

HIRING A LAWYER

Not sure whether you need a lawyer? Do you have questions about how to even go about finding one? Here are some matters you should consider in hiring a lawyer and in managing the relationship with your lawyer.

Decide What Type of Lawyer You Need

First, it's important to realize that different lawyers they focus on specific areas – they're specialized. You wouldn't want to hire a family law attorney to represent you in bankruptcy court. So it's important to think about your problem and consider what type of lawyer may be able to help.

Some common legal issues that lawyers specialize in are:

- Personal Injury
- Family Law
- Probate/Estates
- Criminal
- Business Disputes:
- Landlord/Tenant and Property
- Bankruptcy

If you're not sure what lawyer you need, try searching the internet for "what kind of lawyer can help with (insert problem)?".

How to Find a Lawyer

First, ask your friends and family if they know a lawyer they would recommend. As with hiring any other professional, a referral lets you know someone you trust had a good experience with the lawyer.

Next, consider contacting your local bar association. A bar association is where lawyers gather to network and attend continuing education courses. Your local bar association will know which lawyers are in your area and what type of work they do.

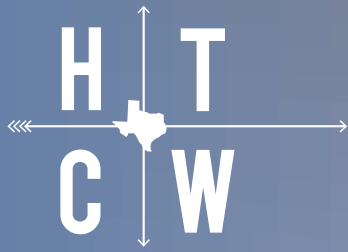
Then, consider looking at the website for the [State Bar of Texas](#), where every lawyer in Texas is registered. There's even a [special section of the website](#) to help you locate lawyers.

Working With Your Lawyer and the Disciplinary Rules

Lawyers are professionals who are regulated by the State Bar of Texas, and they must follow the [Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct](#).

Generally, a lawyer may not represent someone if doing so creates a "conflict of interest". Meaning, if representing you in your matter would be against the interest of another client of that lawyer, the lawyer cannot accept representation of you. This means a lawyer generally cannot represent two parties on opposite sides of litigation, or who are negotiating a contract with each other. However, a lawyer may be able to represent parties who have a conflict of interest if the lawyer obtains written informed consent.

Many other of these rules, sometimes called "ethics rules", govern the relationship with your lawyer. The Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct for lawyers is available [online](#). You should review the rules to understand how your lawyer should represent you.



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Working With Your Lawyer and the Grievance Oversight Committee (GOC)

If you have a problem with your lawyer, you may consider visiting the [State Bar of Texas](#) website to see what options are available to you. In addition to these resources, The Supreme Court of Texas utilizes The Grievance Oversight Committee to continually monitor and improve the attorney grievance process to implement the best practices for both attorneys and their clients.

This committee is responsible for reviewing the Texas lawyer disciplinary system and providing feedback to the Texas Supreme Court. The committee is composed of nine members who are appointed by the Court. The Grievance Oversight Committee is a body that is independent in nature. While it is not a participant in the grievance process itself, 3 of the 9 members should be members of the State Bar of Texas.

The purpose of the Grievance Oversight Committee is "to assist the Supreme Court in its constitutional and statutory responsibility for the lawyer discipline system." The Grievance Oversight Committee provides the Supreme Court with its observations of the disciplinary system and makes recommendations that may improve the system.

The Grievance Oversight Committee does not oversee or interact in grievances or complaints. In essence, the sole function of the Grievance Oversight Committee is to assist the Supreme Court by providing this oversight of the attorney-client disciplinary process and providing information as to what issues may exist about the attorney-client grievance process.

The Grievance Oversight Committee prepares a biennial report which is available online for public viewing. The report provides a background of activities, general observations, and further recommendations on the disciplinary system for the Supreme Court.

While the Grievance Oversight Committee does not directly control or interact in the grievance processes, it does provide valuable insight on both the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure. The rules of professional conduct define what is proper conduct within the practice of law in Texas. The Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure provide information on how to process, investigate, and prosecute grievances. The Grievance Oversight Committee reports date back to 2007 and are available for review at www.txgoc.com.

Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 1.06.

Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 1.06(c).

See Order of the Supreme Court of Texas, Reconstituting the Grievance Oversight Committee, Misc. Docket No. 06-9060 (June 26, 1996).

See Order of the Supreme Court of Texas, Grievance Oversight Committee, Misc. Docket No. 97-9066 (April 2, 1997).

Links to GOC biennial reports as well as other information can be found at www.txgoc.com.