

LAWYER REFERRAL & INFORMATION SERVICE

State Bar of Texas



Rules and Application

www.texasbar.com/LRIS

Application for Membership On The Lawyer Referral Service

Mail, email or fax completed application to:

State Bar of Texas – LRIS
P.O. Box 12487
Austin 78711-2487

Email: mail.LRIS@texasbar.com
 Fax: (512) 427-4320
 Questions? Call (512) 427-1720



Attorney Information

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

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 (MM/DD/YYYY)

E-MAIL ADDRESS (FOR LRIS STAFF USE ONLY)

Geographic Areas of Practice

List the Texas counties in which you will accept referrals. You may add more than nine counties, including statewide. **The State Bar LRIS does NOT service Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Jefferson, Tarrant or Travis counties.**

1. _____ 6. _____
2. _____ 7. _____
3. _____ 8. _____
4. _____ 9. _____
5. _____ Statewide

Subject Areas of Practice

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative & Public Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate-Landlord Tenant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Law, Corporations & Partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Disability Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Litigation | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Income Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans' Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Law/Traffic Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> Workers' Compensation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elder Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Areas of Law
(please specify): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental & Natural Resources Law | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Estate Planning, Wills & Probate Law | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Law | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration & Naturalization Law | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labor & Employment Law | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malpractice—Legal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malpractice—Medical | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Injury Law | |

LRIS Registration Information

Please list any other preferences or information about you that would be helpful to LRIS staff in making appropriate referrals to you:

Professional Liability Insurance

All members of the LRIS must carry professional liability insurance at a minimum of \$100,000 per claim and \$300,000 aggregate.

Check the box to indicate a copy of your insurance declaration page has been included with your application.

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, 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 (payable to State Bar of Texas LRIS)
 Mastercard VISA AMEX Discover

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION (MONTH/YEAR)

PRINT NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD

SIGNATURE _____

FOR LRIS STAFF USE ONLY

DATE RECEIVED: _____ FEE RECEIVED: _____
 MEMBERSHIP YEAR: _____ INSURANCE EXP: _____

Lawyer Referral & Information Service Rules

*As amended and adopted by the
State Bar of Texas Board of Directors,
effective March 11, 2013*

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.

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 LRIS

The LRIS will be operated from the State Bar of Texas Law Center in Austin, utilizing members of the staff. 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.

III. 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 LRIS Director may conduct further investigations and require further information bearing upon the responsibility, capability, character and integrity of any applicant or participant-member. The LRIS Director 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; or
 - (b) signed any application or other certification or report to the LRIS which shall be found to be untrue in any material respect.

Applicants may appeal denial of membership to the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if at any time the LRIS Director receives notice or information giving reasonable grounds to believe that a participant-member does not meet the required standards of responsibility, capability, character, and integrity, the Director may suspend a participant-member from participation in the LRIS in accordance with the LRIS Disqualification Rules and Procedures.

- 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 mediation 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; and
- 7) carry professional liability insurance at a minimum of \$100,000 per claim and \$300,000 aggregate. Panel members must include a copy of the declaration page of the policy with 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.

IV. FEE FOR PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The annual fee to join or renew as a participant-member of the LRIS shall be \$125.00 per calendar year. This fee can be discounted or prorated 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 final 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 fees collected for the initial one-half hour consultation, if any.

V. 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.

VI. 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.

VII. 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 Board and officers of the State Bar of Texas.