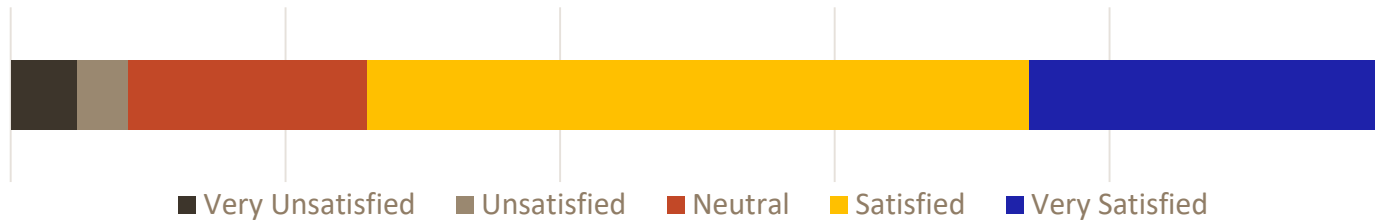
“A link on the OBA site with information for court closures in all counties and federal courts in Oklahoma.”

“I suggest...forming a “back office” cooperative so that solo practitioners struggling with overhead could have centralized services for reception, bookkeeping, accounting, tax prep...I am at a point in my career when I do not need that admin assistance, but younger lawyers distributed across OK could use the service until their practice turns enough income to hire individual services. Just a thought.”



## Q14. Satisfaction with OBA overall

3.9★  
average rating



There is not a statistically significant variation in overall satisfaction when filtered by demographics:

- **White 3.9/5.0**
- **Black/African-American 3.6/5.0**
- **All other Race/Ethnicities 3.8/5.0**
- **Metro 3.9/5.0**
- **Non-Metro 3.8/5.0**
- **Disability 3.8/5.0**



## Q14. Representative Quotes

“I have never been involved with the OBA. Sorry.”

“We really need to do more to get underrepresented people involved. Unfortunately, looking at the officers and directors, it does not really represent the people on the front lines trying to help. Unfortunately, it seems more elitist and good old boy oriented than service oriented.”

“The OBA is a wonderful resource, it could always be improved, but that’s always true of any resource. Please note none of these suggestions are meant to be criticisms. They are simply suggestions on helpful ways the Bar can serve it’s members better.”

“Only picked satisfied as I realize the amount of funding necessary to improve a minority of individuals but we are not as small of a minority as when I started practicing law and someone, somewhere will eventually demand that the ADA be implemented in our courthouses.”

“Very satisfied.”

“There are lawyers practicing law who have no business practicing law. There is a lawyer in my area with multiple felony counts still practicing law. It’s an embarrassment.”

“Both membership and CLE cost too much.”



## Q14. Researchers Observations and Analysis

### Overview

More than any other question in the survey, this question elicited responses that touched on themes of ethics, lawyer conduct, and the merits of who is authorized to practice law. This indicates to our team that OBAs overall reputation is linked to the perceived quality of its policing and oversight of the profession and its involvement in “political” issues.

Our team of researchers are not practitioners in the field, and we would encourage a small team review the write-in answers on this question in the complete data set to glean insights into its membership’s views on this. There seem to be recurring themes:

1. **Overall oversight:** Not policed well enough; ethics surrounding the practice of law and professional responsibility and being convicted of a crime; the ability to regain a license after imprisonment or conviction for a crime; a sentiment that OBA is “allowing too many lawyers to get away with too many things,” not holding accountable known violations or misuses of power and position within the practice.
2. **Involvement in “political” issues:** there are vocal members who do not want to see the OBA be involved in politics and those that do; this marries an individuals overall satisfaction with their perception of the OBA’s position on socially important matters that mirrors their own. This is may be juxtaposed against #1 which would suggest more need for reform in the profession and to some degree, more advocacy and political involvement.





## Q15. What are the strengths of OBA?

### Summary of Responses

- **People:** loyal staff, diversity and reach of its members
- **Qualities:** friendly, responsive, “there when you need it”, good customer service, good communication
- **Services:** CLE, Solo Small Firm Conference, legal research
- **Reputation:** not biased, gives leadership on important items, oversight on legal profession, ethics bearer, fosters a professional community
- **Character & Values:** genuinely want to make OBA better, adaptable to changing practices in the profession, willingness to promote membership to serve the community and give back
- **Technical:** infrastructure of the organization, strong financial position, technology (access, support, information)



## Representative Quotes

“Helpful and forthcoming staff of the OBA”

“Collegiality, member focus, continuing education, ethic[s] advice and assistance.”

