

**THE FLORIDA BAR
LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE
OPERATING PROCEDURES**

I. Referral Procedure

- A. An LRS clerk receives a call.
- B. The LRS clerk asks the caller the county from which (s)he is calling and the type of legal problem (s)he is having. If the caller is presently using the services of an attorney, the LRS clerk explains that the attorney must be released before a referral can be made.
- C. During the conversation with the client, the LRS clerk will determine the type of attorney needed by the caller and other criteria (if necessary). Selection of attorneys is based on the following information provided by the caller:
 - 1. The city/county in which the caller needs an attorney.
 - 2. The area of law in which the problem falls.
 - 3. Panel type (i.e., Regular Panel, Low Fee Panel or Elderly Referral Panel.)
 - 4. Other criteria if necessary (i.e., other languages, jail calls, etc.).

The computer will select a name based on the above criteria. After a referral has been made, the computer will rotate the attorney's name. **The attorney's name will be rotated for all areas of law the attorney has signed up for.** Panel attorney names are rotated automatically by the computer each time a referral is made.

- D. During the conversation with the client, the LRS clerk will enter the caller's name, address and telephone number into the computer.
- E. The LRS clerk, while talking with the client, will inform the client that the first half-hour office consultation with the attorney will be at a fee of no more than **\$25.00**, and that further fees will be negotiated between client and attorney. **The \$25.00 is paid directly to the attorney, and the Service does not receive any portion of it.**

For referrals made on the Low Fee Panel and Elderly Referral Panel, the client is informed that the first half-hour consultation is **free** and that further fees may be at a reduced rate.

- F. The caller is provided the attorney's name, address, and phone number, and instructed to contact the attorney for an appointment. The caller is further instructed to inform the attorney's office that (s)he was referred by The Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service.

II. Reports

- A. Panel Members can review their referrals online on The Florida Bar website at www.floridabar.org, and can indicate the status of each case and print the remittance fee documents and mail it back to the Bar in a timely manner. On The Florida Bar's website there is a link to The Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service's homepage. Just click on the Find A Lawyer icon at the top of the Bar's homepage. On the next screen click on the Lawyer Referral Service located at the right hand corner of the screen. This will direct you to the Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service's homepage. The referral database is located on the homepage. Just click on the database and enter in your Florida Bar attorney number, and your personal Florida Bar password. It will then take you to the referral database. You can review your cases online, and indicate the status of the cases. The service receives 12% of any attorneys' fees from the cases on the Regular Panel. To ensure our records are accurate, please send all remittance checks with the remittance form. Please do not send checks without the remittance form because we will not know to which cases the remittance fees should be assigned.

IF A REFERRAL IS MADE ON THE LOW FEE PANEL OR ELDERLY REFERRAL PANEL THE ATTORNEY IS NOT REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THE 12 PERCENT REMITTANCE FEE TO THE LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE. ADDITIONALLY, BANKRUPTCY AND SOCIAL SECURITY CASES DO NOT REQUIRE SUBMISSION OF THE 12 PERCENT FEE.

III. Contacting Clients

- A. Lawyers participating on The Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service should not call clients referred to them unless the client calls them first.

Calling a referred client prior to the client calling the lawyer is a violation of Rule 4-7.4(a) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar. A lawyer violating this rule may be subject to discipline.

IV. Referrals

If you receive a referral from The Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service and you are unable to handle the case, please refer the person back to the Lawyer Referral Service. Please do not refer the person to another lawyer. Please tell the person to call The Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service at 1-800-342-8011 to obtain another referral.