

NALA Membership Application



THE ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ASSISTANTS • PARALEGALS

Qualifications (NALA Bylaws Article III)

Active Membership

Active membership is open to all individuals who meet at least one of the following requirements. This is the only membership classification which carries full voting privileges. Active members are also the only NALA members who may serve as association officers, members of the Board of Directors, or committee chairs.

1. An individual who has successfully completed the Certified Paralegal (CP) Examination of NALA, or
2. An individual who has graduated from an ABA approved program of study for paralegals, or
3. An individual who has graduated from a course of study for paralegals which is institutionally accredited but not ABA approved, and which requires not less than the equivalent of 60 semester hours of classroom study, or
4. An individual who has graduated from a course of study for paralegals other than those set forth in 2 and 3 above, plus not less than six months of in-house training as a paralegal, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal, or
5. An individual who has received a baccalaureate degree in any field, plus not less than six months in-house training as a paralegal whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal, or
6. An individual who has a minimum of three years of law related experience under the supervision of an attorney, including at least six months of in-house training as a paralegal, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal, or
7. An individual who has a minimum of two years of in-house training as a paralegal, whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal.

Associate Membership

Associate membership is open to individuals who meet at least one of the following qualifications:

1. Those members of bar associations endorsing the paralegal concept or involved in the promotion of the paralegal profession, or
2. Those members of the educational field endorsing the paralegal concept or involved in the promotion of the paralegal profession, or
3. Those persons directly involved in the supervision of paralegals.

Student Membership

Student membership is open to individuals who are a full time students in good standing at any college, community college or other school pursuing a course of study as a paralegal. A full time student shall be defined as one enrolled for a

minimum of 12 semester hours or equivalent hours, or who is taking all paralegal courses offered, provided the individual is not employed as a paralegal.

Sustaining Membership

Sustaining membership is available to individuals, law firms, corporations and paralegal program representatives who endorse the paralegal concept or are actively involved in the promotion of the paralegal profession and who contribute dues of \$70 or any amount in excess thereof.

Membership Dues

First year's dues and initiation fee must accompany the application form. Thereafter, dues are billed annually and you will receive your first bill one year after being admitted to membership. For the year ending April 30, 2012, annual dues are:

- Active Members:** \$125
(20% Discount for active military or active military reserve)
- Associate Members:** \$100
- Student Members:** \$50, 2 years, first year free
- Sustaining Members:** \$70 minimum

Contributions or gifts to the NALA, Inc., are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, payments may qualify as ordinary and necessary business expense.

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.



**THE ASSOCIATION OF
LEGAL ASSISTANTS • PARALEGALS**

Method of Payment

Annual Membership Dues: Active \$125, \$100 for active military or active military reserve; Associate \$100; Student \$50 (2 years); Sustaining \$70 minimum

Applications must be accompanied by a **non-refundable \$15 initiation fee**. This fee is waived for members of NALA affiliated associations or for those who have successfully completed the Certified Paralegal certification examination.

I hereby apply for the following membership in NALA: Active Associate Student Sustaining

Check Enclosed, payable to NALA, in the amount of \$ _____

Charge to VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Amount _____ Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Name as appears on the card: _____ Signature: _____

Are you a member of a NALA Affiliated Association? Yes No Name of Association: _____

Membership Application – Part 1

Please complete the information below. This is required of all applicants for NALA membership. For Part 2 of the form, please complete the section related to the class of membership for which you are applying.

Preferred Address: Home Office

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Home Address _____

Home City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Employer's Name _____

Employer's Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Office Phone/Fax _____

Preferred E-Mail _____ Alternate E-mail address _____

I agree to be bound by the *Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility* and the bylaws as adopted by NALA. I further understand that this application is subject to approval by NALA.

Date _____ Signature _____

In accordance with Articles 3.7 and 3.22 of the NALA bylaws, individuals who have been convicted of a felony are not eligible for membership in NALA.

How did you become acquainted with NALA? _____

Student Membership – Part 2

This information and attestation is required to complete the application for Student membership in NALA.
(*The School Program Director or an Instructor should complete this form*)

School Attestation

I hereby attest that _____, an applicant for student membership in NALA, is currently enrolled in the paralegal course at and, to my knowledge, is not employed as a paralegal.

Length of Paralegal Training Program _____ Expected Date of Graduation _____

School _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name of Program Director or Instructor _____ Title _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Active Membership Application – Part 2

This information and attestation is required to complete the application for Active membership in NALA.

Background Information

How long have you been employed as a paralegal? _____ Total years legal experience: _____

Formal or specialized education (*name and address of school*) or training for present position _____

Date of graduation _____ If Certified Paralegal Date certified _____ If ACP (*Advanced Certified Paralegal*) Date certified _____

Check the most appropriate description of your employer:

- Law department; nonprofit organization
- Judicial agency; court; government
- Corporate law department

Private law office consisting of:

- _____ number of attorneys
- _____ number of paralegals
- _____ number of nonlegal personnel

Specialty area of work, if applicable: _____

Circle which qualification for active membership you are applying under (*See front of the form*) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Attorney/Employer Attestation

(*Note: This section must be completed by all applicants qualifying under requirements number 4, 5, 6 and 7.*)

I hereby attest that _____ is employed by me and meets the qualifications for active membership in NALA as listed under active membership requirement number _____.

Date _____

Name of attorney/employer (*please print*) _____

Signature _____

Associate and Sustaining Membership Application – Part 2

This information is required to complete the application for Associate or Sustaining membership.

Check the categories that apply:

Associate Membership:

- Attorney Paralegal Educator Paralegal Supervisor

Sustaining Membership:

- Company or law firm membership (*If company membership, be sure the contact person is listed in Part 1*)
- Paralegal Supervisor Individual member



**THE ASSOCIATION OF
LEGAL ASSISTANTS • PARALEGALS**