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HOW TO Select a Personal Injury Lawyer

You have been injured in an accident and now need to select a lawyer to represent you. Selecting the right lawyer is not as easy as you might think. The lawyer you select may be helping you recover money to pay medical bills, replace lost income, and compensate you for pain and suffering resulting from your accident. This is a very important decision and should be treated as one. Below are some factors that you should consider:

Referrals

The first thing you will realize is that everyone knows someone who is willing to handle your case, especially if it is a good one. However, do not take the word of just anybody, especially not the helpful person who shows up at the scene of the accident with an attorney's card. Aside from the fact that this conduct could violate serious ethical rules, an attorney who has to get cases in that fashion is not an attorney you want handling your case.

Finding someone who was satisfied with the representation he or she received in a prior personal injury case is a good person with whom to talk. Another good referral source could be your doctor. Most doctors have treated patients injured in accidents, and therefore have been involved in litigation. Thus, your doctor may be able to give you valuable insight about the skills of certain attorneys. If you have not been given any

where the attorneys have to meet certain requirements to be placed on the panel.

Experience of the Attorney

Once you have the name of an attorney you want to contact, do some research on that attorney. Make sure the attorney handles solely personal injury cases. Many attorneys who practice in other areas think that personal injury cases are simple, and consider them easy money. Therefore, even though they have very little experience



in this area and would not be able to take the case to trial if necessary, they find it difficult to turn such cases down. Ask the attorney directly if he or she specializes only in personal injury cases.

Initial Consultation

Make sure you are comfortable with the attorney during your initial consultation. Make sure he or she is willing to answer all of your questions and to spend as much time with you as necessary to make you feel comfortable. Also, be sure to listen carefully to what the attorney tells you during this first meeting. An honest and credible attorney cannot predict how much your case is worth just a week after your accident when your medical condition is not yet stabilized. So avoid the attorney who promises you big money for your case at that first meeting!

How-To Tips

- ✓ When selecting an attorney, do not take the word of just anybody, especially not the helpful person who shows up at the scene of the accident with an attorney's card.
- ✓ Finding someone who was satisfied with the representation he or she received in a prior personal injury case is a good person with whom to talk.
- ✓ If you have not been given any suggestions on whom to contact, then contacting a local bar association might be a good idea.
- ✓ Once you have the name of an attorney you want to contact, do some research on that attorney.
- ✓ Ask the attorney directly if he or she specializes only in personal injury cases.

you valuable insight about the skills of certain attorneys. If you have not been given any suggestions on whom to contact, then contacting a local bar association might be a good idea. The San Fernando Valley Bar Association has a referral service program

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For more information, call Lewitt, Hackman, Shapiro, Marshall & Harlan, A Law Corporation, at (818) 990-2120.



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