

# LAWYER REFERRAL INFORMATION SERVICE

## State Bar of Texas



### Rules and Application

[www.texasbar.com/lris](http://www.texasbar.com/lris)

## Application For Membership On Referral Panel

Mail completed application to:  
**State Bar of Texas / LRIS**  
**P.O. Box 12487**  
**Austin 78711-2487**

Phone: 800-204-2222, ext. 1720  
 Fax: 512-427-4115



**Attorney Information**  
 NEW MEMBER     RENEWAL

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

BAR CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

FIRM NAME \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

FOREIGN LANGUAGES SPOKEN \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER STATES LICENSED TO PRACTICE \_\_\_\_\_

TX LICENSE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS (FOR LRIS STAFF USE ONLY) \_\_\_\_\_

### Geographic Areas of Practice

Indicate up to nine Texas counties in which you will accept cases:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ 7. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 8. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 9. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### Subject Areas of Practice

- Administrative & Public Law
- Bankruptcy Law
- Business Law, Corporations & Partnerships
- Civil Rights Law
- Consumer Law
- Criminal Law
- Criminal Law/Traffic Tickets
- Environmental & Natural Resources Law
- Estate Planning & Probate Law
- Family Law
- Immigration & Naturalization Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- Labor & Employment Law
- Malpractice & Professional Liability Law/Legal
- Malpractice & Professional Liability Law/Medical
- Personal Injury Law
- Real Estate Law
- Real Estate Law/Landlord & Tenant
- Tax Law
- Other Areas of Law (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### LRIS Registration Information

Please list any other data or information about you or your practice that would be useful in making referrals to you: (Board Certified, Specializations etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Professional Liability Insurance

All members of the LRIS must carry profession liability insurance at a minimum of \$100,000 per claim and \$300,000 aggregate. Please attach a copy of your declaration page to your application.

Insurance Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

Liability Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby swear or affirm that I have read and understand the State Bar of Texas Lawyer Referral & Information Service rules, and I agree to abide by those rules as a member of the referral service panel. I am a member of the State Bar of Texas in good standing. Pursuant to Rule 1.01 of the Texas Disciplinary Rules, I certify that I am competent to practice in the subject areas indicated above, and I will accept referrals for cases in those areas.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

I am paying the annual application/renewal fee of \$125.00 by:  the enclosed check     Mastercard     VISA     AMEX     Discover

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

EXPIRATION (MONTH/YEAR) \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

# Lawyer Referral & Information Service Rules

*As amended and adopted by the  
State Bar of Texas Board of Directors,  
effective January 25, 2002.*

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## Preamble

*The State Bar of Texas recognizes that there exists a large group of persons who have felt that legal services were not readily available. In order to respond to the needs of those persons it is the position of the State Bar of Texas that a statewide lawyer referral and information service be established.*

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## I. Objectives

The immediate objective of the State Bar of Texas in the establishment of the State Bar of Texas Lawyer Referral & Information Service, hereinafter referred to as the "LRIS," is to assist the general public, by providing a way by which any person who can afford to pay a reasonable fee for legal services may be referred to a member of the State Bar of Texas.

As long range objectives, the State Bar of Texas seeks to:

- a. Encourage lawyers to recognize the obligation to provide legal services to the general public.
- b. Acquaint people in need of legal service with the value of consultation with a lawyer.
- c. Acquaint lawyers with the fact that the needs of some clients suggest the use of a deferred payment plan.

## II. The Committee

The standing committee on Lawyer Referral & Information Service is charged with the responsibility of establishing the operating policies of the LRIS. The president of the State Bar of Texas appoints members of this committee under the established rules that govern standing committees, appointments and operations.

## III. The LRIS

The LRIS will be operated from the State Bar of Texas Law Center in Austin, utilizing members of the staff and under the general supervision of the Lawyer Referral & Information Service Committee. Any person seeking legal services in one of the geographic areas served by the LRIS may call a toll-free telephone line maintained at the Law Center and will be interviewed by a staff member. If the staff member determines that the person calling needs a referral to a lawyer and can afford to pay for legal services, a referral will be made to a participant-member of the service, on a rotating basis, who practices in the geographic area of the caller and who handles cases in the subject area of law needed by the caller.

## IV. Formation of the Participant-Member Panel

- A. Any member in good standing with the State Bar of Texas may qualify as a participant-member of the LRIS panel.
- B. Applications for membership will be grouped by county or counties of regular practice together with subject areas of practice, and placed in order of receipt within such group.
- C. (1) In submitting an application for membership on the panel, a lawyer shall list those subject areas of law in which the lawyer is willing to accept referrals and is competent to handle. In accepting the membership of any lawyer, the LRIS may require such information and certifications as it deems necessary to demonstrate that the lawyer is a member of the Bar in good standing, qualified to practice and adheres to recognized ethical standards of the profession. The committee may conduct further investigations and require further information bearing upon the responsibility, capability, character and integrity of any applicant or participant-member. The committee may also require such information as it deems necessary in accepting or continuing the membership of any applicant or participant-member on any panel or panels that may be established.
- (2) Any applicant may be denied registration and any participant-member may be withdrawn from membership if the lawyer has:
  - (a) Willfully failed to pay any fee, render any report, or otherwise abide by the rules of the LRIS.
  - (b) Signed any application or other certification or report to the LRIS which shall be found to be untrue in any material respect.

