



# LANCASTER AREA PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION



### MISSION STATEMENT

- To encourage and foster continuing legal education of the members of LAPA.
- To establish good fellowship and networking among association members, other local paralegal associations, and the members of the legal community.
- To promote the profession of the paralegal; educating the public for the advancement and improvement of the profession; and broadening public understanding of the skills and functions of the paralegal.
- To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations.
- To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment.

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

APPLICANT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Check the appropriate membership classification:

Paralegal (voting) **All four (4) requirements must be met** \$60.00\*

This membership is open to an individual:

- Currently employed as a paralegal; and is
- Qualified through education, training, or work experience, defined as:
  - Degree or Certificate awarded in the field of paralegal studies and a minimum of six (6) months of substantive paralegal experience, OR
  - Three (3) years of substantive legal work experience if applicant does not have a degree or certificate relating to paralegal studies; and
- Performs substantive legal work requiring knowledge of legal concepts and ethics, and is
- Under the direction of an attorney.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Supervising Attorney Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervising Attorney Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attorney I.D. Number

- Paralegal Student (non-voting) \$25.00\*  
This membership is open to an individual (i) currently enrolled in a formal course of study leading to a position as a paralegal, or (ii) within the past nine (9) months has graduated from a paralegal training program who is currently seeking employment as a paralegal. **Please provide a copy of your current student identification card (REQUIRED).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Student Advisor's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Advisor's Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Business Associate (non-voting) \$80.00\*  
This membership is open to entities such as law firms, educational facilities and other businesses that are interested in promoting the goals of the paralegal profession by an association with LAPA.
- Sustaining (non-voting) \$60.00\*  
This membership is open to any individual who does not meet the requirements of the aforementioned membership categories but desires to support LAPA.

**(\* Includes \$5.00 Non-Refundable Application Fee)**

**\* Please contact the Membership Chair of LAPA if your employment status changes during your annual membership period. If a change to membership status is made during the annual membership year, no additional fees will be incurred by the member, nor will the member receive a refund for a status change resulting in a lower membership fee. At the time of the member's next renewal, the appropriate fee for the member's new membership status will become due.**

B. Please supply the following information about yourself:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Communication will be provided to you via the E-mail address above unless otherwise noted below:

\_\_\_\_\_

D. **For Paralegal Applicants:** Please complete the following (*Please include dates*):

How Long Employed as a Paralegal: (*Please include employer name and dates*):

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Paralegal Educational Background (*Please include dates*):

- ✓ Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Major: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Degree or Certificate Obtained: \_\_\_\_\_

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Paralegal Work Experience (*Please include employer name and dates*):

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Paralegal on-the-job Training (*Please include employer name and dates*):

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E. In which area(s) of law do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

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F. If you are employed as a Paralegal, please describe your primary duties:

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G. **For Student Applicants:** Please indicate your current (and previous, if applicable) educational background:

Current Enrollment (Please include dates):

- ✓ Name of Institution Enrolled In: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Major: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Dates Attended \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Anticipated Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Anticipated Degree or Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Enrollment (Please include dates):

- ✓ Name of Institution: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Major: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Dates Attended \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Degree or Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

H. We encourage all LAPA members to take an active part in our Association. ***In numerical order of preference***, please identify your top three (3) committee choices (you will only be added to one (1) committee, based on committee needs). All LAPA members are expected to actively participate in at least one (1) committee.

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|--|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| ___ Community Relations                | ___ Marketing  | ___ Special Events                    |
| ___ (subcommittee Wills for Heroes)    |                | ___ Newsletter                        |
| ___ Education                          | ___ Membership | ___ Student Liaison                   |
| ___ (subcommittee Criminal Conference) |                | ___ (subcommittee Student Conference) |

I. Permission is hereby granted to the Lancaster Area Paralegal Association (LAPA) and its representatives, the right to take, use, reproduce, and/or publish photographs and/or video of me including my image, likeness, and/or voice and/or my property at any LAPA event that I attend, without compensation. I authorize LAPA to use and publish the same in print and/or electronically. I agree that LAPA may use such images/photograph(s) of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including for example, such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content. This authorization is continuous and may only be withdrawn by my specific rescission of this authorization.