“Opportunities to serve and network; sharing of resources and tools; opportunities for feedback for improvement.”

“Member services, keeping up with technology, ease of access to information, directors and staff genuinely care about lawyers and improving the practice of law in Oklahoma.”

“I love the bar center”

“My limited contact with the OBA leads me to not have an answer.”

“Lawyers helping lawyers is truly a breath of fresh air. I have recommended it to lawyers under stress. Thank you for that.”



## Q16. What are the opportunities for improvement that should be considered by leadership (staff and board)?

### Summary of Responses

- **Training topics:** refugee and asylum support, rules for Indian Courts, diversity, equity, inclusion, unconscious bias, disability sensitivity, ADA compliance in visual platforms (not just buildings); practical tools for new attorneys on running a practice; psychology lessons for dealing with a difficult person; cryptocurrency;
- **Increased services:** mental health, broaden network for Lawyers helping Lawyers, visual/audio for differently abled;
- **Economics:** free/reduced CLE, assistance with UBE transfers, advocate for fair pay; age-limitations for paying for CLEs;
- **Legal Profession Reform:** civility among lawyers, ethics to stop manipulate trial by jury; advocate for opportunities for women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ, lobbying and working with legislature; self-report known lawyers and judges with unethical behavior; mandatory professional liability insurance; software, technology, ethical rules for municipal lawyers; stop people practicing law without a license and case runners; allow for President to be at-large rather than from a specific county; General Counsel – too aggressive (and) not aggressive enough;
- **Community Involvement/Reputation Management (PR):** more opportunity for community service, pro-bono opportunities; left/right politics management;
- **Efficiencies:** online filing, form database, shared administrative services (bookkeeping, billing/payment, collections), national licensing (rather than by state), self-report CLEs, website with single-sign on, provide meeting “producer” to assist with technology (who isn’t involved in the discussion); secure file sharing service;
- **Connection:** communication/outreach to lawyers in non-metro or out of state; social events; in-person events; more on-line training events; support local/county bar associations.



## Q16. Representative Quotes

“Strengthening the ethics office of general counsel. Go after unethical judges and prosecutors. Communicate to us that you are not afraid to do so and with gusto. Most will not report because of widespread belief that your office is afraid to take on certain judges and prosecutors unless and only unless another powerful attorney is the one leading the charge...Look to surrounding states for examples...Oklahoma does not do as much to police the rot in in our profession.”

“Mentorship programs – and not just for new attorneys (older attorneys may be starting new legal careers) like coming out of government practice and starting a private practice.”

“It would be nice if we could self-report our CLE online like we can do with the Texas Bar Association...If I do online CLE that needs reported to Oklahoma, I have to e-mail it to the office and then remember to go check and make sure that it is there later. The CLE staff is wonderful, but it would be nice to do this ourselves.”

“More in person CLEs”

“Better, immediate help with technology in meetings. We should have a staff person immediately available to deal with technology issues in a meeting.”

“Consider being intentional about hiring more people of color on the OBA staff.”



## Q17. What are the top 3 items that must be address by the OBA in the next 3 years?

### Summary of Responses

There was a lot of recapping of answers and theme explored in Q16. In general:

- **Technology:** internal legal services, online form database, website more upgraded, modernize technology/website/ and software platforms;
- **Educate the Public:** fear that the public is losing a handle on how democracy works, how the legal profession supports civil and individual rights, how the legal process works;
- **Accommodations:** support a diverse, aging workforce; invest in new technologies to reach its geographically diverse membership; support to retain women and BIPOC/LGBTQIA+ in the profession (create affinity groups); mental health services, work/life balance; support self-care
- **OBA Operations:** size of staff, perceptions of efficiency and institutional “bloat”, create value proposition for membership program.



## Q17. Representative Quotes

“Immigration; educate public as to what a democracy is and how its supposed to work; opposing efforts to stop minorities from voting.”

“1. Determine what new/alternative ways to share information with membership are available and accessible by diverse membership. 2. Determine the implications of the aging workforce...and what new skills may be needed to remain helpful to Oklahomans... 3. Determine the implications of a more diverse workforce...”

