

2017 Birmingham Bar Association LawyerConnect Rules and Regulations

1. **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the LawyerConnect service (LC) is to provide a public service to the Birmingham community by referring consumers with legal matters to Birmingham Bar members who join LawyerConnect.

2. **LC MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY OF PANEL MEMBERS:**

LawyerConnect membership is open to the first 100 Birmingham Bar members to submit an application along with the \$150.00 annual membership fee.

Upon application from an attorney whose membership dues with the Birmingham Bar Association are current, LawyerConnect membership will be approved for member attorneys providing they:

- (a) Are currently registered by the Alabama Supreme Court. Registration must remain in force without lapse;
- (b) Are engaged in the full time private practice of law, apart from any activity which proposes a conflict of interest or makes the member inaccessible to clients during normal business hours;
- (c) Maintain current active membership within the Birmingham Bar Association;
- (d) Personally certify competency in areas of law in which clients will be accepted, and/or designate areas of law in which clients will not be accepted;
- (e) Abide by all rules and regulations promulgated by the Birmingham Bar Association LawyerConnect service and the Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct, as amended;
- (f) Have not been disciplined by the Alabama State Bar within the past three years;
- (g) Abide by a final determination of the Birmingham Bar Association Fee Arbitration Committee in the event of any dispute over fees arising between the attorney and the referred client;
- (h) Maintain professional liability insurance; and
- (i) Are among the first 100 current Birmingham Bar members to apply.

3. **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE:**

The annual LawyerConnect membership fee is determined by the Birmingham Bar Association, of which a portion is reserved to advertise LawyerConnect to the public and expand the reach of the service. All fees are non-refundable, except upon written request and as approved by the Birmingham Bar Association. Membership dues will not be pro-rated, and membership runs from May 1 to April 30 each year.

4. REFERRAL INTERVIEW:

Potential clients referred to a LawyerConnect attorney must be interviewed by that attorney, or by an associate or firm member under the direct supervision of that attorney. The referred attorney will negotiate any consultation or representation fee directly with the prospective client.

5. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES:

LawyerConnect members shall notify the Birmingham Bar Association in writing of any changes in contact information, insurance information, and/or any changes to practice category information.

6. PANEL MEMBERSHIP SUSPENSION, DENIAL:

- (a) Suspension: The Executive Director of the Birmingham Bar Association may suspend any LawyerConnect member for any violation of the rules and regulations contained herein. Any such suspension shall be informal, need not be in writing, and shall exist for a period of no more than sixty days. Any suspended panel member's status shall not be jeopardized by such action except that referrals will not be made during said suspension. The Executive Director may extend the period of suspension.
- (b) Special Powers: The Executive Director shall have the authority to deny membership to any applicant deemed to have failed to comply with any rule or regulation as set forth herein.

7. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

After action by the Executive Director, as indicated in 6(a) or (b), above, or if any LawyerConnect member makes claim against the LawyerConnect program for any reason, and a resolution cannot be reached, then upon written demand of either, the matter at issue shall be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Birmingham Bar Association.

8. OTHER AUTHORITY:

Nothing herein shall be construed to infringe, and shall not infringe, upon the authority exercised, and retained, by the Supreme Court of Alabama.

Revised 4/14/2017