



PACO NEWSFLASH

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August 2006

BYLAWS COMMITTEE NEWS

By Nell Chambers, Parliamentarian

The Bylaws Committee recently met to discuss revisions of PACO's Amended Code of Regulations. The Committee will soon be distributing to the membership a bullet point list of issues to be addressed. We will then invite the membership to a meeting to discuss these issues. We encourage anyone who would like to be part of the Committee to join now. Please contact Nell Chambers at parliamentarian@pacoparalegals.org for more information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 8, 2006: 5:30 p.m.

Board Meeting
Location- Jones Day
Contact: president@pacoparalegals.org

August 10, 2006: 5:30 p.m.

Membership Committee Meeting
Location- King Avenue 5
Contact: membership@pacoparalegals.org

September 12, 2006: 5:30 p.m.

Board Meeting
Location- Jones Day
Contact: president@pacoparalegals.org

September 18, 2006: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting
Location- Columbus Bar Association
Contact: program@pacoparalegals.org

September 27, 2006: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

High Noon at the Bar
Topic- Paper to Electronic Indexing: How to Save Time, Money and Paper Cuts
Presented by- Chris Yost, CliCKS Document Management
A must for litigation, corporate and real estate paralegals!
Location- Columbus Bar Association
Contact: cle@pacoparalegals.org

October 10, 2006: 5:30 p.m.

Board Meeting
Location- Jones Day
Contact: president@pacoparalegals.org

October 16, 2006: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting
Location- Columbus Bar Association
Contact: program@pacoparalegals.org

October 25, 2006: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

High Noon at the Bar
Topic- The Business and Legal Internet- Save Time with the Right Tools
Presented by- Nell Chambers, Schottenstein Zox & Dunn and Jim Meaney, Desk Runner
Location- Columbus Bar Association
Contact: cle@pacoparalegals.org

November 15, 2006: 12:00-1:00

High Noon at the Bar
Topic- TBA
Presented by- Larry Kotterman, ProFile Imaging
Location- Columbus Bar Association
Contact: cle@pacoparalegals.org

OSBA ESTABLISHES CREDENTIALING PROGRAM FOR PARALEGALS

By Barry Kiser, Statewide Representative

Some of you may have already heard that the OSBA has established a credentialing program for paralegals in Ohio. It is planned to have applications available after January 1, 2007 for paralegals to apply to take the written examination to become an "OSBA Certified Paralegal".

To be eligible to sit for the written examination a paralegal must meet the definition of a paralegal, which is given as, "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 and who performs substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible."

Applicants must also meet education/experience, CLE and reference requirements. The applicant must have completed one of one of the following combinations of years of education and experience:

1. A bachelor's degree in any discipline and satisfactory completion of a paralegal studies program and a minimum of one year full-time experience as a practicing paralegal (or its equivalent 2,000 hours); or
2. A bachelor's degree in any discipline or associate degree in paralegal studies with a minimum of three years full-time experience as a practicing paralegal (or its equivalent of 6,000 hours), or
3. Satisfactory completion of a paralegal studies program with a minimum of five years full-time experience as a practicing paralegal (or its equivalent of 10,000 hours), or
4. A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven years full time experience as a practicing paralegal (or its equivalent of 14,000 hours). To be eligible under this section, an applicant must have been employed as a paralegal before Dec. 31, 2006.

For purposes of this section, the OSBA defines "paralegal studies" as a program that consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours (or equivalent clock or quarter hours) of which at least 15 semester hours (or equivalent clock or quarter hours) are substantive legal courses.

The applicant must also have attendance at a minimum of twelve credit hours of CLE courses in the three years immediately preceding their application. Two and a half hours of the twelve hours must be in legal ethics, professionalism and substance abuse.

Lastly, the applicant must submit a minimum of three professional references, of which two must be from attorneys in good standing with the OSBA.

After all of the above requirements are met and the application submitted, the paralegal must pass a written examination. The areas to be tested are not finalized yet but will likely include legal research and writing, ethics, communication, computer knowledge, law office management and substantive areas of law.

Certified paralegals will have to maintain CLE requirements with biennial reporting to a yet to be established OSBA Paralegal Certification Board. We will have further details in the Fall Citorator and will keep you updated as this exciting program takes shape. You may also check out the OSBA website at www.ohiobar.org for more details.

Some of the information in this article originally appeared in an Ohio State Bar Association Press Release.