“Diversity Diversity Diversity”

“Improvement of relationship with the legislature. Deepening connection with all members. Always continue to enhance resources.”

“1. Member involvement. 2. Technology. 3. Annual meeting participation by younger lawyers.”

“Civility. Fellowship. Community Interaction.”

“1. Relevance to the day-to-day practice of law. 2. The importance in maintaining trial practice skills in an era where Alternative Dispute mechanisms have replaced advocacy skills. 3. Invest time in programming for rural county bars.”



# Q18. How Can the OBA be a leader for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

## Segmentation of Responses by Demographic Population

### Analysis

This question generated a tremendous display of responses. In segmenting the data further, we saw attitude and behavior differences among ages, race/ethnicity, and to some degree geographic location.

Though there is a vocal group who feels that the OBA should not be involved in this topic, or it is irrelevant to OBA's mission, there are far more who are appreciative of the efforts the OBA has demonstrated thus far in providing leadership, and still more that desire additional efforts and are willing to offer suggestions. In most segmentation of the data more than 50% of each representative group felt that OBA should provide leadership on matters related to DE&I and in some categories it was as high as 100%.

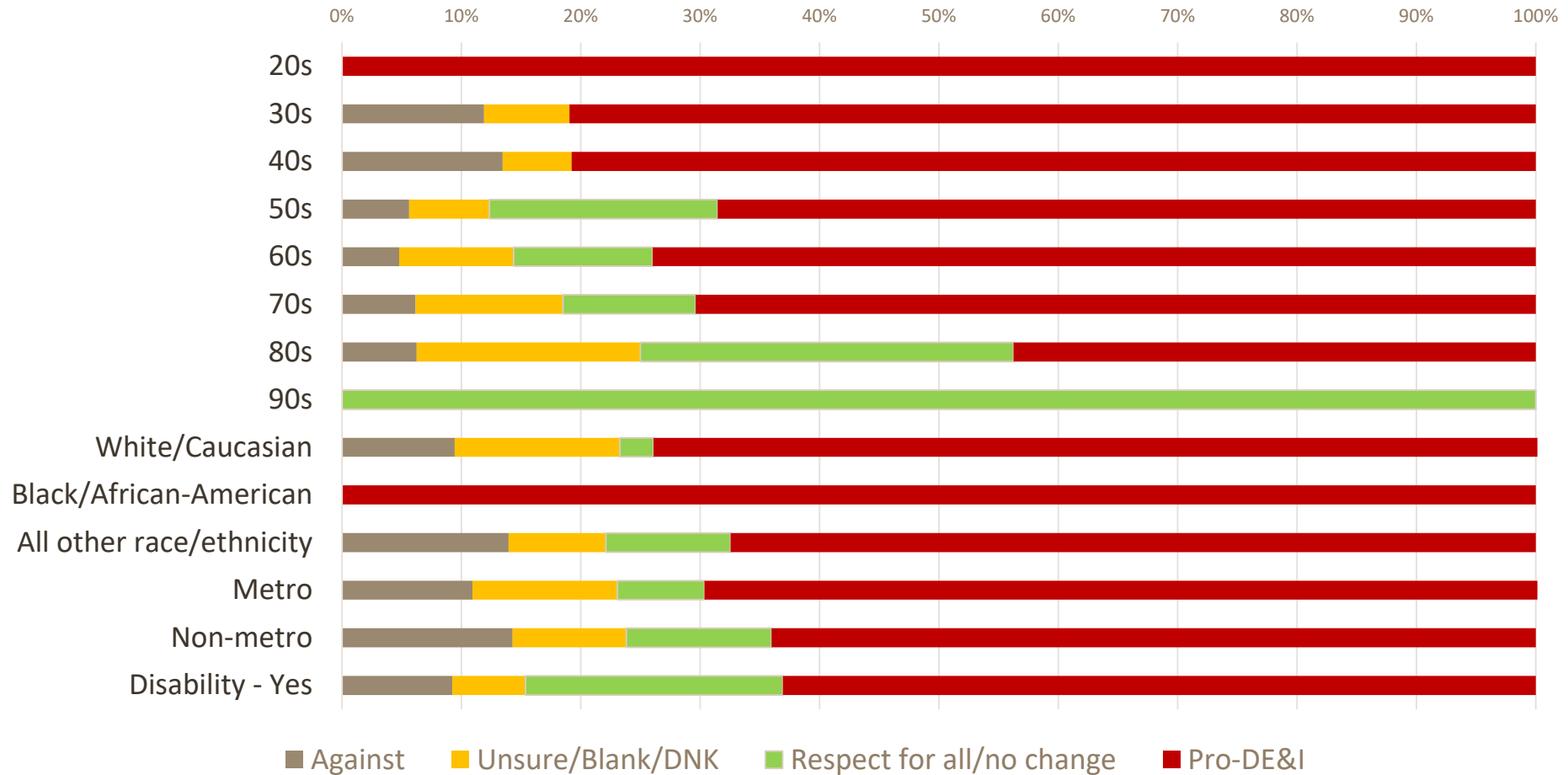
Responses in each category were counted and tallied according to the attitude most represented by the following categories:

