



NAPPA

National Association of
Public Pension Attorneys

DENVER

2025

June 24th – 27th

Legal Education Conference Brochure

Registration opens April 2, 2025

Hilton Denver City Center | Denver, CO.
Solicitation and marketing are prohibited at all NAPPA events.

CLE CREDITS & REGISTRATION

CLE Credits

NAPPA will apply for CLE accreditation of the program. Accreditation requirements vary from state to state. There is no guarantee every state will accredit the program for the total number of hours requested.

How to Register

Online registration begins Wednesday, April 2, 2025.

To register: go to www.nappa.org, and click on Conference Registration.

	April 2 - May 14	May 15 - June 2	June 2
Governmental	\$990	\$1,090	Last Day to Register
Non-Governmental	\$1,195	\$1,295	

Refund and Substitution* Policy

Requests for refunds and substitutions must be made in writing by 4:00 p.m. EST in accordance with the schedule below. Administrative fees will be applied as noted.

May 14	May 15 - June 2	June 2	June 16
Last Day to Request Full Refund	\$150 Administrative Fee Charged for Refunds	Last Day for Refunds	Last Day for Substitutions

**The Substitution Policy allows another member from the same entity to attend as a substitute.*

Off-Site Dinner Event: Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum

Wednesday, June 25 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Advance Registration by June 2 Required

Bus transportation will be provided starting at 5:30 p.m.

Attendee Fees: \$0

Guest Fees: Age 21+ and Up: \$165 / Age 14-20: \$100 / Age 4-13: \$60 / Under Age 4: \$0

Solicitation and marketing are prohibited at all NAPPA conferences.

HOTEL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Hotel Information



Conference location:

Hilton Denver City Center

1701 California Street

Denver, CO 80202

Phone: (303) 297-1300

Toll Free: (800) HILTONS

[Link to the Hotel](#)

Hotel Reservations

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hilton Denver City Center. The block room rate will be available **until Monday, June 2, or when the room block is filled, whichever comes first.**

Conference Room Rate: \$249 per night (single/double occupancy)

- To ensure those registered for the conference can book a room in the NAPPA block, we ask members to register for the conference **before** booking a room.
- To book a room online, go to www.nappa.org, login, and click on the quick link: LEC Hotel Reservation.
- Please refer to the hotel's website for their cancellation policy.

Please Note!

- Materials will be provided electronically.
- Individuals are responsible for their own airfare and hotel reservations.
- Dress code is business casual. A sweater or jacket is recommended, as most meeting rooms tend to be on the chilly side.
- Unless otherwise indicated, meals noted in this brochure are provided by NAPPA.

Visit Denver

Denver is known as The Mile High City. See the [Official Visitors Guide](#) for things to do, places to eat and drink, and neighborhoods to visit.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

12:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. **Registration**

1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. **New Member Orientation** (This session is kindly reserved for those members new to public pension plans.)

Introduction to NAPPA and Roundtable Q & A

The Board President and a panel of NAPPA members will introduce the organization to new members. A brief Q & A session will follow, allowing new members to ask their most pressing questions.

Moderators

Michael Herrera, Senior Counsel, Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association
Adam Kinney, Associate General Counsel, New York State Teachers' Retirement System

Presenters

Jeffrey Gill, General Counsel, Indiana Public Retirement System
Patrick Morrison, Compliance Attorney, Tennessee Treasury Department
Christopher Myers, Partner, Holland & Hart
Kristi Spinosa, Director/General Counsel, Louisiana Parochial Employees' Retirement System

1:45 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. **Break**

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. **Concurrent Sessions** (*choose one*)

Session A: *Public Pension Overview, Part I. Benefits & Fiduciary Duty*

The panel will present an overview of the legal framework for public pensions. Topics will include plan structure, trust law, fiduciary obligations, tax qualification, funding requirements, and retirement benefits. The panel will also focus on commonly used terms and their meanings.

Moderator

Ruby Menon, Of Counsel, Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd

Presenters

Anya Freedman, Partner, Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann
Dee Larsen, General Counsel, Utah Retirement Systems
Jennifer Mills, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Defined Contribution Investments, Pennsylvania Public School Employees' Retirement System

Session B: *Weathering the Storm: Fund Workouts and Investment Manager Changes*

Sometimes fund investments go sideways. Even after the most comprehensive due diligence and onboarding processes, and despite rigorous and continued monitoring efforts. This panel will discuss what to do when the storm hits, things to look out for, key considerations, and steps to consider when navigating these, hopefully rare, but highly impactful events.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Tuesday, June 24, 2025, continued...

