



## Georgia Defense Lawyers Association

Advancing the Civil Defense Bar®

# GDLA MEMBER BENEFITS

*The Georgia Defense Lawyers Association (GDLA) is the statewide organization of almost 1,000 attorneys who defend the interests of businesses and individuals in civil litigation, whether in private practice or the government sector. Although its initial focus was social camaraderie and sharing war stories when it was founded in 1967, GDLA has evolved to offer formal avenues of valuable training, networking, and communication. Below are the many benefits of GDLA membership:*

### EBLAST SYSTEM

Do you need an expert witness; IME expert; information on jury tendencies or the judge in a particular venue; another defense lawyer's take on a complex point of law; or their experience with opposing counsel and/or plaintiff's experts? Use the eblast system to quickly ask your colleagues for their input on this and more. It functions like a listserv but without the sometimes bothersome "reply all" feature. Replies only go back to the eblast sender.

### GEORGIA DEFENSE LAWYER MAGAZINE

The *Georgia Defense Lawyer* contains not only details about GDLA activities, but also recent developments in case law. Members are encouraged to submit substantive articles for publication consideration. Additionally, the magazine reports attorney moves or promotions, honors, big wins, significant orders, and more. Again, it is an excellent outlet for publishing your own articles, especially since it is mailed to state and federal judges statewide. The *Georgia Defense Lawyer* has been honored by the State Bar of Georgia with its Best Newsletter Award (for voluntary bars) eight times—five in a row.

### AMICUS BRIEF PROGRAM

GDLA has an Amicus Curiae Committee that receives amicus brief requests from members needing assistance with cases at the state appellate level. Over the last six years alone, GDLA has filed 42 amicus briefs in either the Court of Appeals or Supreme Court of Georgia. In some cases, the respective appellate court invited GDLA and the plaintiff's bar association, GTLA, to weigh in. If you need help on an appellate matter for which the outcome would impact the civil defense bar, please reach out to our Executive Director who'll connect you with our Amicus Committee.

### LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM/LOBBYING

In 2021, through the generosity of several GDLA member law firms, we established a Political Action Committee (Georgia Defense Lawyers Action Fund, Inc.) and hired a lobbyist to counter GTLA's efforts by giving our members and clients a presence at the Capitol. Most of the same firms have continued to contribute—and many GDLA members donated when paying their membership dues—enabling us to keep Kade Cullefer of Troutman Pepper Strategies working on our behalf under the Gold Dome. In 2025, we were instrumental in supporting Governor Brian Kemp's tort reform package and are pleased with the passage of Senate Bills 68 and 69. Individual members are encouraged to donate when paying their annual dues, as it is included as a negative checkoff on the invoice.

### ANNUAL MEETING

This yearly conference, held every June at a beach location, brings together members and their families for networking, CLE, and family time. There's also an exhibit hall where you will find tips and tools to enhance your practice from a variety of GDLA sponsors. Events always begin on Thursday with a welcome reception/dinner. CLE programming is Friday and Saturday mornings. Friday is a cocktail reception before dinner on your own, and Saturday is our closing reception/dinner. Don't miss the fun! Visit the Calendar page of our website for the next dates.

### JUDICIAL RECEPTIONS

GDLA hosts receptions for the judiciary around the state, allowing you to meet and mingle with judges in your area. We have hosted receptions in Atlanta, Augusta and Savannah. The Atlanta reception is traditionally held in February of each year, but check the Calendar page of our website to save the date for our next edition.

### DIVERSITY

We are a member of the Multi-bar Leadership Council (MBLC), a consortium of local bars that focus on diversity and networking opportunities. We participate in MBLC meetings and also group events, which have included a cook-off competition that would make The Food Network proud! Members of MBLC voluntary bars, who have not been a GDLA member previously and otherwise meet our membership criteria, qualify for a free year.

### CURRENT LEGAL TRENDS DATABASE

This database is housed in the Members Only area of our website, and includes these categories: Daubert & Expert Qualifications, Discovery of Surveillance, Joint &

Several Liability, Medical Expenses, Motions in Limine, Qualified Protective Orders, and Social Media. Members are asked to contribute their own documents to make this a repository for information on important, and recurring, hot topics.

### VERDICTS DATABASE

We launched the Verdicts Database in 2015 in the Members Only area. Members are encouraged to enter their own recent verdicts, regardless of outcome, so this becomes a robust resource for the civil defense community. It is searchable in a variety of ways, including by venue and attorneys.

### TRIAL & MEDIATION ACADEMY

Every August at Callaway Gardens, GDLA hosts this intensive three-day CLE for lawyers covering a variety of trial and mediation techniques. Attendees watch demos of opening statements and more by seasoned lawyers; then it's their turn to present what they've learned in breakout sessions. Attendees also hear professionalism considerations from a trial or appellate court judge. It's suitable for newer attorneys, as well as those more seasoned who want to brush up on their trial skills.

### GDLA WOMEN LITIGATORS SECTION

In 2019, GDLA launched this section to support, encourage and advance women litigators. They hold networking events, CLEs, and more. Most notably, section founder Karen Karabinos created the Southeastern Women Litigators Conference modeled after DRI's Women in the Law Conference that's held in Arizona. Her idea was to give women litigators in our region the opportunity to participate in a similar conference without the expense and time of travel. We've since held four such summits, bringing together women litigators from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. We started at the Atlanta Zoo and have since met in Hilton Head, Nashville, and Asheville (2025). Visit the Calendar page of our website and save the date for the next edition.

### YOUNG LAWYERS

GDLA is expanding its young lawyer (YL) offerings, giving YLs an opportunity to socialize at happy hours; get published; network with experienced defense attorneys and judges at members-only events; as well as attend the excellent, intensive seminar, Trial & Mediation Academy, mentioned above.

### DRI - THE VOICE OF THE DEFENSE BAR

GDLA is one of DRI's State & Local Defense Organizations (SLDO). As the DRI state affiliate, we regularly participate in idea sharing and networking through the DRI Annual Meeting and Regional Meetings. In 2013 and again in 2020, DRI honored GDLA with the Outstanding SLDO Award among those nationwide. Our Executive Director Jennifer Davis Ward was honored in 2016 with the second-ever SLDO Executive Director Award. We are also proud to have DRI Past President Douglas Burrell among GDLA's membership ranks.

### SPONSORS RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Need a court reporter? Jury consultant? E-discovery specialist? Forensic engineer? Private investigator? Medical billing review? Help sourcing a medical expert? Our sponsors in these areas and more are a great resource for our members. There's a sponsorship directory in the members' only area sorted by level and also by type of service offered so you can easily find the support you need.

### ONLINE ATTORNEY DIRECTORY

Our online membership directory is searchable by name, city and firm name on the public side of our website. In the members' only area, you can narrow your search by counties of practice, city, areas of practice, and more.

### AFFILIATION WITH GEORGIA'S CIVIL DEFENSE BAR

In addition to the many personal benefits to your practice, your participation in GDLA will bolster the defense bar and advance your client's interests through shared knowledge, techniques, and insights. In addition, you'll be able to cite your GDLA membership whenever you present your professional credentials online and elsewhere.