

Santa Fe 2026 Annual Conference & CLE Schedule
Up to 11.5 Hours CLE Available (Plenary Plus Individual Tracks)
ALL TIMES MOUNTAIN TIME

Registration hours Saturday 3p-5p

Date: Sunday, May 3

Time	Track	Title and Description	Speakers	CLE Hrs.
9 – 10 am	New Member Welcome Session/Breakfast for Others/Registration			
10:15 am – 11:45am	Plenary 1	Title: Unleash the Super Power of AI in your Practice: integrating today’s technology to ensure tomorrow’s success! Description: This CLE demystifies AI for practicing adoption and ART attorneys, showing how modern tools can streamline legal research, drafting, e-discovery, due diligence, intake, and practice management—without compromising accuracy, confidentiality, or ethics. Through live-style workflows, case studies, and vendor-agnostic comparisons, participants learn where AI adds real value, how to evaluate tools, build defensible processes, and implement guardrails that meet professional responsibilities.	•	1.5
12 – 1 pm	Lunch			
1:15 pm	Business Meeting (1.5 hours)			
2:45 pm	Sponsor Break (15 Minutes)			
3:00 p.m-4:30pm	Plenary 2	Title: Beyond the Happy Ending: Building Resilience, Recognizing Secondary Trauma, and Strengthening Care for Clients and Ourselves Description: Legal matters do not always end with resolution, relief, or closure. Attorneys—particularly those working closely with vulnerable clients—are routinely exposed to trauma that can take a cumulative toll on their mental health, professional judgment, and long-term sustainability in practice. This CLE explores the realities of secondary (vicarious) trauma in the legal profession and how it manifests in attorneys’ work and well-being, how to protect against it and how to effectively manage it. Participants will learn to identify common signs of secondary trauma and burnout, understand how trauma affects decision-making and client relationships, and develop practical coping strategies that can be integrated into daily practice. The program also addresses ethical considerations, boundary-setting, and communication tools that allow attorneys to support traumatized clients without sacrificing their own resilience. Attendees will leave with concrete strategies to protect their mental health, strengthen their practices and better serve clients when outcomes fall short of a “happy ending.”	•	1.5
6:00 pm	Dine-Arounds Begin			
8:30pm	Dessert Welcome Reception			

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Date: Monday, May 4

Time	Track	Title and Description	Speakers	CLE Hrs.
7- 8 am	Breakfast			
8:00 am	Announcements in Seminar Rooms			
8:30 am 10:00 am	ART Session 1	Title: Applying the Updated AAAA Code of Ethics: Practical Lessons from the First Year Description: AAAA attorneys commit to the competent and ethical practice of adoption and assisted reproduction law. In May 2025, AAAA updated its Code of Ethics (Rules 19 and 20) as part of its ongoing efforts to be the standard-bearer in surrogacy and gamete and embryo donation. All AAAA Fellows are bound to the Code of Ethics. One year since the update, several Fellows will share how they have integrated the updated Code of Ethics into everyday practice. They will discuss practical challenges, highlight what has worked, and point out where there is still room for improvement.	•	1.5
8:30 am 10:00 am	Adopt Session 1	Title: Love Makes a Family—Smart Business Makes a Better Practice Description: Adoption law is deeply personal work—built on compassion, trust, and lifelong impact. But even the most mission-driven practices need sound business strategies to thrive. This CLE explores how adoption attorneys can honor the heart of their work while strengthening the business side of their practice. Attendees will learn practical approaches to client-centered communication, ethical fee structures, efficient case management, and sustainable growth—without losing sight of why they do this work in the first place. A healthier practice not only supports attorneys; it better serves children, birth parents, and adoptive families alike.	•	1.5
10:00 am	Sponsor Break (15 Minutes)			
10:15 am – 11:45 pm	ART Session 2	Title: Gamete & Embryo Donation Description: This presentation will address: Banks vs. matching programs vs. independent matching in gamete and embryo donation, specific terms for contract inclusion, what should not be included in these documents, conflict of law issues, and how to reconcile situations where the donor wishes to retain some control vs the intent to effectuate a full and complete donation. Discussion will also include how these contracts may affect a confirmatory adoption and best practices for drafting re-donation language.	•	1.5
10:15 am – 11:45 pm	Adopt Session 2	Title: Jurisdiction in Multistate Adoption Disputes Description: Adoptions that cross state lines raise unique and often misunderstood jurisdictional issues. This CLE will provide a practical overview of how jurisdiction is established in multistate adoption cases, including the roles of home state, birth state, and adoptive parents’ state of residence. Attendees will examine how the ICPC intersects with jurisdictional principles, common pitfalls that can delay or derail finalization, and best	•	1.5