Moderator

Brian LaVictoire, Deputy General Counsel for Investments & Compliance, Michigan
Municipal Employees' Retirement System

Presenters

Ava Jacobi, Assistant General Counsel, APG Asset Management NV
Finbarr O'Connor, Founding Partner, TREO Asset Management
Noah Schottenstein, Senior Attorney, DLA Piper

3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions (*choose one*)

Session A: *Public Pensions Overview – Part II Investments and Actuary*

The panel will present an overview of the legal framework for the actuarial and investment functions at public pension plans. This topic will include the role of actuaries in determining funding and contribution requirements, the role of investment returns, applicable fiduciary principles, and the relationship between the legal, actuarial, and investment functions in plan administration.

Moderator

Ruby Menon, Of Counsel, Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd

Presenters

Andrew Feucht, Senior Attorney, K&L Gates
Paul Wood, Senior Consultant, Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company

Session B: *Voices Heard: Crafting Effective Public Comment Policies*

Public pension boards are entrusted with the critical responsibility of managing substantial assets and making decisions that impact the financial security of countless individuals. Balancing the First Amendment rights of the public and stakeholders with the board's need to conduct its business efficiently and effectively is a nuanced challenge. This session will delve into foundational First Amendment principles and relevant legal considerations, providing public pension attorneys with practical strategies to navigate this balance. Panelists will cover recommended elements of an effective public comment policy, including examples from various jurisdictions, and provide guidance on effectively adopting public comment policies, including strategies for managing disruptive behavior.

Moderator

Suzanne Dugan, Special Counsel, Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll

Presenters

Julie Becker, Partner & Fiduciary Services Practice Leader, Aon
Cynthia Collins, Director of Governance & Strategic Initiatives, Pennsylvania State
Employees' Retirement System
Jessica Smith, Partner, Holland & Hart

4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception for All Members

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

7:15 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **Registration**

7:15 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast**

8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. **President's Remarks**

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. **General Session**
Game of Clones: Legal Ethics in the Age of AI - Act I

Compliance Season is coming! And we've got you covered with the most entertaining way you can earn two legal ethics credits. The Law Club is proud to present its latest show, Game of Clones: Ethics in the Age of AI. The show is new and different every year. Topics include ethical use and misuse of artificial intelligence, diligence, communication with clients, responding to critical social media comments, charging a reasonable fee, proper use of client trust accounts, work/life balance, conflicts in dual representation, multistate practice, candor to the court, paraprofessionals, and pro bono representation. Presented in two Acts.

Moderator

Julie Borisov, Senior Staff Attorney, Colorado Public Employees' Retirement Association

Presenters

Dana Eismeier, Senior Shareholder, Burns, Figa & Will
Phil James, Member, Colorado Bar Association Ethics Committee
Barbara Weil Laff, Of Counsel, Ireland Stapleton

9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. **Break**

9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. **General Session**
Game of Clones: Legal Ethics in the Age of AI - Act 2

After a brief intermission, Game of Clones draws to a dramatic conclusion in Act II.

Moderator

Julie Borisov, Senior Staff Attorney, Colorado Public Employees' Retirement Association

Presenters

Dana Eismeier, Senior Shareholder, Burns, Figa & Will
Phil James, Member, Colorado Bar Association Ethics Committee
Barbara Weil Laff, Of Counsel, Ireland Stapleton

10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. **Break**

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Wednesday, June 25, 2025, continued...

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

General Session

AI & Pension Funds: How to Build a Safe and Effective Policy

This panel will explore how a pension fund can implement effective and safe AI strategies that allow it to enhance pension plan governance, while navigating evolving risks, rewards, and regulations. Successfully integrating AI into pension fund operations requires a structured, strategic approach. The panel will provide a lifecycle framework to help guide pension funds through AI implementation while ensuring compliance, risk management, and operational efficiencies.

Moderator

Serena Hallowell, Partner, Motley Rice

Presenters

Manuel Serpa, General Counsel, Orange County Employees Retirement System

David Stauss, Partner, Husch Blackwell

Heather Traeger, General Counsel & Chief Compliance Officer, Texas Teacher Retirement System

12:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

Lunch on Your Own

1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions *(choose one)*

Session A: *Catch-ups, Audits, and DOGE-Oh My!*

This panel of experienced practitioners will offer insights into the developments regarding catch-up contributions and Roth requirements under SECURE 2.0, developments in audit activity from the IRS and developments regarding the current states of staffing and regulations at the IRS/Treasury.

