

Legal Resources

Legal issues and questions can be complicated. This section is intended to guide you on the journey of finding competent and appropriate legal representation.

Why Do You Want a Lawyer?

Lawyers can assist you with:

- Obtaining reasonable compensation from the person or company responsible for your injury.
- Determining eligibility for, securing and maintaining government benefits.
- Determining eligibility for, securing and maintaining Workers' Compensation benefits.
- Securing maximum benefits from insurance policies.
- Ending discrimination against a person with a brain injury.
- Estate planning, including trust funds, wills, power of attorney, and legal guardianship.

What if You Can't Afford a Lawyer?

In most personal injury cases, you should be able to retain competent legal assistance regardless of your own economic situation by using a contingent fee agreement to retain an attorney. This means that you do not pay the attorney any money until the case is successfully resolved. Once the case is resolved the attorney takes a certain percentage of the recovery.

How Do You Pick a Good Lawyer?

- **Identify Your Issues:** The first thing is to remember that lawyers, like doctors, generally specialize in a particular area. For example, an attorney who is an expert in estate planning may not be competent to handle a personal injury case. You should select an attorney with the skills and experience to meet your specific legal issues.
- **Interview Different Lawyers:** After you have identified the areas in which you need assistance, find at least three lawyers or law firms. It is your right and responsibility to ask potential lawyers about their background and experience. Questions to ask may include:
 - How many brain injury cases like mine have you handled? What were the results?
 - What training have you received to handle brain injury cases?

- What kind of experience do you have selecting, retaining, and working with expert witnesses? How would you use expert witnesses in my case?
- What knowledge do you have of government benefits for persons with brain injury? Can you structure the settlement so that I will not lose eligibility for government benefits?
- Can you provide the names and telephone numbers of three individuals as references who had situations similar to mine?

Call References: You should contact the references that the lawyer gives you and ask them if they were satisfied with the lawyer's performance. Was she or he prompt? Helpful? Understanding? Successful?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees that individuals with disabilities receive equal opportunities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

To find a comprehensive list of Trial Lawyers in your area, visit the NC Advocates for Justice on their website at www.ncaj.com.