

SMCBA LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)



What is the Lawyer Referral Service Program?

The SMCBA's Lawyer Referral Service is a State Bar of California certified program (Certificate 0039). We provide callers with a referral to a qualified lawyer. The LRS Program determines the legal area of the problem described by the caller and provides a referral to a proper lawyer or agency.

Why should I participate in the Lawyer Referral Service Program?

The LRS Program handles over 7,000 calls per year. Approximately 1,500 of those calls turn into referrals to attorneys from the LRS Program. In the recent years, participating attorneys have collectively earned over \$1,00,000 in attorney fees.

I just started my own practice; will I be able to participate in the LRS Program?

Yes! This is the perfect way for you to build your practice. The LRS Program even has a general practice panel designed for attorneys without much experience. You'll grow your practice and develop new skills. When the time comes, you can apply for more experienced panels to provide services based upon the experience you've gained.

I do not have an office in San Mateo County, can I join?

Yes! To join the LRS Program you must certify that at least 25% of professional time and practice is devoted to and in the geographical service area (defined as all of the County of San Mateo and the County of Santa Clara).

How much will it cost me to join the LRS Program?

You can join the LRS Program for as little as \$75 a year. The enrollment fee is \$65 which is paid yearly, and panels are \$10 each.

What is the time commitment?

The LRS Program does most of the upfront work. We advertise the program, collect the client's contact information, brief description of their legal matter, and provide them with the attorneys' contact information so that they can schedule their consultation appointments.

All you have to do is schedule an appointment with the client and interview them for up to 30 minutes. During the consultation you will determine whether you want to represent them or provide additional services. If so, you will arrange directly with the client.

What happens if the client hires me?

That's great! You will perform your work as their counsel and when the client pays you, you pay 15% of the total amount collected to the LRS Program.

Do you require malpractice insurance?

Yes. The LRS Program requires that attorneys be covered by a policy of errors and omissions insurance of at least \$100,000 for a single occurrence and \$300,00 aggregate per year.