

Frequently Asked Questions About Hiring an Attorney

Answers to common questions about choosing and working with legal counsel.

Based on Frequently Asked Questions by McCormick and Murphy

Q: What is the first step when I need to hire an attorney?

A: The first step is to identify your legal issue and then determine if you need an attorney. If you do, research attorneys who specialize in your area of law. Look for experience and a good track record.

Q: How do I know if I need an attorney?

A: You may need an attorney if you are facing a legal dispute, need to understand complex legal documents, or are involved in a situation with significant legal implications. Consulting with a legal professional can help clarify your needs.

Q: Where can I find a good attorney?

A: You can find a good attorney through referrals from friends, family, or other legal professionals. Online directories, bar associations, and law firm websites are also valuable resources for research.

Q: What should I look for in an attorney?

A: Look for an attorney with experience in the specific area of law relevant to your case. Consider their communication style, track record, client reviews, and the firm's overall reputation.

Q: How much does it cost to hire an attorney?

A: Attorney fees vary widely depending on the complexity of the case, the attorney's experience, and the billing structure (hourly, contingency, flat fee). It's important to discuss fees upfront.

Q: What are the different ways attorneys charge for their services?

A: Common billing structures include hourly rates, contingency fees (where the attorney gets a percentage of the settlement or award), and flat fees for specific services. Some may also require a retainer.

Q: Should I discuss fees before hiring an attorney?

A: Yes, absolutely. It is crucial to have a clear understanding of the attorney's fee structure, potential costs, and payment terms before you agree to hire them.

Q: What information should I prepare before meeting an attorney?

A: Gather all relevant documents, a timeline of events, and a list of questions you have. Be prepared to explain your situation clearly and concisely.

Q: How important is communication with my attorney?

A: Communication is vital. You should feel comfortable discussing your case, asking questions, and receiving timely updates. A good attorney will keep you informed about your case's progress.

Q: What is attorney-client privilege?

A: Attorney-client privilege is a legal rule that protects confidential communications between you and your attorney. This ensures you can speak freely and honestly without fear of disclosure.

Q: Can I change attorneys if I'm not satisfied?

A: Yes, you generally have the right to change attorneys. Discuss your concerns with your current attorney and understand the implications regarding fees and case transfer.

Q: What happens after I hire an attorney?

A: After hiring an attorney, they will begin working on your case, which may involve investigation, legal research, drafting documents, and communication with opposing parties or the court.

Resources & Further Reading

Related guides for these FAQs:

■ Hiring an Attorney FAQs (Infographic)

<https://storage.googleapis.com/mccormick-and-murphy-checklists-20260710-3eaad2/mccormick-and-murphy/Infographic/frequently-asked-questions-infographic.pdf>

■ McCormick & Murphy Attorney Hiring FAQs (Comparison)

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Choosing the right legal representation is a critical step in navigating legal matters.