

ETHICS FOR PARALEGALS PROGRAM OUTLINE



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Attorneys and paralegals must maintain the highest ethical standards so they can legitimately claim to uphold the law. Because paralegals serve as representatives of the legal profession, they should keep their conduct above reproach, perform all assignments efficiently and constantly seek to improve their legal knowledge and skills. Blackstone's online, self-paced course covers ethical issues for paralegals such as the unauthorized practice of law, ethical walls, fiduciary duty, and rules of confidentiality. Additional information about paralegal certification and licensing is also included.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Lesson 1 | Evolution of the Paralegal Profession

Lesson 2 | Tasks of a Paralegal

Lesson 3 | Attorney vs. Paralegal Responsibilities

Lesson 4 | Certification and Licensing

Lesson 5 | Freelance and Independent Paralegals

Lesson 6 | Confidentiality, Ethical Walls, and Screening

Lesson 7 | Fees and Fee Sharing

Lesson 8 | Advertising

Lesson 9 | The Integrity of the Paralegal Profession

Evolution of the Paralegal Profession

LESSON 1



In the first lesson, you'll learn why it's difficult to define a paralegal. You'll also learn about the history of the paralegal profession and how this exciting profession evolved over the years.

Tasks of a Paralegal

LESSON 2

Lesson 2 will introduce you to some general duties that most paralegals perform. You'll also learn some of the specific duties of paralegals working in different branches of the law. You'll see that these duties vary greatly from one branch of the law to the next. While paralegals may perform legal work, it's important that they refrain from practicing law.

Attorney vs. Paralegal Responsibilities

LESSON 3



You'll learn what it means to practice law in Lesson 3 and how a paralegal's duties differ from tasks performed by attorneys.

Certification and Licensing

LESSON 4

Many people believe that paralegals should obtain a license to perform their job. Others maintain that paralegals are much better served by certification. You'll learn the difference between licensing and certification in Lesson 4. You'll also learn about the different types of paralegal certification and what paralegals have to do to obtain these certifications.

Freelance and Independent Paralegals

LESSON 5



Some paralegals opt to work on their own. Freelance paralegals may work for several attorneys at different legal offices. In some cases, they may work in a location other than a legal firm. Perhaps becoming a freelance paralegal is your ultimate goal. In this lesson, you'll learn about this option, and you'll learn between a freelance paralegal and an independent paralegal; there's an important distinction between the two.

Confidentiality, Ethical Walls, and Screening

LESSON 6

In Lesson 6, you'll learn about confidentiality and ethical walls.

Fees and Fee Sharing

LESSON 7



Lesson 7 discusses the rules governing fees and fee sharing for attorneys and paralegals. Paralegals are often involved in managing client trust accounts and are responsible for billing their hours worked on each case. It is important that these duties are carried out according to the rules of ethics, and a good paralegal must be familiar with those rules.

Advertising

LESSON 8

Lesson 8 focuses on advertising. Paralegals need to know the rules governing the placement of their names on firm letterhead, business cards, and advertisements. There are also some special considerations for independent and freelance paralegals, who advertise their services to the public or to attorneys.

The Integrity of the Paralegal Profession

LESSON 9



Lesson 9 focuses on maintaining the integrity of the paralegal profession. It covers the duties that a paralegal has to report misconduct, participate in pro bono work, and engage in lifelong learning. These are all important elements of achieving and maintaining excellence in the paralegal profession, and must not be overlooked. The Paralegal Association (NALA) and the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA) standards on these topics are also reviewed in this lesson.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Explain how the paralegal profession evolved

Describe the tasks of a paralegal

Differentiate between legal and paralegal responsibilities

Differentiate between certification and licensing

List the pros and cons of licensure

Cite advantages and disadvantages of becoming a freelance paralegal

Elaborate on duties paralegals may perform

Explain the rules of confidentiality relating to attorneys and paralegals

Describe an “ethical wall”

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Define fiduciary duty

Differentiate between billable and nonbillable hours

Define fee splitting

Elaborate on advertising and the freelance/independent paralegal

Describe the importance of paralegal conduct

Understand the duty of reporting misconduct

Describe the importance of pro bono work

Describe the value of lifelong learning



WHY CHOOSE BLACKSTONE

ADMISSIONS TEAM

STUDENT SERVICES

ACCREDITED SCHOOL

Blackstone Career Institute

info@blackstone.edu 800-826-9228