Moderator

John Nixon, Partner and Board Member, Duane Morris

Presenters

Audra Ferguson, Partner, Ice Miller

Joanne Jacobson, Senior Counsel, Groom Law Group

Session B: *Taxation Basics of Disability Benefits, Conversion to Retirement Issues, and SECURE 2.0 Provisions Affecting These Issues*

With the staggered implementation of SECURE 2.0, there are several open questions regarding the conversion of disability benefits to a regular retirement benefit. This session will explore the basics of the tax treatment of disability benefits for public safety employees and the possible effects of the implementation of SECURE 2.0. The speakers will also provide examples of some state laws having to do with duty-related disability grants, disability presumptions, and conversion to regular retirement benefits.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Wednesday, June 25, 2025, continued...

Moderator/Presenter

John Danish, General Counsel, Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund

Presenters

Luke Bailey, Senior Counsel, Clark Hill

Chuck Campbell, Partner, Jackson Walker

2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Break

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions *(choose one)*

Session A: *Hot Topics for Health Plans*

The panel will discuss the state and federal constitutional bases for challenges to laws related to “hot button” coverage issues, the latest litigation trends, policy and practical considerations for governmental plans. The panel will also address other hot topics related to health plans coming from the new administration in Washington.

Moderator

Christopher Sears, Partner, Ice Miller

Presenter

Paul Esposito, Principal, Slevin & Hart

Session B: *Ins and Outs of SMAs and Funds of One*

Our panel will discuss when and why a pension system may wish to retain a manager via a separately managed account (SMA) rather than in a commingled fund; and to summarize the respective advantages and disadvantages of an SMA or Fund of One in which the investor will be the sole limited partner.

Moderator

Edward Klees, Partner, Reed Smith

Presenters

Thomas Perkins, Investments Counsel and Director of Investment Stewardship, Indiana Public Retirement System

Carrie Rief, Partner, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Offsite Dinner @ Wings Over the Rockies - *Separate Advanced Registration Required*

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday, June 26, 2025

7:15 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. **Registration**

7:15 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. **Breakfast**

8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. **Introductions and Announcements**

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. **General Session**

The End of the Chevron Deference: Challenges and Opportunities for Public Pension Plans

In June 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* ended four decades of *Chevron* deference—a doctrine that required courts hearing challenges to regulatory actions to defer to regulators' interpretations of ambiguous statutes. *Loper Bright* now requires courts to independently interpret statutory ambiguities using traditional tools of statutory construction, reducing the deference previously granted to administrative agencies. The session will review decisions issued in the wake of the *Loper Bright* decision and the regulated industries that have been impacted. This panel will discuss the challenges and opportunities for public pension plans as we navigate our path forward, using touchstone fiduciary and governance principles to guide our way through the uncertain post-*Chevron* landscape.

Moderator

Margaret Michel, Executive Director, Louisiana State Police Retirement System

Presenters

Anya Freedman, Partner, Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann

Julie Reiser, Partner, Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll

Heather Traeger, General Counsel & Chief Compliance Officer, Texas Teacher Retirement System

9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. **Break**

9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. **General Session**

Privacy. Does it Exist? What You Should Know

With a new data breach seemingly making headlines every day, it may seem that data privacy is only a mirage. It is not. Learn the privacy requirements you should be aware of and how you can successfully chart a course forward.

Moderator/Presenter

Thomas Dover, Partner, Nossaman

Presenters

David Levine, Principal, Groom Law Group

MaryEllen O'Neill, Mgr. Data, Compliance, & Risk/ Privacy Officer, Texas Teacher Retirement System

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday, June 26, 2025, continued...

10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. **Break**

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. **General Session**

Cracking the Code for Board Success (Spoiler Alert, it's Governance Policies!)

This session will provide an overview of various types of governance models used on boards, identify common governance challenges and effective solutions to balance authority and accountability. We will share real-world challenges and show how specific policies and practices can help boards (and their lawyers) navigate these challenges and improve their governance practices.

Moderator/Presenter

Dee Larsen, General Counsel, Utah Retirement Systems

Presenters

Kristin Bellar, General Counsel, Michigan Municipal Employees' Retirement System

Michael Board, Executive Director, Office of Legal Services, Kentucky Public Pensions Authority

12:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. **General Counsel Lunch** (Advance Registration Required)

Emeritus Board Lunch (Advance Registration Required)

All Others, Lunch on Your Own

1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. **Concurrent Sessions** (choose one)

Session A: *Be Cool Man; the Cops Are Here*

A practicing lawyer and retired FBI agent discusses what to do when law enforcement comes to your workplace, including providing tips on coordinating with law enforcement in situations involving fraud or security breaches.

