

Washington County Lawyers

Clients have many qualified lawyers to choose from in Washington County. Your investment of time in the selection of a lawyer should result in a strong, positive relationship with the lawyer you ultimately choose to represent you.

WCBA Membership

325 lawyers and judges are members of the Washington County Bar Association.



LRS Panelists

20% of WCBA members practicing in 26 areas of the law serve on the LRS referral panel.



WCBA Public Service

724.225.6710 is the number to call for more information on public education and community service programs.



This pamphlet has been issued as a public service of the Washington County Bar Association. It is intended to inform and not to advise. Information is current as of June 2006; LRS operations and fees are subject to change.

**Washington County Bar Association
Lawyer Referral Service
119 South College Street
Washington, PA 15301
724.225.6710**

**LRS phone service is subject to
holidays and WCBA office hours;
LRS office does not have walk-in hours.**

**Washington
County Bar
Association**

**LAWYER
REFERRAL
SERVICE**

***Finding a
Lawyer***



724.225.6710



How Do I Find a Lawyer?

If you find yourself in a situation where you need a lawyer, but don't know how to find one, a lawyer referral service may be able to help you. Lawyer referral services are designed to help you find a private lawyer in your geographic area who welcomes new clients. Attorneys listed with these services frequently have special arrangements regarding the fee charged for an initial consultation. However, each service has its own specific rules, which you should ask about when you call. For a referral to a lawyer who practice in Washington County, call 724.225.6710. For other referrals, call the Pennsylvania Bar Association at 1.800.692.7375 or 717.238.6715.



**Washington
County Lawyer
Referral Service
724.225.6710**

How Does a Lawyer Set Fees?

An attorney may charge on a flat fee basis for handling a particular type of case; a contingent fee (based on percentage of recovery or amount involved); on an hourly basis; or a combination of these fees. Be sure to discuss fees at your initial meeting and to have the fee agreement confirmed in writing. Factors that influence fees include the novelty or difficulty of the case; time limitations; time and labor required; related business expenses; and the lawyer's experience and skill. Simple problems, involving routine, well-established procedures, will cost less than complex matters that raise unique questions or require work in a more specialized field of law.

How Does the WCBA LRS Work?

When you call the Lawyer Referral Service ("LRS" or "Service") you will speak to a staff member who will ask the nature of your legal matter. All information you give will be held in strictest confidence. The staff person is not a lawyer and cannot give you legal advice.

The staff member will then consult the lawyers who have agreed to accept referrals in certain practice areas. The lawyers on the referral list are members in good standing of the Washington County Bar Association and state Supreme Court Disciplinary Board.

Once a lawyer has been found who meets your geographic, area of law, or other needs (such as handicapped access), either the LRS or the attorney will call to you schedule a half-hour consultation appointment.

There is no charge to contact or use the LRS. The fee for the consultation with the lawyer is \$25, payable directly to the lawyer at the time of or prior to the appointment.

If your legal problem requires work beyond the first half-hour, ask the lawyer about how much he or she would charge to handle the legal matter for you. Any arrangements beyond the first half-hour should be discussed and agreed upon by you and the lawyer.

When you go to the lawyer's office, be prepared to tell him or her all background information relating to your legal matter. You may also want to make a list of questions to ask about your situation or the law.

If you are not satisfied with or are uncomfortable with the lawyer you have been referred to, you are not obligated to hire that attorney. In such a case, or if the attorney declines the case due to a conflict, you are welcome to call the LRS for another referral.

How Can I Be Sure of a Lawyer's Qualifications?

To protect you, by law only lawyers may give legal advice. The right to practice law in Pennsylvania is granted by the Supreme Court of PA. Only after a lawyer demonstrates knowledge and skill in the law is he or she admitted to the bar. This is your assurance that he or she has been found qualified to represent clients. Admission to the bar, however, does not ensure that a lawyer has knowledge and skill in every area of the law. You should ask additional questions to find out if a lawyer has experience with cases like yours. Lawyer referral services can also be of assistance with finding attorneys who practice in certain areas of the law.

The practice and conduct of lawyers registered and qualified to practice law within Pennsylvania is governed by the Supreme Court of PA and by the Rules of Professional Conduct.

What if I Can't Afford a Private Lawyer?

If you need a lawyer but cannot afford legal fees, you may qualify for representation by legal aid:

Southwestern PA Legal Services
1.888.855.3873 (hotline) or 724.225.6170

If you have been charged with a criminal offense and cannot afford a lawyer, you may qualify for representation by a public defender:

Washington County Public Defender's Office
724.228.6818

Other agencies may also be able to assist you with information (call the LRS for additional resources):

Area Agency on Aging Legal Services for the Elderly
724.228.7080

Women's Shelter Domestic Abuse Hotline
724.223.9190 or 1.800.791.4000

Attorney General's Consumer Protection Hotline
1.800.441.2555 or www.attorneygeneral.gov

Web Resources: www.paLawHelp.org (general)
www.PaOpenForBusiness.com (starting a business)