- **Against involvement:** this group felt that OBA should not be involved in conversation, education, or advocacy on DE&I issues and topics, or it should not be a priority of the OBA.
- **Unsure/Neutral:** this group made comments that they were unsure, neutral, didn't know, left the question blank, or wrote a response that was uncertain to our research team as to what their opinion might be .
- **Respect for all/No change:** this group expressed an idea that we should "respect everyone", be "color blind", keep things as they are, and/or that OBA is already expressing diversity and no change was needed. This group expressed attitudes to maintain the status-quo on OBA's current position.
- **Pro DE&I:** this group felt that OBA needed to take an active stance on topics, education, and advocacy for social groups. Comments that expressed an attitude that OBA was already doing a good job but also offered additional suggestions fell into this group. This group exclusively wrote in their thoughts for how OBA could increase its involvement in matters of DE&I.



# Analysis of DE&I Attitudes by Population

By percentage of responses for each group





# Analysis of Q18 on Diversity Equity and Inclusion

## Segmentation of Responses by Age

**Researchers note:** we chose to focus on age in this segmentation because it offered the greatest representation of the nuances in the filters for demographics. Because there is not much variation among answers in the “against,” “unsure”, and “respect for all/no change needed” categories, the next few pages will highlight some of the subtle differences among those who offered Pro-DEI perspectives in order that the OBA might highlight perspectives among their membership. A more comprehensive summary of all voices is found following these pages.

### 20s

5 responses

100% advocated for DEI and /or expressed an understanding and awareness of DE&I issues



#### Representative Quotes:

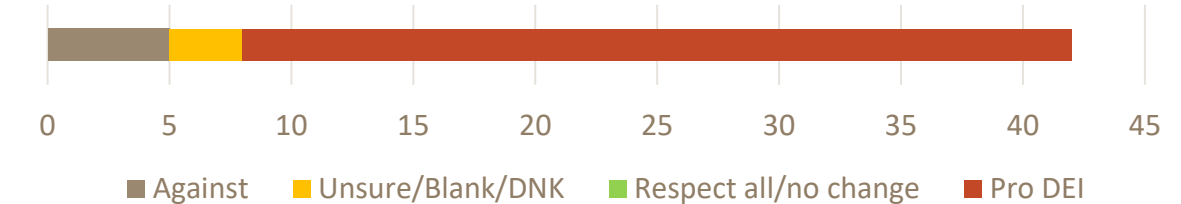
“Have board members who are of different cultural backgrounds.”

“Work with universities in Oklahoma to reach out to minority student populations to recruit students to attend law school. There is a lack of representation and the best way to start increasing representation is to reach minority students when they are making decisions on what to do with their careers, and to encourage them to apply and attend law school.”

### 30s

42 responses

This group has opinions either “for” or “against” with a few that are unsure/DNK, the vast majority support DE&I efforts and saw DEI competence as a part of their practice.



#### Representative Quotes:

“Mandatory bias and cultural competency training; grant programs to help subsidize and generate competitive salaries for internships and employment with Legal Aid, OILS, OIDS and other similar public service employers.”

“More native interests and criminal law discussion.”

“The OBA needs to be at the forefront. By having a diverse leadership this helps others feel welcomed.”

