

NEW HAVEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE PROCEDURES

1. When a client calls the Lawyer Referral Service (“LRS”) office, he/she will be screened to determine the nature of the legal problem.
2. If appropriate, the screener will give the caller the name and telephone number of the next attorney in rotation who has indicated that he/she will accept referrals in the relevant area of law. The caller’s geographic preference generally is taken into consideration.
3. The screener will explain to the caller that the attorney will be notified by LRS that the client will be calling the attorney's office to arrange an appointment. The caller also will be advised that this appointment is for a ½ hour consultation. The referral charge (unless waived by the LRS) is paid directly to the LRS prior to the consultation. It will further be explained to the caller that any fees for services beyond the initial ½ hour consultation are a matter of private agreement between the attorney and client. If questioned, the caller will be advised that Lawyer Referral Service does not provide pro bono attorneys, and/or that the NHCBA sponsors a Modest Means reduced fee referral program in limited case type areas for people who financially qualify.
4. A disposition sheet will be e-mailed, faxed or mailed to the attorney the same day the referral is made.
5. The attorney will consult with the client; fill out the disposition sheet and return it to the LRS immediately following the consultation or within 21 days of the referral date. Disposition follow-up forms may be sent to the attorney on an ongoing basis to determine the status of referred cases.
6. Status reports will be sent to the attorney periodically for an update on the progress of all open cases. **Any attorney who does not respond to a status report within four months of the date on which it is sent will be suspended from participation in LRS until the completed status report has been received by the LRS office.** The LRS attorney agrees to remit 15% of the gross fee received over \$200.00 on all cases, excluding representation of debtors in personal bankruptcy. Remittance of the percentage of the gross fee received by counsel is payable to the Lawyer Referral Service upon receipt by attorney. In accordance with the LRS Attorney Application and Agreement, the attorney agrees not to increase his or her normal fees or otherwise pass along the percentage remittance to the LRS-referred client.
7. If the attorney is unable to represent the client for a demonstrated reason (conflict of interest, etc.), the client should be referred back to LRS for a second referral. The client should be advised to contact the LRS to arrange for this second referral. Attorneys should not refer the client out of the LRS network. LRS has many qualified attorneys and can usually re-refer the client.
8. If requested, a client may receive a third referral, but only after LRS researches the reasons the first two referral attorneys did not take the case.