



NATIONAL
FEDERATION
of
PARALEGAL
ASSOCIATIONS Inc.

January 11, 2008

The Hon. R. Fred Lewis
Chief Justice, Florida Supreme Court
500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1925

RE: Opinion No. SC06-1622
Amendments to the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Florida
Registered Paralegal Program

Dear Chief Justice Lewis:

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (“NFPA”)® is a professional organization founded in 1974 as the first national paralegal association. Created as a non-profit federation, NFPA is an issues-driven, policy-oriented professional association directed by its membership. It is comprised of 50 paralegal associations located in 31 states, including the Tampa Bay Paralegal Association in Florida, and represents approximately 11,000 individual members. NFPA promotes a global presence for the paralegal profession and leadership in the legal community. Its core purpose is to advance the paralegal profession.

In 1994, the membership directed NFPA to create an exam to test the competency level of experienced paralegals. The exam that was developed is the Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (“PACE”)®. PACE is offered to paralegals with a minimum of two years’ experience who meet specific educational requirements. When a paralegal successfully passes PACE, he/she is able to use the credential “PACE Registered Paralegal”® or “RP”®. In order to maintain the credential, paralegals are required to provide proof of 12 hours in continuing legal education, including at least one hour in ethics, every two (2) years.

As a part of NFPA’s commitment to PACE, NFPA has secured registrations for the following designations from the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

1. PACE, United States Trademark Registration No. 2,564,862 registered April 30, 2002;

Please Reply to:

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2. PACE Registered Paralegal, United States Trademark Registration No. 2,685,535 registered February 11, 2003; and
3. RP, United States Trademark Registration No. 2,397,396 registered on October 24, 2000.

NFPA believes that paralegals can and should play an integral role in the delivery of cost-effective legal and law-related services. To that end, NFPA commends the Florida Registered Paralegal Program in that it establishes minimum criteria by which a paralegal may be recognized as a Florida Registered Paralegal, including the requirement to abide by an established code of ethics, and for its recognition of PACE as one method for becoming a Florida Registered Paralegal.

In reviewing the Florida Registered Paralegal Program, it has come to our attention that there is no specific reference to how a Florida Registered Paralegal is to refer to him/herself (although it does seem to be inferred). Consequently, in order to avoid any infringement upon the NFPA RP trademark, NFPA proposes that an individual meeting the requirements of the Florida Registered Paralegal program be required to refer to him/herself as "Florida Registered Paralegal" and/or "FRP."

In addition, our members in the State of Florida have expressed concern regarding the status of their PACE Registered Paralegal (RP) credential once the Rule goes into effect for the reason that there is no specific language in the Rule addressing that concern. To that end, NFPA proposes that any PACE Registered Paralegal (RP) who becomes a Florida Registered Paralegal be entitled to use both credentials in conjunction with his/her name.

Sincerely,

National Federation of Paralegal Associations



Anita G. Haworth, RP
PACE Registered Paralegal
NFPA President

NFPA—The Leader of the Paralegal Profession™

cc: Cindy L. Byfield, NFPA Managing Director
Leslie H. Matthews, CLA, President, Tampa Bay Paralegal Association
Lori Holcomb, UPL Counsel, The Florida Bar