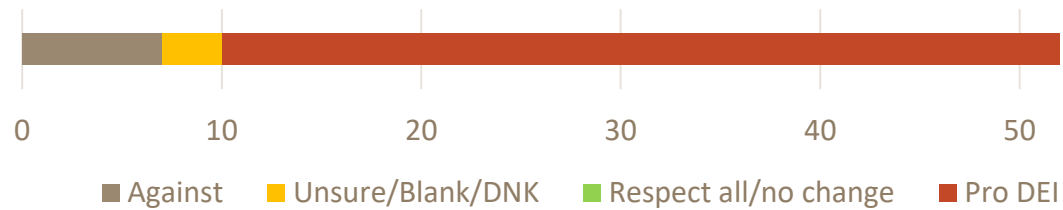


# Analysis of Q18 on Diversity Equity and Inclusion

## Segmentation of Responses by Age

40s

52 responses



### Representative Quotes:

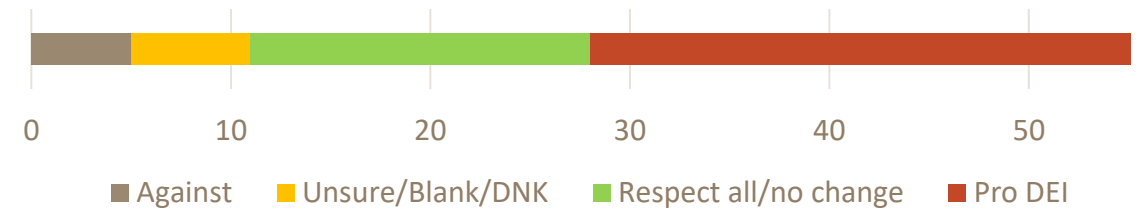
“Lead by Example. Don’t keep calling on the same pale male participants as leaders.”

“Great question! Recognize that DEI is fundamental to growth and sadly, the law has been a bastion of old white men. We are in a state of staunch conservatives but our state leadership doesn’t reflect our state’s citizenship. We should be make[sic] sure that the OBA’s leadership properly reflects the diversity of our workforce in age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, etc.”

50s

89 responses

This was the first segment of the data that showed an attitude to respect all, or no need to change course from OBA’s current practices.



### Representative Quotes:

“Lead by Example. Don’t keep calling on the same pale male participants as leaders.”

“Great question! Recognize that DEI is fundamental to growth and sadly, the law has been a bastion of old white men. We are in a state of staunch conservatives but our state leadership doesn’t reflect our state’s citizenship. We should be make[sic] sure that the OBA’s leadership properly reflects the diversity of our workforce in age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, etc.”



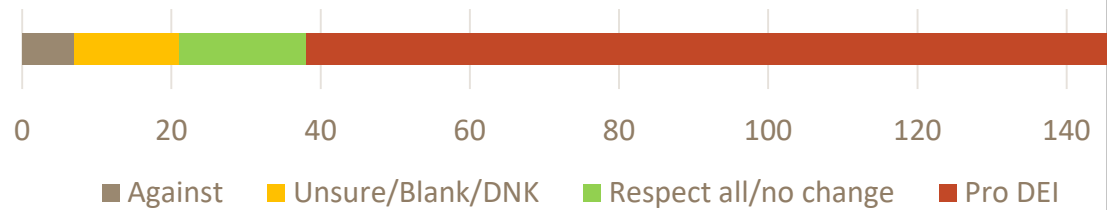
# Analysis of Q18 on Diversity Equity and Inclusion

## Segmentation of Responses by Age

### 60s

146 responses

Responders who were Pro-DE&I in this age group were more likely to be concerned as a matter of supporting the next generation of legal practice.



#### Representative Quotes:

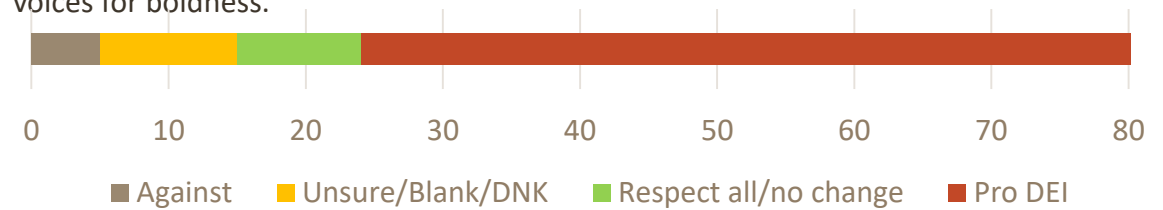
“Have a regular column in the Bar Journal that addresses various issues related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Is there a committee with this focus? If so, help publicize its activities and recruitment efforts.”

