

KEYSTONE ALLIANCE OF PARALEGAL ASSOCIATIONS

The Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations is a professional organization comprised of paralegal organizations located throughout Pennsylvania. The member associations represent in excess of 1,400 paralegals of varying backgrounds, experience, education, and job responsibilities, reflecting the diversity of the paralegal profession.

The Keystone Alliance was formally established in 1995 from groundwork laid in the 1980's by the paralegal associations in Pennsylvania.

Any paralegal association located in and/or representing paralegals in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is eligible to become a member of the Keystone Alliance.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

1. To provide a statewide voice for paralegals in Pennsylvania;
2. To maintain a statewide communications network among paralegal associations and other members of the legal community;
3. To advance, foster and promote the paralegal profession in Pennsylvania;
4. To monitor developments in the paralegal profession.

KEYSTONE ALLIANCE MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Central Pennsylvania Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 11814
Harrisburg, PA 17108
<http://home.comcast.net/~cppgeneral>

Chester County Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 295; West Chester, PA 19381
www.chescoparalegal.org

Lancaster Area Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 593; Lancaster, PA 17608-0593
www.LAPAParalegals.com

Lycoming County Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 991
Williamsport, PA 17703
www.lycolaw.org/lcpa/main.htm

Montgomery County Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 1765; Blue Bell, PA 19422
www.montcoparalegals.org

Philadelphia Association of Paralegals
P.O. Box 59179
Philadelphia, PA 19102-9179
www.philaparalegals.com

Pittsburgh Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 2845
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-2845
www.pghparalegals.org

York County Paralegal Association
c/o CGA Law Firm; 135 North George Street
York, PA 17401

Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations
P. O. Box 344
Pittsburgh, PA 15230

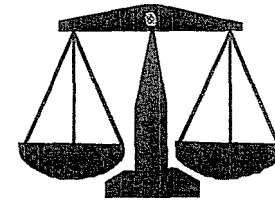
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PARALEGALS AND THE DELIVERY OF LEGAL SERVICES



An informational
pamphlet provided by the

KEYSTONE ALLIANCE OF PARALEGAL ASSOCIATIONS

THIS BROCHURE MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT
THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE KEYSTONE
ALLIANCE OF PARALEGAL ASSOCIATIONS

WHAT IS A PARALEGAL?

Although there are several formal definitions, the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations defines a paralegal as a "person who is qualified through education, training, or work experience to perform substantive legal work requiring knowledge of legal concepts and ethics and is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency, or other entity to work under the direction of an attorney or pursuant to state statute, administrative regulation or court authority in a capacity that, in most instances, would be performed by an attorney in the absence of a paralegal.

WHO EMPLOYS PARALEGALS?

A paralegal may be employed anywhere law related work is performed, such as:

Law Firms
Banks
Corporations
Trade Associations
Insurance Agencies
Legal Clinics
Courts
Government Agencies
Accounting Firms
Engineering Firms
Title Companies

WHAT TASKS DO PARALEGALS PERFORM?

A paralegal's responsibilities may include:

1. Preparation of drafts of legal documents;
2. Client and witness interviews;
3. Factual research;
4. Case management;
5. Trial preparation;
6. Attendance at court proceedings and depositions with an attorney;
7. Preparation of transactional documents;
8. Attendance at real estate closings;
9. Administration of estates, including preparation of death tax returns; and
10. Preparation and maintenance of the documents required for the formation of business entities.

WHAT TASKS ARE PARALEGALS PROHIBITED FROM PERFORMING?

1. A paralegal cannot set legal fees;
2. A paralegal cannot contract to provide legal services to the public;
3. A paralegal cannot represent a client in court;
4. A paralegal cannot render legal opinions;
5. A paralegal shall not engage in the unauthorized practice of law and shall not encourage or contribute to any act which could constitute the unauthorized practice of law.

WHAT ARE OUR PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS?

A paralegal's conduct is guided by the rules of professional conduct for lawyers. Many paralegal associations have adopted their own rules or code of ethics.

A paralegal shall achieve competency through training, work experience and continuing education and shall keep informed of current legal, technical and general developments. Continuing legal education courses are sponsored by various bar associations, paralegal associations and educational institutions.

The Keystone Alliance has adopted Educational Standards and Professional Responsibility Guidelines for paralegals in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A copy may be obtained by contacting any member association.

HOW DO I BECOME A PARALEGAL?

One may become a paralegal through on the job training, specialized paralegal education, a post-graduate degree, or a combination thereof.

Currently, voluntary certification programs for paralegals are available through national paralegal organizations.

One may contact a local paralegal association for information on educational opportunities as well as educational requirements of the employers in that area.