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		practices for advising clients and coordinating with agencies and courts across state lines. The session is designed for practitioners seeking clear guidance and real-world insights into navigating jurisdictional challenges in multistate adoptions.		
11:45 pm	Lunch & Awards (1.5 hours)			
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	ART Session 3	Title: The Artistic Balance of ART and PR Description: It seems as if there is an avalanche of negative news regarding ART-this affects our clients, our practices, legislators and commentators. As ART attorneys, we must be prepared to address the stories and counter their negativity with facts that reflect the positive side of family building. This presentation will include a PR specialist who will discuss how to get positive stories of ART into the bigger world: resources, language, and tips for managing sticky situations, your website, social media and protection of client interests.	•	1.5
1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Adopt Session 3	Title: Not All Adoptions Have a Happy Ending: The Cases No One Wants to Talk About or Handle Description: This presentation will cover extra supports available to high-risk placements, practical guidance for helping clients navigate potential disruptions, and liabilities in secondary placements. Presenters will discuss a wide range of options from adoption subsidies to secondary placements as well accessing private support and local departments of human services.	•	1.5
3:15 pm- 4:15pm	ART Session 4	Title: Insurance, Demystified: Health and Life Insurance in Surrogacy and How to Protect the Parties Description: Understanding the practical but complex implications of health and life insurance policies is critical for contract drafting and to best serve clients. This presentation will include: navigating situations where the gestational carrier's health insurance is not surrogacy-friendly; coordination of coverage with supplemental policies; distinguishing life insurance from accidental death insurance; interim coverage options; and, how the pay-out of death benefits is handled. The presenters will provide specific contract language addressing these issues and review the ins and outs of comprehensive insurance coverage.	•	1.0
3:15pm pm - 4:15pm pm	Adopt Session 4	Title: Months of Stability vs. DNA: Cross-Examining the Expert Who Says 'Move the Child.' Description: We often see conflicts arise in our child welfare cases when relatives arrive late in the life of the dependency case. Then DCF either wants the relative to adopt, or they will try to abruptly move children from their bonded foster placements to a relative placement simply because relatives exist. We often encounter experts who conduct bonding assessments and agree with DCF's relative placements, so we can present cross-examination strategies (and litigation strategies more broadly) for how to address these experts' testimony and manage a case like this.	•	1.0
4:15pm	Free Time in Santa Fe			
6:00 pm	Evening Event			

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Date: Tuesday, May 5

Time	Track	Title and Description	Speakers	CLE Hrs.
7:30 am	Breakfast			
8:30 am – 10:00 am	ART Session 5	Title: ART in Dispute – Current Cases and Controversies Description: This session will discuss recent ART-related legislation and litigation, an overview of trends in anti-ART legislation, both stealth and overt, and tips on how to manage these growing threats.	•	1.5
8:30 am – 10:00 am	Adopt Session 5	Title: Adoption Cases with Immigration Components: What Attorneys Need to Know in 2026 Description: Adoption cases increasingly intersect with complex and evolving immigration laws. This CLE equips adoption attorneys with the knowledge needed to identify immigration issues early, avoid common pitfalls, and collaborate effectively with immigration counsel. Focusing on current law and anticipated developments in 2026, the program will cover citizenship and visa pathways for adopted children, Hague and non-Hague adoptions, re-adoption and recognition, documentation challenges, and risk management strategies. Designed for practitioners who want to protect their clients—and the children they serve—this session provides practical guidance for navigating adoption matters with cross-border and immigration considerations.	•	1.5
10:00 am	Sponsor Break (30 Minutes)			
10:30 pm – 12:00 pm	ART Session 6	Title: When Contracts Go Wrong: Real-World Drafting Mistakes & How to Fix Them Description: Poorly drafted clauses can derail a contract, damage trust, or even lead to litigation. Using real examples from surrogacy and donor agreements this session will highlight avoidable drafting errors such as: unclear pronouns, clinical or dehumanizing language, consistent use of party names, and provisions that conflict with insurance, medical or statutory requirements. We will focus on practical revisions that make agreements clearer and more enforceable.	•	1.5
10:30 pm – 12:00 pm	Adopt Session 6	Title: From Conflict to Consensus: Discovery Tools in Contested Adoption Cases Description: This CLE is to support both seasoned and new litigators with honing their discovery tools in contested termination and adoption cases. The goal of this CLE is to provide attendants with actionable tools and insights to improve their discovery requests. Whether you plan on taking your case through litigation, or passing your case on to an attorney that specializes in trial law, you can set your case up for success at trial, and promote the possibility of settlement by effectively using the discovery tools at your disposal.	•	1.5
12:00pm	Business Meeting/Board Installation/Box Lunches/Closing Remarks (1.5 Hours)			