“Encourage more members from unrepresented groups to join committees and the Board. Reach them at the time they are sworn in or other strategic points -- perhaps at State's 3 law schools.”

### 70s

81 responses

Responders in this group who were Pro-DEI were more likely than other groups to be sympathetic to OBAs need to work on this issue, but were also some of the strongest voices for boldness.



#### Representative Quotes:

“That’s difficult. Understanding that everyone is diverse in some way would help. Just going through the motions is not enough. Photos of males/females/different races together is not enough.”

“Listen to women and minorities, get rid of the old white-male (Oklahoma) ultra-conservative viewpoints.”

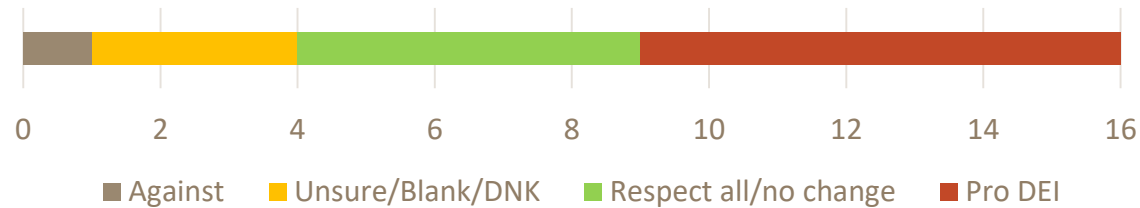


# Analysis of Q18 on Diversity Equity and Inclusion

## Segmentation of Responses by Age

80s

16 responses



### Representative Quotes:

“Provide programs in CLE with a mandatory hour devoted to those subjects”

“This will happen over time as older lawyers die and younger lawyers replace them. In the meantime, be sure we welcome all ethnic lawyers.”

90s

1 responses

The answer is a little vague but seems to indicate an advocacy to keep doing what the OBA is currently doing.

“By encouraging its practice in the supreme court, lower courts, legislature, and the composition of the board of governors.”

