

The Fort Bend County Paralegal Association

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

TO BE FULLY COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

DUES: \$40.00 per year. An additional \$25 fee will be assessed for any returned check.

(Annual Membership Dues of \$40.00 are due in January of each year. No fees will be pro-rated.)

ACCEPTANCE FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FORT BEND COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION WILL NOT GRANT:

[1] CERTIFIED PARALEGAL (CLA) STATUS TO THE APPLICANT; [2] SPECIALIZATION BY THE TEXAS BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION; OR [3] ANY OTHER CERTIFICATION OR SPECIALTY WHICH MAY BE APPLIED FOR THROUGH OTHER STATE OR NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

I HEREBY APPLY FOR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP IN THE FORT BEND COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION. I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I AM EMPLOYED AS AN ACTIVE PARALEGAL IN THE STATE OF TEXAS, THAT I WORK UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF A DULY LICENSED ATTORNEY AT ALL TIMES, AND THAT I QUALIFY AS A MEMBER UNDER THE CATEGORY(S) CHECKED BELOW. I HEREBY GIVE CONSENT TO THE DIVISION TO CONTACT MY PRESENT AND/OR FORMER SUPERVISING ATTORNEY(S), EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND/OR CREDENTIALING BODIES FOR VERIFICATION OR CLARIFICATION OF MY QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT IF ANY INFORMATION SUBMITTED IN THIS APPLICATION IS FALSE, IT WILL BE GROUNDS FOR DENIAL OF MY APPLICATION. I HAVE READ THE "PARALEGAL" AS HEREIN STATED, AND I HAVE READ THE CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARALEGALS DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS, AND IF ACCEPTED FOR MEMBERSHIP, I AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THE ASSOCIATION'S BYLAWS AND CODE OF ETHICS.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Complete in **FULL**, all pages of this application. Attach additional pages if necessary to complete answers.
2. Sign and date the application.
3. Make sure the Attorney Acknowledgment of Applicant is completed, signed and dated.
4. Keep a copy of the Code of Ethics for future reference and make a copy of your application for future reference.
5. Return the application **along with a check or money order in the amount of \$40.00 made** payable to The Fort Bend County Paralegal Association to the following address:

The Fort Bend County Paralegal Association

Melinda Knight
Fort Bend County Bar Association
P. O. Box 18825
Sugar Land, Texas 77496-8825
(281) 565-3634

Please note that an additional \$25 fee will be assessed when a check for dues is returned for any reason.

The approval process of your application will take approximately 30 days upon receipt. Thank you for your interest.

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For Use by the Association

Date Received: _____

Date Approved: _____

Membership No: _____

Name: _____

(Print your name and designation, as it should appear on your membership card)

Birth date: ____/____/____ Social Security number: _____

Employer: _____

Current Business Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Office Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email Address: _____

Home Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

If you **do NOT** wish any of the above information to be available in a membership directory, please check [].

Preferred Mailing Address: [] Home [] Office

Please list your current job functions/substantive areas of law that constitute 80% of your time:

Please list your current employer and each employer's phone number for the last three (3) years:

How did you hear about the Association? _____

Active Membership Criteria

To meet the membership criteria, at least one of the following categories must be answered in the affirmative in its totality. Please check only those criteria that apply to you. If one of the answers you give is "no", you may not be eligible for membership as an ACTIVE member. However, you may be eligible for Associate Membership.

- a. Are you a Board Certified Paralegal through the Texas Board of Legal Specialization?
Yes If yes, please give the year you became certified and the specialty: _____
- b. Are you a CLA through the National Association of Paralegals?
Yes If yes, please give the year you became certified: _____
- Do you have six (6) months of employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney? Yes No
- c. Are you a RP through the National Federation of Paralegal Associations?
Yes If yes, please give the year you became certified: _____
- Do you have six (6) months of employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney? Yes No
- d. Do you have a bachelor's or higher degree in any field? Yes
- If yes, give the name and address of school and the date of graduation: _____
- Do you have six (6) months of employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney? Yes No
- e. Have you completed an ABA approved program of education and training for Paralegals?
Yes If yes, give the name and address of school and the date of completion: _____
- Do you have six (6) months of employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney? Yes No
- f. Have you completed a Paralegals program that consists of a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of which fifteen (15) are substantive legal courses? Yes If yes, give the name and address of the program and the date of completion: _____
- Do you have six (6) months of employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney? Yes No
- g. Have you completed a Paralegal's program that consists of fifteen (15) semester hours of substantive legal courses? Yes If yes, give the name and address of the program and the date of completion: _____
- Do you have six (6) months of employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney? Yes No
- h. Do you have at least (5) five years employment experience as a Paralegal under the direct supervision of an attorney? Yes No