Such action may be taken by the vote of a majority of all members of the committee, only after a hearing on reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard, and subject to the right of appeal to the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if at any time, the committee receives notice or information giving it reasonable grounds to believe that a participant-member does not meet the required standards of responsibility,

capability, character, and integrity, it may suspend a participant-member from participation in the LRIS, but only for such reasonable time as may be necessary.

- D. In filing an application for panel membership as provided, a lawyer certifies and agrees to:
  - (1) grant an initial one-half hour consultation for a fee of no more than \$20 to any client referred by the LRIS;
  - (2) charge for further services beyond the initial one-half hour consultation in congruence with any agreement made with the client and in keeping with the stated objectives of the LRIS and the client's ability to pay;
  - (3) charge no more than the total cost, including legal fees and expenses, that the client would have been required to pay if a referral through the LRIS had not been made;
  - (4) permit any dispute concerning fees arising from a referral to be submitted to binding arbitration if the client so petitions;
  - (5) grant all clients referred by the LRIS an appointment as soon as practicable after request is made;
  - (6) abide by all of the rules of the LRIS and in no event hold, or claim to hold, the State Bar of Texas or any of its officers, directors or employees liable in connection with the operation of, or use of the information contained in the application in connection with the activities of the LRIS.
  - (7) carry professional liability insurance at a minimum of \$100,000 per claim and \$300,000 aggregate. Panel members must attach a copy of the declaration page of the policy to the application for membership. Upon expiration of the member's liability insurance, the LRIS will place the attorney on inactive status until current insurance information has been received. Panel members have the affirmative duty to notify the LRIS of renewal, cancellation, or other changes to the insurance policy, and should authorize the insurance carrier to supply the LRIS with any information concerning the policy.

## V. Fee for Panel Membership

The annual fee to join or renew as a participant-member of the LRIS shall be \$125.00 per year. This fee can be discounted for marketing and promotional purposes upon the discretion of the LRIS Director. This fee shall be submitted with the application for initial membership or renewal of membership. In addition, the participant-member agrees that on any referral received from the State Bar of Texas LRIS which generates fees of \$500 or more, the member agrees to remit ten percent (10%) of the total attorney's fees to the State Bar of Texas LRIS office within thirty (30) working days from receipt of payment.

If a participant-member transfers a referral case to another attorney, the participant member shall be held liable to the State Bar of Texas LRIS for ten percent (10%) of any fees of \$500 or

more recovered by the attorney to whom the transfer was made. If the participant-member uses another attorney as co-counsel, the participant-member shall be held liable to the State Bar of Texas LRIS for ten percent (10%) of the total attorneys' fees of \$500 or more that are recovered by both the participant-member and co-counsel. The participant-member shall give written notice of this requirement to co-counsel at the time the co-counsel relationship is established.

No other fees for membership shall be required from any participant-members, including any fees collected for the initial one-half hour consultation, if any.

## VI. Withdrawal from Membership

A participant-member may at any time withdraw from membership in the LRIS panel upon five days written notice to the LRIS addressed to the State Bar of Texas. No portion of the membership fee may be refunded.

## VII. Operation of the Panel

- A. Referrals will be made on a rotating basis based on the county (or counties) where a participant-member practices and on the subject area (or areas) of practice in which the participant-member engages. The caller will be given the name and telephone number of a participant-member and told to contact the participant-member to arrange for an initial consultation. The caller will be informed by the staff member that the participant-member to whom the caller is being referred may or may not charge a fee for the initial one-half hour consultation, but that such fee cannot be more than \$20 for the initial one-half hour consultation.
- B. If the LRIS ascertains that a person being interviewed is presently represented by a lawyer, no referral will be made until a release is obtained from the person's lawyer.
- C. A participant-member will accept any referral for initial interview in those subject areas of law in which the participant-member is willing to accept referrals and is competent to handle. However, should any referral give rise to a conflict of interest, the participant-member will contact the LRIS, obtain a new referral for the caller and cooperate in assisting the caller to obtain legal consultation concerning the caller's problem.
- D. A participant-member rejecting initial referrals for any reason will be moved to the bottom of the rotation list.

## VIII. Records and Review

The LRIS will keep on file a confidential record of all referrals and filings of participant-members which will be subject to examination and inspection by the committee and officers of the State Bar of Texas.