

MODEST MEANS REFERRAL PROGRAM

Membership Information & Application

57 S. Broadway Akron, OH 44308
Phone 330.253.5038
Fax 330.253.2140
LRIS@akronbar.org

MMRP

Dear Akron Bar Association member,

Thank you for your interest in the Modest Means Referral Program (MMRP) of the Akron Bar Association. We are excited to be able to offer this much-needed service to our community.

For years, Summit County residents have struggled to obtain affordable legal representation. People who do not qualify for representation by Community Legal Aid are left to deal with legal problems on their own or worse, ignore the issue entirely and be subject to default judgments. MMRP attempts to fill this legal services gap.

Participation in the MMRP is free for bar members. You must:

- be licensed to practice law in the State of Ohio
- be in good standing with the Ohio Supreme Court
- carry liability insurance with minimum coverage equal to \$100,000 per occurrence and \$300,000 in the aggregate; and
- be competent to handle cases through experience or association with a mentor or experienced attorney

The Akron Bar Association will provide a list of volunteer mentor attorneys to assist panel members who need guidance.

By joining the Modest Means Referral Program as a panel attorney, you will not only assist people who would otherwise have nowhere else to turn, but you will also:

- Gain valuable experience
- Expand your client base
- Maintain a work flow at non-peak times
- Make valuable contacts within the legal community

Please complete the enclosed membership application and include a current copy of the Declarations page from your professional liability insurance. Once received, we will be happy to place you in the rotation for the requested panels.

Information should be sent to:

Shantell George
Akron Bar Association
57 South Broadway
Akron, OH 44308

Questions or concerns can be directed to iris@akronbar.org or 330-436-0117.

Client Eligibility

Clients who do not meet the eligibility requirements for services from Community Legal Aid will be referred to the Lawyer Referral and Information Service (LRIS). MMRP clients will undergo the same pre-screen procedures that all LRIS referrals receive.

The following services are available through the MMRP:

Domestic

Divorce/Dissolution
Post-decree issues
Parentage/Visitation

Consumer Law

Personal Bankruptcy
Foreclosure
Collections
Small Claims Coaching

Probate

Wills
Guardianship
Power of Attorney

Criminal

Judicial Release Application
Expungement

Fees

Retainers may be charged by attorneys up to \$400.

If retained, the attorney will charge no more than \$60 per hour for their services. Upon conclusion of representation, an accounting will be presented to the client for all fees and retainers. Unapplied retainers shall be refunded to the client. The attorney shall receive full payment of the retainer prior to filing any documents with the courts.

If it becomes clear that the hourly fee will exceed the retainer amount, the attorney will promptly notify the client to discuss in good faith how to proceed. No additional fee will be charged without the client's agreement.

Panel attorneys are not obligated to undertake representation. Panel attorneys may decline to represent any MMRP case just as they would a regular LRIS case. If a panel attorney chooses to decline representation, the client should be sent back to LRIS for a referral to a different panel attorney. Panel attorneys may terminate representation of an MMRP client for any of the same reasons they would terminate representation of any other client.

The Akron Bar Association does not charge a referral fee for MMRP referrals. All fees are retained by the attorney.

A signed fee agreement shall be used as required by the Akron Bar Association. (Sample Attached)

Modest Means Referral Program Fee Agreement

_____ (You) and _____ (I)
(Client Name) (Attorney Name)

agree that I will represent you in _____
(type of matter)

I have agreed that my fees for this matter are \$60.00 per hour as long as you remain financially eligible for this program through the Akron Bar Association Modest Means Referral Program. Listed below are our arrangements.

You have agreed that if, for any reason, your financial status changes significantly due to finances or tangible property, or you acquire property that significantly changes your financial status while I am representing you through the Modest Means Referral Program, I may continue to provide my services as described above at my normal rate of \$_____ per hour.

Certain areas of law allow for the recovery of attorney's fees as part of the damages to which a claimant is entitled. In the event I obtain an award of attorney's fees in the course of representing you, you have agreed that I shall be entitled to retain the award of attorney's fees. I have agreed that you shall be entitled to a refund for any legal fees paid by you for which I receive compensation through the award of attorney's fees.

You have agreed to pay a retainer fee of \$_____ prior to my filing any documents with the courts and becoming the attorney of record for this matter.

If this retainer fee is to be waived, please check here ___ and both the attorney and client must initial in boxes listed below.

_____ Attorney's initials _____ Client's initials

I have agreed that any unearned portion of the retainer will be refunded to you.

The retainer is an amount that will be held in escrow and applied against actual fees at the hourly rate above. **The retainer does not include filing fees, court costs or other litigation expenses. You are responsible for the payment of these costs in a prompt manner.** A poverty affidavit may be filed if appropriate.

You have agreed that if my time exceeds the amount calculated in the retainer, you will be liable for additional fees.

I have agreed that if it becomes clear that my fee will exceed the amount of the retainer, I will notify you promptly so that we can discuss in good faith how to proceed. **No additional fee will be charged unless we have reached an agreement on the fee and the manner of payment.**

You have agreed that at the conclusion of my services, any amounts due are to be paid upon an agreed date or plan.

If you disagree with my bill and there cannot be any resolution between the two of us, you have the opportunity to submit a request to the Akron Bar Association Fee Arbitration Committee to resolve any disputes. If you submit your claim for review and resolution to the arbitrator, the decision of the arbitrator will be final and binding between you and me.

Client Signature _____ Date_____

Attorney Signature _____ Date_____

Akron Bar Association Modest Means Referral Program Attorney Membership Application

Contact Information

Name _____ Phone _____

Firm _____ Fax _____

Address _____ Email _____

Website _____

Agreement:

I certify the following:

- I am a member of the Akron Bar Association and in good standing.
- I understand that I must carry Professional Liability Insurance at all times.
- I have read the areas of practice experience requirements and either: a) meet the experience requirements or; b) Agree that I will consult a mentor from the Akron Bar Association's Mentor List if I need assistance in the areas where I do not meet the experience requirements.
- I agree to charge the client at the set hourly rate of \$60.00 per hour, and not to collect retainers for more than \$400.
- If, after reviewing the case I find I am unable to represent the client, I will send the client back to the MMRP office to be referred to another panelist.
- I will notify the Akron Bar Association if I learn that the client is financially ineligible for the MMRP. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless, the Akron Bar Association, the Lawyer Referral and Information Service and their officer, agents and employees from any and all liability and costs attendant thereto, (including fees for representation and other litigation expenses) arising out of my participation and/or membership in the Modest Means Referral Program of the Akron Bar Association.

Sign _____

Date _____