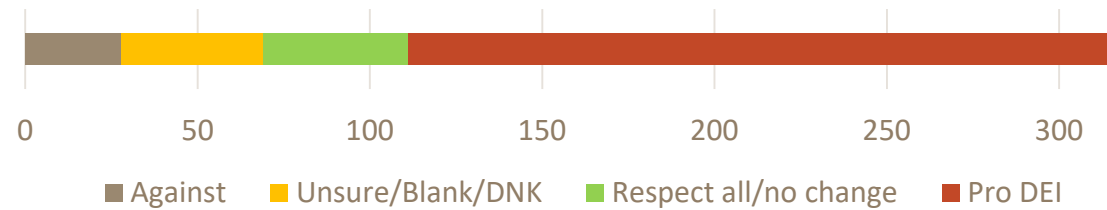


# Analysis of Q18 on Diversity Equity and Inclusion

## Segmentation of Responses by Race/Ethnicity

### White/Caucasian

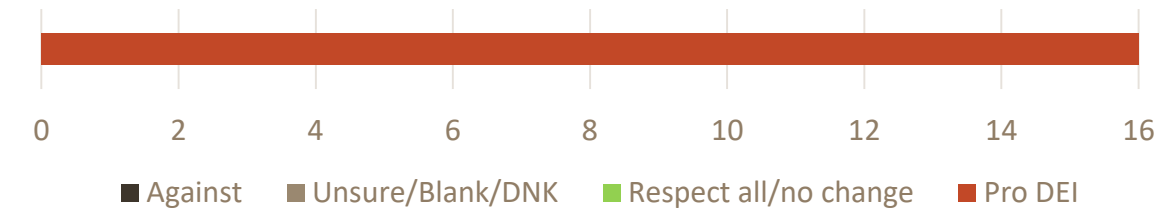
316 responses



### Black/African-American

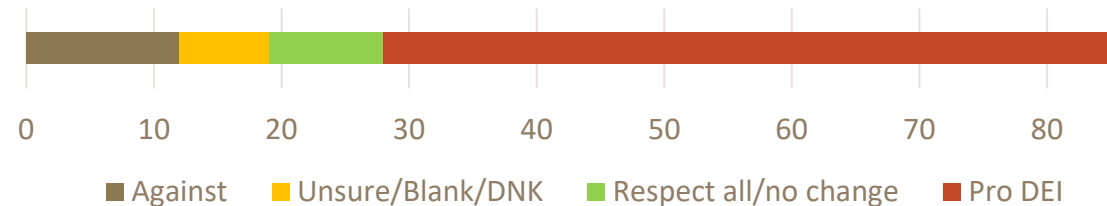
16 responses

This category was also 100% Pro-DE&I and offered suggestions



### All other Race/Ethnicities

86 responses



## Representative Quotes for Against – 8%

“It shouldn't. DEI is perceived as a left wing policy, and Oklahoma is not a left wing state. Moving toward DEI would harm OBA's influence in the state by further casting it as a partisan organization rather than a bar organization. An executive director that prioritizes DEI will irreparably harm OBA's reputation.”

“This question is an example of political undertones that should be avoided if the OBA is an administrative licensing agency.”

“It shouldn't be.”

“Don't be. Equity is unethical. Should focus on Equality.”

“Good grief. So tired of this issue.”

“Get as far away from the "woke" culture as possible.”

“Don't get drawn into the "woke/antiracism" agenda. The Oklahoma Bar Association should treat members as individuals and not as part of class, all of whom are assumed to be identical. The Bar Association should seek to unify members on the basis of our common profession and not on superficial characteristics such as skin color, ethnicity, gender etc.”



## Representative Quotes for Unsure/Blank/Don't Know – 8%

“Not sure other than keeping opportunities for member participation.”

“No idea.”

“It probably can't.”

“?”

“No thoughts on this subject.”

“Not sure. I haven't witnessed or experienced a problem.”

“Not knowing the OBA's recent history, I have no opinion.”

“I honestly don't know.”

“Unsure.”



## Representative Quotes for Respect for All/No Change – 16%

“I think it is and I am so proud of this.”

“Just treat everyone the same.”

“Try to be blind to color, age, gender, etc. differences in out reach and listening.”

“I think OBA is already a leader in these matters. Keep up discussion of these issues in all that we do.”

“I think we already are a leader. Perhaps more education to members and public but without going overboard by trying to find, and resolve, problems that do not exist at the expense of others.”

“I do not think there needs to be improvement here. If someone is qualified the diversity and demographics should not matter or be a consideration.”

“Treat everyone the same.”

“Continue doing what it always has done.”

“Avoid overemphasis on a particular group. Foster respect for all.”





# Pro-DEI Themes – 68%

## Summary of Responses

- **Education:**
  - **Educate Members:** broaden knowledge of the membership, provide or require CLEs on topics of DE&I, use publications for articles devoted to topics, more diversity programs, create mentoring options to foster diverse leadership
  - **Educate Public:** create K-12 programs to encourage more people of color to consider the profession,
  - **Educate Self:** be devoted to learning as individual leaders and an institution, solicit feedback from groups (women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, people experiencing disabilities); utilize community partners who are experts in this area to increase OBAs capacity to lead and understand;
- **Model:** OBA as a leader in the state on the issue, lead by example, “walk the walk,” do it – so that others will do it too; initiate the relationship with groups and demonstrate interest;
- **Recruit/Appoint and Include:** be intentional about hiring and promoting candidates of diversity, representation matters, recruit BIPOC people to be involved in OBA leadership (committees, boards, focus groups, outreach efforts), include representative groups into decisions, program changes, hire a DEI staff person to focus on this,
- **Measure:** create metrics to measure progress in board and staff diversity, and throughout its membership base;
- **Advocate:** create affinity groups to support unique needs of different representative groups, hold accountable unconstitutional/discriminatory legislation, advocate for represented groups in places of practice (such as breastfeeding spaces in courthouses);



## Representative Quotes for Pro-DEI – 68%

“It must be a condition of being an OBA staff person, officer and board member to embrace commitment to diversity etc. Also judges must receive more training about the importance of each of them being committed to the principles of diversity etc including LGBT equality.”

“Create financial incentives for both diverse candidates and firms that are successful in establishing diversity. diversity etc including LGBT equality.”

“Make sure that opportunity is equal for everyone and make sure that is articulated and measured.”

