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## **Virginia Attorneys and Lawyer Referral**

These are questions about attorneys and lawyer referral that are frequently asked by consumers.

### **How do I choose an attorney?**

The Virginia State Bar (VSB) provides services to help you find an attorney. The [Virginia Lawyer Referral Service](#), operated by the VSB, can connect you with a lawyer who is prepared to work with your type of problem.

### **Where can I get a referral?**

The Virginia State Bar operates a referral service [Virginia Lawyer Referral Service](#) which can be reached at (804) 775-0808 or 1-800-552-7977. If you think you have a problem which may require the services of a lawyer, call the Virginia Lawyer Referral Service. Your call will be answered by a referral specialist who will request your name and a brief description of your problem. Based on this information, you will be provided with the name and telephone number of a lawyer in your community who has indicated a particular interest in handling your type of problem. The lawyer will be licensed and a member in good standing with the Virginia State Bar. It will then be your responsibility to call the lawyer to schedule an appointment. If it appears that you do not need a lawyer, you will be directed to an agency that may be able to help. Any information that you provide will be strictly confidential.

If you are referred to a lawyer, you will be entitled to consult with him or her for up to one half hour for a fee of \$35. You should be prepared to pay the lawyer at the time of your appointment. This initial consultation may answer your questions and enable you to solve your problem. If your problem requires additional time and work, you will be responsible for any additional legal fees. The lawyer you consult will be glad to discuss his or her fees and the cost of services beyond the initial half-hour consultation. However, there is no obligation for either you or the lawyer to go beyond the one half-hour consultation. The hours of operation are Monday through

Friday, from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Closed on state holidays.

Several local bars also offer referrals:

- Alexandria Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service - (703) 548-1105
- Arlington County Bar Association - (703) 228-3390
- Charlottesville-Albemarle Legal Aid Society Lawyer Referral Service - (434) 977-0553
- Fairfax Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service - (703) 246-3780
- Lawyer Referral Service of the Norfolk & Portsmouth Bar Association - (757) 623-0132

### **How can I find out about pro bono assistance?**

Pro bono service includes all uncompensated services performed by lawyers for the public good. Pro bono assistance is available through the Legal Aid offices throughout the state. You can search on this website for legal aid offices by going to the search box on the homepage and entering "legal aid" in the topic box and then either your city/county or your zip code.

### **How do I file a complaint against an attorney?**

Complaints are handled by the Virginia State Bar, the mandatory and licensing agency in Virginia. The Virginia State Bar can be reached by telephone at (804) 775-0500, or by mail at 1111 E. Main Street, Suite 700, Richmond, Virginia 23219. Office hours are 8:15 am to 4:45 pm Monday through Friday.

### **How are attorneys licensed in Virginia?**

Attorneys must be licensed to practice law in Virginia. Licensing is handled by the Virginia State Bar which can be reached at (804) 775-0500. The mailing address is 1111 E. Main Street, Suite 700, Richmond, VA 23219. The Board of Bar Examiners is responsible for administering the Bar Exam. It can be reached at (804) 367-0412.

### **What is the difference between the Virginia Bar Association and the Virginia State Bar?**

The Virginia Bar Association is a voluntary professional association for attorneys. The Virginia State Bar is a mandatory licensing agency. Attorneys must be licensed by the Virginia State Bar in order to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Not all Virginia attorneys choose to be members of The Virginia Bar Association. In addition, The Virginia Bar Association does not require attorneys to be licensed in Virginia for membership.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the [Virginia State Bar](#) at (804) 775-0500. The TDD/Voice Line (Hearing-Impaired) is 804-775-0502. The mailing address is 1111 E. Main Street, Suite 700, Richmond, VA 23219. You may also find the Virginia Lawyer Referral Service's [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page helpful.

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