I have read and understand the above:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a misdemeanor or felony? If yes, attach full details (name of court, plea or conviction, sentence and length of probation) and appropriate supporting documents with a signed and dated written personal explanation. Yes  No

Have you ever been investigated and/or alleged to have engaged in the Unauthorized Practice of Law? Yes  No

**To the best of my knowledge and belief, this application contains no misrepresentations or falsifications, omission or concealments of material fact and the information given by me is true and complete. I verify that I have been provided with, have read and understand the LAPA Code of Ethics and the NALA Code of Ethics (“Codes”) attached to and incorporated into this Application. I will follow the guidelines set forth in the Codes to the best of my ability and understand that failure to comply with the Codes may result in termination of my membership. I further state that I meet the requirements of the category of membership for which I am applying and consent to my contact information being included in the LAPA Membership Directory. I am aware that membership fees, once accepted, are non-refundable.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

***PARALEGALS: TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE LANCASTER BAR ASSOCIATION, PLEASE VISIT THE LBA: [www.lancasterbar.org](http://www.lancasterbar.org) to complete an application and make payment direct to the LBA.***

Please return this application and your check for membership dues to:

LAPA  
Attention: Membership Chair  
c/o Lancaster Bar Association  
28 E. Orange Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602

**In the event a check is returned for insufficient funds, the applying member must resubmit their membership fee in the form of a money order, cashier's check or law firm/corporate check for the membership fee plus any fees and/or costs incurred by LAPA for the returned check.**

Inquiries may be directed to Cindy Dennes, LAPA Membership Chair:  
[cdennes@thebeaconlaw.com](mailto:cdennes@thebeaconlaw.com)

*We invite you to visit our website at [www.LAPAParalegals.com](http://www.LAPAParalegals.com)*

## **LAPA CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Preamble:**

*LAPA members will strictly adhere to the accepted standards of legal ethics and to the general principles of proper conduct, in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA) and the LAPA Code of Ethics set forth herein.*

### **Definition:**

*Paralegals (including those classified as Legal Assistants) are a distinguishable group of persons who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training and experience, paralegals have knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law which qualify them to work under the supervision of an attorney or corporate officer.*

### **Guidelines:**

*LAPA paralegal members will conduct themselves under the following guidelines:*

**Item 1:** *Paralegals must not perform any task or duties defined only for attorneys nor may they take any actions on behalf of an attorney that the attorney would not (under local, state, or federal rules or regulations) be permitted to do.*

**Item 2:** *Paralegals 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.*

**Item 3:** *Paralegals must not –*

- a. Engage in, encourage, or contribute to any act which could constitute the unauthorized practice of law;*
- 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 the 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.*

**Item 4:** *Paralegals must use discretion and professional judgment commensurate with knowledge and experience but must not render independent legal judgment in place of an attorney, understanding that the services of an attorney are essential in the public interest whenever such legal judgment is required.*

## **LAPA CODE OF ETHICS**

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**Item 5:** *Paralegals must disclose their status as a non-attorney at the onset of any professional relationship with a client, attorney, court or administrative agency or personnel thereof, or a member of the general public. Paralegals must act prudently in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of an attorney.*

**Item 6:** *Paralegals 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 services under the guideline of an attorney.*

**Item 7:** *Paralegals 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.*

**Item 8:** *Paralegals 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.*

**Item 9:** *The conduct of all LAPA members is guided by the local and state codes of professional responsibility and rules of professional conduct, including to the extent reasonable those of the attorney under the Pennsylvania and local county Rules of Ethics.*

**Item 10:** *The LAPA Board of Directors may suspend or expel any membership for cause after reasonable inquiry into an alleged violation of conduct, as listed in Item 3 above, and may then, by a majority two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at any regularly constituted meeting of the Board, terminate or suspend the membership. Any member found to be guilty of the unauthorized practice of law or convicted of a felony (in a court of law) may have their LAPA membership revoked.*

**Item 11:** *Any LAPA member who misrepresents themselves as a professional paralegal, paralegal student or other specific classification is subject to be reclassified by request of the LAPA Board and may have their membership cancelled if unwilling to comply with the reclassification.*

# NALA Code of Ethics & Professional Responsibility

Each NALA member agrees to follow the canons of the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility. Violations of the Code may result in cancellation of membership. First adopted by the NALA membership in May of 1975, the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility is the foundation of ethical practices of paralegals in the legal community.

A paralegal must adhere strictly to the accepted standards of legal ethics and to the general principles of proper conduct. The performance of the duties of the paralegal shall be governed by specific canons as defined herein so that justice will be served and goals of the profession attained. (See Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of paralegals, Section II.)

The canons of ethics set forth hereafter are adopted by the NALA, Inc., as a general guide intended to aid paralegals and attorneys. The enumeration of these rules does not mean there are not others of equal importance although not specifically mentioned. Court rules, agency rules and statutes must be taken into consideration when interpreting the canons.

## Definition

Paralegals, also known as legal assistants, are a distinguishable group of persons who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training and experience, paralegals 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 paralegal, as follows:

A 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.

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**THE ASSOCIATION OF  
LEGAL ASSISTANTS • PARALEGALS**

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