“That is a tough challenge given the political environment of Oklahoma. Attorneys need to lead or help lead the movement. It is long over-due.

“Recruit for [sic] the law schools from HBC”

“Informational webinars to raise awareness. Articles in OBJ.”

“Elect someone as President who is a person of color.”

“Reach out to the law schools, beginning with the 1L's, to promote student involvement in the OBA committees. It's scary (it was for me) to walk into the OBA building and not know hardly anyone. The OBA FLS members actively reached out to practitioners - I went, loved it, and was heavily invested in it for almost two decades. I proselytized as much as I could during my FLS service. But the OBA has to create the outreach.”

“Walk the talk through hiring and promoting DEI with members and in the community.”



## Q19. Qualities in the next CEO

### Summary of Responses

- **Skills:** Knowledgable with practical experience, strategic thinker, listener, hard-working; comparative knowledge with other bar associations, experienced on issues in Oklahoma, public speaker, organized;
- **Qualities:** Flexible adaptable, advocate for members, well-respected, good speaker/communicator; technologically curious; interest in communicating with members, service oriented, can work behind the scenes to lead staff and operations;
- **Values:** ethical, reliable, dependable,, diversity, hard working, kindness, listening, compassion;
- **Image:** more public appearances with members; motivated to help members' wellbeing; political line-walker; female or minority;
- **Perception/Politics:** politically neutral, don't choose a candidate based on demographics, politically active that advocates for diverse membership and represents population.



## Q19. Representative Quotes

“John Morris 2.0 obviously, the practice of law is changing dramatically and will continue to do so. I would expect our next leader to have the same forward-thinking and innovative traits that John has.”

“knowledgeable of the law and having real practical experience; good communication skills; flexible to changes”

“Empathy and compassion, strong leadership and administrative skills, and proven ability to advocate on behalf of the members.”

“Ethical, honest and respectful, coupled with highly intelligent and a great presenter.”

“Willingness and effort to be visible to legal groups that may not usually get recognition. The same groups/firms seem to get most of the attention which discourages engagement of other groups.”

“A woman, approachable, and knowledgeable in legal education, politics, and psychology.”

“A leader who does not stop learning and respects the thoughts and ideas of others.”

“Someone who has actually practiced law and understands the stress and the pressure and how to juggle being in three counties in one day.”



## Q20. Is there anything else you want us to know?

### Summary of Responses

- **Encouragement: & Appreciation** keep doing what you're doing; appreciate the OBA, honor and a privilege to be a member;
- **Survey as Feedback:** use question to recap points previously made in the survey; (lower costs for CLEs, inequity in dues, ethics issues with practice of law, need for more diversity);
- **Nothing new to offer:**



## Q20. Representative Quotes

“Being an OBA member and participating in Bar governance has been a highlight of my life. I’m so appreciative.”

“Just in general and not really responsive or pertinent to this question probably, at my age my views on society and the things going on are probably way out of line with the mainstream. Almost glad that I am the age I am because the future looks murky and difficult to navigate at best.”

“ I AM A HUGE FAN OF JOHN MORRIS WILLIAMS.”

“California has removed Bar Association fees for an attorney who is 70+ years of age. Please consider this for OK.”

“Where the Bar Association stays silent on widely known corruption, bias, or otherwise unethical behavior in our State, it sends the message to members that there is no use in trying to report wrongdoing. It is assumed nothing will be done, and the whistleblower will only incur harm. This is a growing consensus [sic] among trial attorneys that there is no place to report unethical judges, prosecutors, or even private defense attorneys that will make a difference. Many, therefore, accept the bad behavior and just part of the OK system. This is a bigger, systemic issue about which the Bar Association should not be blind.”

“I am an attorney who became a K-12 educator 25 years ago. I do not actively practice, but to maintain my law license, I have to pay the same dues as an attorney who is in practice. That position lacks equity.”

“Keep up the good work!”



# Contact Us

## Oklahoma City

Chesapeake Community Plaza  
720 W. Wilshire Blvd., Suite 115  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
Phone: (405) 463-6886

Website: [www.okcnp.org](http://www.okcnp.org)

Email: [info@okcnp.org](mailto:info@okcnp.org)

## Tulsa

Legacy Plaza  
5330 East 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Tulsa, OK 74135  
Phone: (918) 392-7984

