



What Kind of Am I Getting for My Buck with the LRS?

**By Renee Avery,
LRS secretary**

Why join the Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral Service? What can I expect for my investment? What can the LRS do for me that I can't do myself? How many calls will I have to take before I get an actual client? What kind of client needs to call for a referral? Are the clients that call wanting a free attorney? These are some of the questions asked by attorneys. We have the answers.

Every attorney from the solo practitioner to the partner in the big firm could benefit from the LRS program. Last year, the Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral Service received over 9,000 callers requesting a referral. Of these 9,000 calls, approximately 7,000 received a referral.

All callers are first screened by LRS staff before a referral is made to an attorney.

- The LRS provides fast, efficient referrals via a specially modified database system.
- Referrals are made using criteria based on area of law and geographic preferences to provide a mutually beneficial match to both the attorney and client.

- The proceeds from the percentage-fee program will be used to fund the service, increase LRS promotions and networking and advertise the service.
- The LRS provides the groundwork to build clientele.
- The LRS has a targeted marketing plan to reach the public.
- We are better than a billboard! When people call our line, they talk to someone in person who gives your information to potential clients!
- You receive your referrals via e-mail (unless you choose otherwise) within an hour of the potential client calling the service.
- We advertise in the Yellow Pages of almost every county to help you get potential clients.
- Our rate is only \$100 per year! Nowhere else can you spend such a small amount of money and get such a great return.
- You become a part of a great public service program.

How many referrals will I get through the LRS?

Do you speak Spanish? Do you practice family law? How far are you willing to travel? The number of referrals a member receives varies widely depending on a number of factors. The more flexibility you have usually means more referrals.

Many attorneys are skeptical at the type of client they would get from the Lawyer Referral Service. Some think that an individual who really needs an attorney would be able to find one on his own. The reality is that individuals look for a good source to find someone who can help. The resource they usually go to is the bar association in their state. The ASB Lawyer Referral Service is an ideal way to introduce clients to lawyers who can provide the legal services they need.

The LRS is changing with these changing times. We are reaching out for clients who can afford legal help, but do not know where to find it in their area.

The LRS is constantly trying new marketing ideas to reach the public who needs to find a lawyer. In the coming year, we will be distributing bookmarks to all public libraries in the state and handing out marketing information to chambers of commerce statewide, in addition to speaking to numerous senior groups. We will continue our Yellow Book ads for almost every county across the state.

Networking is a huge part of today's society. The LRS is a great way to do that at an affordable rate. Maybe the referral wasn't an instant client, but the value of your name being out there is priceless. Getting the pre-qualified referral is great for client development and retention as well as a public service.

With the tough economic times we are facing one must maintain and grow your practice by all available means. The most affordable means is the Lawyer Referral Service. You may join the service by calling (800) 354-6154 or going to the ASB Web site at www.alabar.org, click on "Members" and then visit "Lawyer Referral." Get more bang for your buck—join the LRS today! ▲▼▲



Renee Avery joined the Alabama State Bar staff as the Lawyer Referral Service secretary in February 2009.



ASB Lawyer Referral Service

The Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral Service can provide you with an excellent means of earning a living, so it is hard to believe that only three percent of Alabama attorneys participate in this service! LRS wants you to consider joining.

The Lawyer Referral Service is not a pro bono legal service. Attorneys agree to charge no more than \$50 for an initial consultation, not to exceed 30 minutes. If, after the consultation, the attorney decides to accept the case, he or she may then charge his or her normal fees.

In addition to earning a fee for your service, the greater reward is that you will be helping your fellow citizens. Most referral clients have never contacted a lawyer before. Your counseling may be all that is needed, or you may offer further services. No matter what the outcome of the initial consultation, the next time they or their friends or family need an attorney, they will come to you.

For more information about the LRS, contact the state bar at (800) 354-6154, letting the receptionist know that you are an attorney interested in becoming a member of the Lawyer Referral Service. Annual fees are \$100, and each member must provide proof of professional liability insurance.



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