

WEST TEXAS PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION
An Affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants/Paralegals, Inc. (NALA)
P.O. Box 93103
Lubbock TX 79493

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR YEAR _____ = _____
Dues \$25.00

NAME: _____

FIRM NAME: _____

PREFERRED ADDRESS: _____

CITY STATE ZIP _____

PREFERRED PHONE/FAX: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HAVE YOU BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY OFFENSE? ___ YES ___ NO

TOTAL YEARS EMPLOYED AS A PARALEGAL _____

TOTAL YEARS OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE (if different) _____

CLA/CP STATUS: Please give date of Certification: _____

Specialty Certification: _____ Area _____

Formal or special education, schooling or training: _____

Member of NALA? ___ YES ___ NO Paralegal Division? ___ YES ___ NO

I HEREBY CONSENT TO WTPA CONTACTING MY PRESENT AND/OR FORMER SUPERVISING ATTORNEY(S) FOR VERIFICATION OR CLARIFICATION OF MY QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Please check the appropriate category(ies) that apply to you

- ___ 1. I work as or have worked as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney and also meet one of the following criteria:
- ___ (a) I have successfully completed the voluntary certification examination given by NALA;
- ___ (b) I have a bachelor's degree or higher in any field PLUS at least one (1) year of experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney;
- ___ (c) I have successfully completed an ABA approved program of education and training to paralegals or a non-ABA approved but institutionally accredited program of education and training for paralegals PLUS at least one (1) year of experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney;

_____ (d) I have completed a minimum of four (4) years of law-related experience PLUS at least one (1) year of experience as a paralegal under the direct supervision of a duly licensed attorney; or

_____ 2. I am employed as a Coordinator or Supervisor of a paralegal program within the employing entity, and I have previously met the criteria set forth above.

I hereby apply for ACTIVE membership in the West Texas Paralegal Association. I hereby certify that I am employed as a Paralegal, that I qualify as an active member under one or more categories checked above, and that I have attended a meeting of the WTPA. I have read the definition of a paralegal and the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility as stated below and agree to be bound by them and the Bylaws as adopted by the WTPA.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

ATTORNEY-EMPLOYER ATTESTATION

I hereby attest that _____ is employed by me and is recognized as a paralegal and that he/she is under the supervision and direction of an attorney and is capable of the following services as generally described by the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Paralegals:

Applying knowledge of the law and legal procedure in drafting legal documents and other papers in certain fields of law; exercising judgment and working independently with respect to the assigned tasks, keeping and meeting deadlines; preparing or interpreting legal documents for review by attorneys; selecting, compiling, and using technical information from such references as digests, encyclopedias, or practice manuals; analyzing procedural problems and recommending solutions in certain fields; and preparing detailed office procedures for efficient handling of specified fields of law.

I further attest that the above Applicant has been employed by me or another attorney as a paralegal for one (1) year or longer and that he/she is recommended for membership in the WTPA.

Signature of Attorney/Employer: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by Membership Chair:

_____ This Applicant has been approved as an Active Member

_____ This Applicant does not meet the qualifications for active membership.

Date determination made: _____

By: _____
Vice-President, Membership

_____ Payment received and accepted Check No. _____
_____ Payment returned to Applicant

NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility

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National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

Definition: Legal assistants, also known as paralegals, are a distinguishable group of persons who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training and experience, legal assistants have knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law which qualify them to do work of a legal nature under the supervision of an attorney.

In **2001**, NALA members also adopted the ABA definition of a legal assistant/paralegal, as follows:

A legal assistant or paralegal is a person qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible. (Adopted by the ABA in 1997)

Canon 1.

A paralegal must not perform any of the duties that attorneys only may perform nor take any actions that attorneys may not take.

Canon 2.

A paralegal may perform any task which is properly delegated and supervised by an attorney, as long as the attorney is ultimately responsible to the client, maintains a direct relationship with the client, and assumes professional responsibility for the work product.

Canon 3.

A paralegal must not: (a) engage in, encourage, or contribute to any act which could constitute the unauthorized practice of law; and (b) establish attorney-client relationships, set fees, give legal opinions or advice or represent a client before a court or agency unless so authorized by that court or agency; and (c) engage in conduct or take any action which would assist or involve the attorney in a violation of professional ethics or give the appearance of professional impropriety.

Canon 4.

A paralegal must use discretion and professional judgment commensurate with knowledge and experience but must not render independent legal judgment in place of an attorney. The services of an attorney are essential in the public interest whenever such legal judgment is required.

Canon 5.

A paralegal must disclose his or her status as a paralegal at the outset of any professional relationship with a client, attorney, a court or administrative agency or personnel thereof, or a member of the general public. A paralegal must act prudently in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of an attorney.

Canon 6.

A paralegal must strive to maintain integrity and a high degree of competency through education and training with respect to professional responsibility, local rules and practice, and through continuing education in substantive areas of law to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide legal service.

Canon 7.

A paralegal must protect the confidences of a client and must not violate any rule or statute now in effect or hereafter enacted controlling the doctrine of privileged communications between a client and an attorney.

Canon 8. A paralegal must disclose to his or her employer or prospective employer any pre-existing client or personal relationship that may conflict with the interests of the employer or prospective employer and/or their clients.

Canon 9.

A paralegal must do all other things incidental, necessary, or expedient for the attainment of the ethics and responsibilities as defined by statute or rule of court.

Canon 10.

A paralegal's conduct is guided by bar associations' codes of professional responsibility and rules of professional conduct.