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NFPA News



NATIONAL
FEDERATION
of
PARALEGAL
ASSOCIATIONS Inc.



NFPA 2014 Annual
Convention in Dallas,
Texas. Convention
dates are October 9-12,
2014. Registration
opens July 1, 2014.

See NFPA's website for more
details.
www.paralegal.org



One Small Step for Paralegals

By Patt Tharpe, Vice President CCPA
and NFPA Primary Delegate

Earlier this year, a member of the Central Connecticut Paralegal Association, Inc. (CCPA) Board was approached by a CCPA member with regard to issues she had experienced while assisting at trial in the Connecticut District Court. The Connecticut District Court has a Cell Phone Policy listing which individuals are permitted to carry cell phones with them into the courtrooms; sadly, paralegals were not on the list (big surprise there!). Although some of the court deputies are reasonable, a few of them are sticklers, and our member was not permitted to carry her cell phone with her, resulting in an interruption in court proceedings because of her inability to be in contact with her office.

This issue came up several years ago in the Connecticut Superior Courts (state trial courts), which at that time had a very similar cell phone policy. We approached our then Attorney General, Richard Blumenthal about the issue; as a big supporter of paralegals and the paralegal profession, Mr. Blumenthal was happy to approach the court administrators for us, and the policy was changed.

This time around, CCPA, in conjunction with the New Haven County Association of Paralegals, Inc., and the Connecticut Association of Paralegals, Inc., (comprising the membership of the Connecticut Alliance), came up with a suggested change to the Connecticut District Court Cell Phone Policy, and forwarded a request for the change directly to the Honorable Janet C. Hall, Chief Judge of the District of Connecticut.

The response, "I am pleased to advise you that paralegals and litigation support personnel will be allowed to bring cell phones into the courthouse to assist counsel of record..." according to a letter dated May 8, 2014 from Judge Hall. The letter goes on to say that the District of Connecticut Cellular Telephone Policy will be updated shortly to reflect the changes.

Chalk one up for Para Power!!!

Submission for Scholarships and Awards for NFPA Annual Convention

Join other paralegals in a celebration of excellence in our profession. At the Annual Convention and Policy Meeting, we will be recognizing the outstanding achievements of individuals and associations that have made a significant contribution to the paralegal profession. Scholarships to be used to pursue a paralegal education will also be awarded. Submissions for scholarships and awards must be postmarked by July 1, 2014



Interested in PCCE or PACE Credentials?

The Next API PCCE and AIPS PACE Review Course Begin July 14, 2014. To Learn More Visit NFPA's Website. www.paralegal.org

Become a NFPA Member. Member benefits include discounts on NFPA National Convention rates, annual joint conferences rates and a subscription to the National Paralegal Reporter Magazine, as well as preferred rates at several retailers and websites.

Article Suggestions? New ideas?



Please send information to Suzanne Sitter, NFPA Editorial Coordinator editorial@paralegals.org

The 8 Best Things about Being a Paralegal

By: Sally Kane, About.Com Legal Careers

- 1. Rising Pay:** Paralegal compensation has risen steadily in the past decade, despite a bump in the road in the depths of the 2009-2010 recession.
- 2. Explosive Employment Outlook:** The paralegal field is one of the fastest-growing professions on the globe. The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts the employment of paralegals and legal assistants to grow 28 percent between 2008 and 2018, much faster than the average for all occupations.
- 3. Easy Career Entry:** Lawyers must complete seven years of formal education and pass the bar exam to practice law. Paralegals can obtain a paralegal certificate or degree through a variety of online programs.
- 4. Intellectual Challenge:** Paralegal work is intellectually challenging and involves a range of high-level skills. The most successful paralegals are problem-solvers and innovative thinkers. Paralegals must become subject matter experts in their specialty area and master legal procedure, research, drafting and other skills. They must stay on top of ever-changing laws and new legal trends.
- 5. Rising Prestige:** As paralegals perform more complex and challenging work, paralegal prestige is rising. Paralegals are no longer simply lawyer's assistants; they are assuming management roles in corporations, leadership roles in law firms and entrepreneurial roles.
- 6. Opportunity to Help Others:** A career as a paralegal offers a unique opportunity to help others. These opportunities vary, depending on the paralegal's practice area. For example intellectual property paralegals help clients patent and protect their unique ideas. Paralegals also can provide Pro Bono work.
- 7. Client Contact:** Paralegals have the ability to work directly with clients and assist them often through a challenging process.
- 8. Shifting Legal Structure:** In the past several years, the legal industry has seen a radical shift in the way legal services are delivered. Lawyers no longer have a monopoly on the law. New laws are opening doors for paralegals to perform a wider range of tasks than ever before, such as representing clients in certain administrative hearings.

Editor's Note: This article has been abbreviated. You can read it in its entirety at: <http://legalcareers.about.com/od/legalcareerbasics/tp/The-8-Best-Things-About-Being-A-Paralegal.htm>

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