Moderator

Benjamin Brandes, General Counsel, Wyoming Retirement System

Presenter

James Watson, Partner, Ice Miller

Session B: *The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act - 30 Years On*

A panel of distinguished speakers will explore how public pension funds transformed securities litigation. Topics include: how shareholder classes benefit from institutional leadership, and what lies on the horizon for public pension funds and other institutional investors pursuing recoveries of investment losses stemming from corporate wrongdoing.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday, June 26, 2025, continued...

Moderator

Michael Herrera, Senior Counsel, Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association

Presenters

Daniel Kramer, Partner, Paul Weiss

Layn Phillips, Former U.S. District Judge; Founder, Phillips ADR Enterprises

Darren Robbins, Partner, Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd

2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Break

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions (*choose one*)

Session A: *Stranger Claims: Examining Peculiar Pension Legalities*

Join the Benefits Committee if you dare as we tell the scary tales of pension lore, including the Case of the Forgotten Beneficiary, the Curious Case of the Not-so-retired Retiree, whether we can have non-human beneficiaries, and time travel with some pension payments from beyond the grave... bring your scariest questions!

Moderator

Liza Eves, Senior Associate General Counsel, Utah Retirement Systems

Presenters

Mark Cavanaugh, Deputy Counsel and Compliance Officer, New Hampshire Retirement System

Nicole Giambarrese, Partner, Ice Miller

Gwin Hall, Senior Associate General Counsel, Georgia Municipal Employees' Benefit System

Session B: *Navigating Tax Implications for Private Funds*

As institutional investors increasingly allocate capital to private funds, understanding the complex tax considerations is more critical than ever. Panelists from internal and outside counsel will share their insights into the tax aspects of these investments, with an emphasis on dealing with issues in a proactive, practical, cost-effective manner. The discussion will cover early considerations, structure, negotiation, and navigating those often-perplexing subscription documents. We'll answer: How do I apply for US residency certificates, and Canadian and other exemption letters? What vehicle do I choose, and do I really want a Cayman blocker? What makes a good side letter template, and what should you fight for? What is a Luxembourg hybrid anyway?

Moderator

Douglas Schwartz, Partner, Nossaman

Presenters

Won-Han Cheng, Partner, K&L Gates

Samuel Hamner, Investment Attorney, Indiana Public Retirement System

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Friday, June 27, 2025

7:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. **Registration**

7:15 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. **Breakfast**

8:15 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. **Introductions, Announcements, and Business Meeting**

8:45 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. **General Session**

The Compliance Marathon: Staying Ahead of the Pack at Retirement Systems

For fund counsel and compliance officers, staying ahead of the pack in an ever-changing regulatory environment can feel like a marathon. This panel will provide you with aid stations along the way for “runners” of all skill levels, from first-time compliance officers to those growing an already mature compliance program and adapting to emerging trends. We will also be joined by an outside expert in the niche area of investment compliance. Join us at the finish line!

Moderator

Kristin Bellar, General Counsel, Michigan Municipal Employees’ Retirement System

Presenters

Carrie Bass, Compliance Officer, Kentucky Public Pensions Authority

Elizabeth Goldstein, Chief Compliance Officer, Pennsylvania Public School Employees’ Retirement System

Marcus Pierre, Managing Director, IQEQ

9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. **Break**

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. **General Session**

Federal Legislative Update

The presenters will provide an overview of the key issues under consideration by the U.S. Congress, Executive Branch agencies, and any judicial rulings that are relevant to state and local governmental retirement plans.

Moderator/Presenter

Tony Roda - Principal, Williams & Jensen

Presenter

Leigh Snell, Federal Relations Director, National Council on Teacher Retirement

11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. **Break**

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Friday, June 27, 2025, continued...

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

General Session

Public Pension & Related Litigation of National Importance

Panelists will present, review, and discuss current state and federal pension litigation and the opinions and decisions made by those courts on issues of particular significance to public pension plans and their attorneys.

