Position Overview

The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) is a legal specialty professional association dedicated to improving legal services delivered to older adults and people with special needs. Established in 1987, NAELA serves attorneys, bar associations, and those trained to address the legal problems faced by senior citizens and individuals of all ages with special needs. With a mission to educate, inspire, serve, and provide community to attorneys with elder and special needs law practices, NAELA has over 4,000 members and 32 state chapters.

What distinguishes NAELA from other bar associations is their members’ commitment to its Aspirational Standards. These Standards are above and beyond traditional Rules of Professional Conduct and provide attorneys guidance for complex ethical issues and holistic client representation. The Aspirational Standards are embedded in NAELA’s history, culture, and core values.

NAELA’s Vision: We envision a day when all older adults, people with special needs, and their families have the legal, health, social, and financial care they need to live their best lives. NAELA will shape, support, and inspire the national legal community.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports to, and the organization is led by, a 16-member Board of Directors who developed the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan focused on:

- **Engagement** of members internally and externally to enhance their members’ practice and build a community for elder and special needs law attorneys.
- **Relevance** of NAELA’s specialty is promoted and equips practitioners to advocate for their clients.
- **Leadership** through members’ voices for the specialty with policymakers, academics, judges, and others in the legal community and related professions.

The CEO serves as ex-officio, non-voting director on the board.

NAELA’s primary programs and services include in-person and virtual continuing legal education (CLE), networking programs and events (meetings and annual conference), special interest sections, chapters, publications (biannual journal, quarterly news, and weekly updates), Knowledge Base resources, the Council of Advanced Practitioners (CAP), fellowship programs, and a public attorney referral database. With coalition partners dedicated to aligned interests, NAELA members advocate for their clients and the vulnerable populations they serve. In addition, NAELA’s national staff supports and engages the chapters for event support, leadership resources, and dues collection.

As a 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization, NAELA has a budget between $2.8-$3 million and about 10 staff.
The CEO will also lead the NAELA Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, in partnership with its separate Board of Directors as an ex officio, non-voting director. The Foundation advances NAELA’s vision, benefits the public and clients, and increases interest in the legal specialty, through grant-making, consumer education, and scholarships.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic, Operational, and Financial Leadership

- Partners with the Executive Committee to implement the strategic plan with established objectives, sound organizational plans, and performance standards (metrics for success) for all key result areas (marketing, fundraising, human resources, operating efficiency, innovation, physical and financial resources, public responsibilities, ethical behavior, profitability, pricing strategies, and quality of member services).
- Establishes course corrections to meet changing conditions and ensure future relevance to members and the public served.
- Plans, leads, and manages day-to-day activities and programs of NAELA.
- Provides guidance to the Foundation Board and leadership ideating and implementing growth initiatives to support NAELA’s vision.
- Soundly administers all financial management responsibilities, including developing, overseeing, and monitoring the annual budget for the Finance Committee’s approval and their Board recommendation.

Governance, Volunteer Leadership, and Administrative Management

- Partners and supports the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and committee leaders.
- Develops and maintains positive, effective relationships with the Board of Directors, volunteers, and members.
- Ensures the Board is kept informed of the conditions of the NAELA’s programs and activities and important information.
- Works with the President to develop Board meeting content and agendas, leadership orientation and training, and other governance development activities.
- Serves as the primary staff contact for the Officers and Directors, anticipating and meeting their needs for materials, information, and support to fully manage their roles and responsibilities.
- Executes the Board’s decisions and committee actions promptly and according to the bylaws.
- Works with staff and leadership to identify, recruit, and support volunteers.
- Provides expertise and guidance in the governance of nonprofit organizations.
- Maintains awareness of governance, legal, and financial reporting requirements for 501(c)(6) and 501(c)(3) organizations and provides guidance to the Board.
- Manages risk, including assuring compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and governing documents.
• Ensures all funds, physical assets, and other NAELA property are appropriately safeguarded and administered.
• Authorizes and executes contracts and commitments following NAELA bylaws and policies established by the Board.

Member Services
• Engages diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within NAELA and among members.
• Builds effective relationships and networking opportunities between the national organization and chapters that create value for both levels.
• Develops, plans, and oversees the annual conference, virtual and in-person education programs, academic and professional resources, internal communications, publications, and other direct member services.
• Provides administrative support for specialty sections.
• Nurtures relationships with peer organizations to keep abreast of emerging issues.

Communications and Marketing
• Oversees all communication and outreach efforts, including publications, journals, educational materials, website content, and emails.
• Ensures listservs are monitored for social media policy compliance.
• Directs and manages media and public programming efforts.
• Fields media and other public speaking requests. Identifies appropriate leadership spokesperson. Supports the President and other leaders’ preparation.

Staff Leadership
• Exercises primary authority to hire, evaluate, compensate, and terminate NAELA staff and consultants within the framework of the approved association budget and established NAELA personnel policies.
• Assesses and provides for the optimum personnel use to ensure the organization is staffed with competent personnel delegated appropriate authority and compensated commensurately.
• Ensures managers and staff are continuously developed professionally for career growth and succession opportunities.

Skills, Experience, and Qualifications
• Bachelor’s Degree is required.
• A minimum of seven years of progressive career leadership and management experience in a professional membership association. Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation preferred.
• Passion for the NAELA mission and its commitment to elder and special needs law.
• Experience reporting directly to, and partnering with, a nonprofit board of directors.
• Entrepreneurial focus and solid business and finance acumen with a track record of growing an organization.
• Demonstrated track record of successful change management.
• Leadership style for a staff culture that is team-oriented, collaborative, and inclusive with a member service-focus.
• Dual-focus on generating new revenue and aligning expenses with current resources.
• Experience building member engagement, especially for differing career stages and individuals participating in various professional associations.
• Experience in building brand awareness and raising the visibility of an organization.
• Familiarity with both 501(c)(6) and 501(c)(3) organizations is desirable, as well as some experience with supporting charitable organizations.

NAELA is based in Vienna, VA (Washington DC Metro Area). Travel expectations are less than 20%.

**Measures of Success**
The specifics regarding measures of success, including metrics, will ultimately be agreed upon by the new CEO and the NAELA Board, but at the end of the executive’s first year, the Board would expect the following:

• A smooth transition of leadership.
• Implements the strategic plan and sets annual operational goals.
• Increase public awareness of elder and special needs law attorneys and the importance of their work.
• The CEO has established solid relationships and rapport with the Board, members, and staff, and communicates regularly and effectively.
• Ensure a successful future from engagement and financial perspectives.
• Assist the Board in advancing its governance model.

**Digital Presence**
Web: [https://www.naela.org/](https://www.naela.org/)
Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/NAELA.org](https://www.facebook.com/NAELA.org)
Vetted Solutions is an executive search firm focused on serving the Board, CEO and senior staff recruitment needs of purpose driven organizations.

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