



PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OHIO

P.O. Box 1582
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www.pacoparalegals.org

What is a paralegal?

A paralegal is a person, qualified through education, training, or work experience to perform substantive legal work that requires knowledge of legal concepts and is customarily, but not exclusively, performed by a lawyer. This person may be retained or employed by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency or other entity or may be authorized by administrative, statutory or court authority to perform this work.

Understanding the Nature of Paralegal Training & Work

Paralegals are trained in several ways. Many of the first paralegals received their jobs based on work experience or “on-the-job training.” Some community colleges offer associate’s degrees in paralegal studies, or undergraduate paralegal certificates. Other colleges offer a bachelor’s degree in paralegal studies or post-baccalaureate certificates. Some of these schools have received approval from the American Bar Association (ABA), provided that their curricula and other requirements meet the ABA’s standards. A bachelor’s degree is a definite asset and formal training is encouraged as the number of applicants for paralegal positions is increasing dramatically.

Paralegal Association of Central Ohio (PACO)

PACO is a professional association of approximately 300 paralegals in the Central Ohio area. The organization strives to:

- promote the interest of paralegals;
- develop more qualified individuals to enter the profession;
- serve as a network for practicing paralegals;
- promote paralegal awareness in the community; and
- serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of issues facing the profession.

PACO members participate in:

- monthly general membership meetings;
- continuing legal education seminars;
- brown bag luncheons on various legal topics of interest to the paralegal profession;

- mentoring program;
- pro bono activities; and
- social and informative events throughout Central Ohio.

Membership Benefits

PACO is always on the lookout for new paralegal members interested in promoting and supporting our chosen profession. One of the ways paralegals can accomplish this is by membership in the only professional association in central Ohio solely devoted to serving the needs and interests of paralegals.

Members of PACO automatically become members of the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA) and associate members of the Columbus Bar Association (CBA).

Some of the benefits of membership in PACO include:

- Paralegal continuing education seminars;
- Free subscriptions to the National Paralegal Reporter, a publication of the NFPA, Columbus Bar Lawyers Quarterly, a Columbus Bar Association publication, and the Friday edition of central Ohio's legal publication, The Daily Reporter;
- Networking opportunities and social events;
- Job placement services;
- Presentations by distinguished speakers on topics of interest to paralegals;
- Public relations outreach activities; and
- Discounts on office products, entertainment, fitness clubs, banking, eye care, health insurance, and a host of other products and services.

Membership Categories

- **PACO Active Member** – those employed in a paralegal/legal assistant capacity under the supervision of an attorney (right to vote and hold office, may chair and serve on committees) and concurrent **Columbus Bar Associate Member** (non-voting)
- **PACO Associate Member** – those not currently employed as a paralegal/legal assistant or not designated as such by their employer, or those employed in an allied profession (non-voting, may not hold office, but can serve on committees) and concurrent **Columbus Bar Associate Member** (non-voting)
- **PACO Student Member** – presently enrolled in a paralegal/legal assistant course of study provided by an accredited or approved institution or using an equivalent curriculum (special student rate; non-voting, may not hold office, but can serve on committees) and concurrent **Columbus Bar Associate Member** (non-voting)
- **Sustaining Member** – those interested in supporting the purposes and objectives of PACO and are not currently employed in a paralegal/legal capacity (non-voting; cannot hold office or serve on committees; see separate brochure and application)

Contact Information

For additional information, please contact the PACO Membership Director at membership@pacoparalegals.org or download the application from our website at www.pacoparalegals.org.