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

ATTORNEY ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF APPLICANT

DEFINITION OF A PARALEGAL - A Paralegal is a person, qualified through various combinations of education, training, or work experience, who is employed or engaged by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the ultimate direction and supervision of a licensed attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal principals and procedures, that, absent such person, an attorney would be required to perform the task.

Adopted February, 1986, by the Board of Governors of the American Bar Association
Adopted June 19, 1986, by the Paralegals Division of the State Bar of Texas
Adopted October 4, 1986, by the State Bar of Texas Standing Committee on Paralegals
Adopted April 8, 2005, by the State Bar of Texas

I HAVE READ THE "Definition of a Paralegal" as stated above and I hereby verify and acknowledge that I personally know the applicant, _____, and can acknowledge that the applicant is performing Paralegal duties in the State of Texas and:

_____ works under my direct supervision and performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for at least eighty percent of the time and that a licensed attorney is responsible for the applicant's work product; or

_____ is a freelance Paralegal who has performed specifically delegated substantive legal work under my direct supervision during the past (12) months

Name of Attorney: _____ Bar Card No: _____
(Use one primary attorney only-print or type name)

Firm: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Attorney's Signature: _____ Date: _____

CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARALEGAL'S DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

Preamble

Fundamental to the success of any professional organization are the integrity of its members and a high standard of conduct. This Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility is promulgated by the Paralegals Division of the State Bar of Texas and accepted by its members to accomplish these ends.

The PARALEGAL profession is by nature closely related to the legal profession. Although the Code of Professional Responsibility of the State Bar of Texas does not directly govern Paralegals except through a supervising attorney, it is incumbent upon the members of the Paralegals Division to know the provisions of the attorneys' code and avoid any action which might involve an attorney in a violation of that code or even the appearance of professional impropriety.

The canons set forth hereafter are intended as a general guide, and the enumeration of these canons does not exclude others of equal importance although not specifically mentioned.

Canon 1. A Paralegal shall not engage in the practice of law as defined by statutes or court decisions, including but not limited to accepting cases or clients, setting fees, giving legal advice or appearing in a representative capacity in court or before an administrative or regulatory agency (unless otherwise authorized by statute, court or agency rules); the Paralegal shall assist in preventing the unauthorized practice of law.

Canon 2. A Paralegal shall not perform any of the duties that attorneys only may perform or do things which attorneys themselves may not do.

Canon 3. A Paralegal shall exercise care in using independent professional judgment and in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of any attorney, and shall not act in matters involving professional legal judgment.

Canon 4. A Paralegal shall preserve and protect the confidences and secrets of a client.

Canon 5. A Paralegal shall not solicit legal business on behalf of an attorney.

Canon 6. A Paralegal shall not engage in performing paralegal functions other than under the direct supervision of an attorney, and shall not advertise or contract with members of the general public for the performance of paralegal functions.

Canon 7. A Paralegal shall avoid, if at all possible, any interest or association which constitutes a conflict of interest pertaining to a client matter and shall inform the supervising attorney of the existence of any possible conflict.

Canon 8. A Paralegal shall maintain a high standard of ethical conduct and shall contribute to the integrity of the paralegal profession.

Canon 9. A Paralegal shall maintain a high degree of competency to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide quality legal services to the public.

Canon 10. A Paralegal shall do all other things incidental, necessary or expedient to enhance professional responsibility and the participation of Paralegals in the administration of justice and public service in cooperation with the legal profession.

ADOPTED MARCH 27, 1982