Moderator

Laurie McKinnon, General Counsel, Kansas Public Employees Retirement System

Presenters

Ashley Dunning, Partner, Nossaman

Joshua Mond, Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel, Dallas Police & Fire Pension System

2024-2025 SECTION COMMITTEES, EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEES, FORUMS, AND AUXILIARY COMMITTEES

Section Committees

Benefits

- Audra Ferguson, Co-Chair
- Nicole Giambarrese, Co-Chair
- Liza Eves
- Diana Felsmann
- Adam Franklin
- Alyca Garrison
- Isaac Glovinsky
- Susan Malcom
- Amy Nowak
- Cathy Smith
- Elmira Tsang
- Kristin Bellar, *Board Liaison*

Fiduciary & Plan Governance

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- Guillaume Buell
- Chuck Campbell
- Mark Cavanaugh
- Carolyn Clifford
- Rachel Cohen
- Cindy Collins
- Anya Freedman
- Serena Hallowell
- Hank Kim
- Lindsay Knowles
- Margaret Michel
- Jennifer Mills
- Manuel Serpa
- Kristi Spinosa
- Heather Traeger
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- Anna Dempsey
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- Edward Klees
- Lee Logan
- Denise Lopez
- Bob Perez
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- Joanne Jacobson
- Michelle McCarthy
- John Nixon
- Jessica Palvino
- Tony Roda
- James Thompson
- Melanie Walker
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Educational Committees

Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

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- Mary Ellen O'Neill, Co-Chair
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- David Levine
- Susan St. John
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- Julie Borisov, *Board Liaison*

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- Anthony Green
- Ronald King
- Lindsay Knowles
- Dee Larsen
- Davetta Lee
- Cathy Smith
- Ryan Stippich
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New Member Education

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- Victoria Hale
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- Lydia Lee
- Margaret Michel
- Jennifer Mills
- Patrick Morrison
- Christopher Myers
- Jessica Palvino
- Kristi Spinosa
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- Luke Bailey
- Chuck Campbell
- Mary Beth Foley
- Rachel Hermann
- Benjamin Huxen
- Bonni Jensen
- Robert Klausner
- Lindsay Knowles
- Margaret Michel
- Tony Roda, *Board Liaison*

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- Serena Hallowell
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- Megan Peitzmeier
- Darren Robbins
- Hannah Ross
- Joshua Ruthizer
- Daniel Sommers
- Ryan Stippich
- Marc Weinberg
- Dan Whitman
- Erin Woods
- Jennifer Yamane
- Joseph Indelicato, *Board Liaison*

Forums

DC/Hybrid Plans

- Cindy Collins, Co-Convener
- Melanie Walker, Co-Convener
- Aaron Castle
- Liza Eves
- Donna Frank
- Lisa Harrison
- Lydia Lee
- Jennifer Mills
- Laurie McKinnon, *Board Liaison*

Health Care Plan

- Paul Esposito, Co-Convener
- Christopher Sears, Co-Convener
- Carrie Bass
- Diana Felsmann
- Kevin Gallaway
- Richelle Levy
- Jennifer Mills
- Mary Ellen O'Neill
- Michelle Wood
- Tony Roda, *Board Liaison*

Auxiliary Committees

The Emeritus Board

- Ashley Dunning, Covener
- Cindy Collins
- Adam Franklin
- Bruce Gamble
- Michael Herrera
- Kelly Jenkins
- Lydia Lee
- Kevin Lindahl
- Paul Madden
- Nicholas Marcucci
- John Nixon
- Erin Perales
- Eric Wampler
- Laura Gilson, *Board Liaison*

Member Outreach

- Ashley Dunning
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- Adam Franklin
- Michael Herrera
- John Nixon
- Erin Perales
- Tony Roda
- Suzanne Dugan, *Board Liaison*
- Laura Gilson, *Board Liaison*

Laura Gilson, President

Arkansas Public Employee Retirement System

Suzanne Dugan, Vice President

Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll

Kristin Bellar

Michigan Municipal Employees' Retirement System

Julie Borisov

Colorado Public Employees' Retirement Association

Robert Gauss

Ice Miller

Joseph Indelicato

Pennsylvania Public School Employees' Retirement System

Laurie McKinnon

Kansas Public Employees Retirement System

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Utah Retirement Systems

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Williams & Jensen

NAPPA Staff

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CLE Administrator

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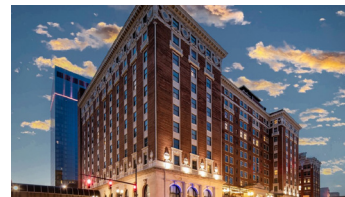
Finance and Events Administrator



2026 Winter Seminar, Nashville, TN

Wednesday, February 18 - Friday, February 20, 2026

The "W" Nashville



2026 Legal Education Conference, Grand Rapids, MI

Tuesday, June 16 - Friday, June 19, 2026

Amway Grand Plaza



2027 Legal Education Conference

Tuesday, June 15 - Friday, June 18, 2027

Hyatt Regency Indianapolis