

When faced with a legal problem, you may be served best by seeking the advice of an attorney. An attorney is educated and trained in the complex world of the legal system to assure that you benefit from all of your legal rights. You and your attorney work together to achieve the best possible results for you.



Because working together begins with a good relationship, the Cincinnati Bar Association suggests using the following guidelines when you work with an attorney:



The Professionalism Committee of the Cincinnati Bar Association is charged with upholding the highest standards of integrity and honor in the legal profession. The committee strives to foster conduct by, and among, lawyers and judges which enhance and support professionalism. The Professionalism Committee provides an ongoing focus on the broader purpose of the Cincinnati Bar Association and on the law as a public profession. In an effort to support this mission, the committee publishes brochures like this one and offers a forum for discussion. For more information, please visit [www.cincybar.org](http://www.cincybar.org)

Since its inception in 1872, the Cincinnati Bar Association has addressed and served the needs of Greater Cincinnati. The Bar stands firm in its belief that the law is for the people. By providing legal education, various legal programs, referral services, and many community service projects, the Cincinnati Bar Association continues its commitment to the legal profession and to the wider community.



## Attorney-Client Relationship





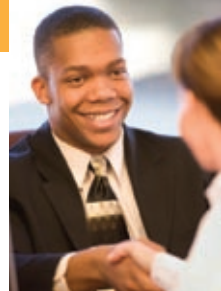
## As the Client, You Will:

- Provide your attorney with your current contact information.
- Share all information, whether favorable or unfavorable, so that your attorney may determine whether to and how to best represent you.
- Immediately forward to your attorney any correspondence or documents you may receive pertaining to the legal matter.
- Review, discuss, understand and abide by the fee agreement you make with your attorney.
- Ask questions and raise any concerns with your attorney about your case and how you are being represented.
- Review and discuss your attorney's statements about the strengths and weaknesses of your case and use your attorney's advice to make informed decisions during the case.
- Retain the right to dismiss your attorney and hire a new attorney if you wish.

## Your Attorney Will:

- Be prepared to represent you.
- Make you aware of any relevant limitations on the scope of representation and undertake only those matters which the attorney is competent to handle on your behalf.
- Not make any promises about the outcome of your case.
- Disclose fees and potential costs to you and reach agreement with you on financial matters before beginning your representation. The attorney will also provide you with a copy of the written services and fee agreement .
- Exercise independent professional judgment on your behalf and not create a conflict of interest situation.
- Vigorously represent you and your interests within the laws and the rules that apply
- Secure your informed consent with respect to any decisions or circumstances affecting your rights or interests in writing if necessary.
- Keep your information confidential unless you waive confidentiality; or there is a court order; or to the extent the lawyer believes reasonably necessary under the prevailing circumstances.
- Let you know if someone else on the attorney's staff is available to the client should a problem arise.
- Cease representing you only upon your request, or as special conditions may otherwise allow.
- Regularly consult with you on the status of your case, and how your objectives are being accomplished.
- Properly safeguard — and account for — your funds or other property in the custody of the attorney.

## You and Your Attorney Will:



- Respond to one another as soon as possible, while mindful of each other's competing obligations.
- Be available to meet with each other when reasonably requested to do so.
- Supply requested information and documents as soon as possible.
- Keep each other informed of important developments, including offers of settlement.
- Treat each other with respect and courtesy.

## How Are Attorneys Governed?

Attorneys have a strict code of conduct, enforced by the Ohio Supreme Court, known as the Ohio Rules of Professional Conduct. Not using the guidelines suggested here do not necessarily violate the Rules.

The Ohio Rules of Professional Conduct can be found at a library or the Supreme Court of Ohio website, [www.sconet.state.oh.us](http://www.sconet.state.oh.us).

If you have concerns about your attorney, visit [www.cincybar.org](http://www.cincybar.org) and click on "Filing a Grievance" under the "For the Public" section.

