



PDQ

"Paralegal Division QuickNotes"

2023-2024

www.txpd.org

The Paralegal Division (PD) provides great benefits to its members and works hard to establish educational opportunities and professional growth, as well as leadership opportunities. Here are some of the great membership benefits offered by the PD:

► **Officers and Board of Directors**

The 2023-2024 [Officers and Directors](#) are working hard to provide CLE events, networking opportunities, and additional avenues to grow professionally as well as advancing the paralegal profession. Many of these leaders participate in the Mentor program to protégés around the State. The PD Board and Officers look forward to hearing your feedback!

► **All Membership Applications Online**

With all membership applications and renewals are handled online, so what is to keep you from becoming a member? Apply now at <https://txpd.org/> under the Membership tab. Reminder renewal time period is May 1 through July 31 of each year.

The Paralegal Division offers Online CLE to both members and non-members, but members receive a discount. Browse through the available topics or search for a specific topic in a specialty area of law on the website by clicking on the [CLE Online](#) tab. You'll be surprised at the variety and selection of seminars.

CLE Calendar

If you are looking for CLE in your area, click on the searchable CLE calendar on the home page of the PD website at www.txpd.org. All CLE offered to paralegals throughout the state, including the PD's 12 districts, approximately 32 local paralegal associations in Texas, as well as other legal organizations and private CLE vendors, can be submitted at no cost for inclusion in the PD's CLE Calendar. To submit an event on the website, from the "CLE/Event" tab choose [Submit CLE Event](#).

► **TAPS 2023**

SAVE THE DATE! The Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar (TAPS) will be held in Frisco on September 27-29, 2023. Be sure to save the date now and help us celebrate the 24th Anniversary of this fabulous event! This event offers up to 13 hours of CLE with excellent speakers and topics, fabulous socials, and superb networking opportunities with paralegals from across the State of Texas.

► **Travel Overseas to Barcelona**

The Paralegal Division is hosting a travel group to Barcelona on April 12-20, 2024. Registration is now open. The full itinerary and details can be found here [Trip](#).

► **TBLS – Paralegal Board Certification**

Have you considered applying for Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) certification? There are currently fewer than 500 elite Board-Certified Paralegals (BCP) in Texas. TBLS offers 9 specialty areas of laws to paralegals: Bankruptcy Law, Criminal Law, Civil Trial Law, Family Law, Estate Planning and Probate Law, Personal Injury Trial Law, Real Estate Law and Oil, Gas and Mineral Law. Visit www.tbls-bcp.org for more information. The TBLS Certification Application period is now open. The 2023 filing deadline is August 1st, and the examination will be held on November 4, 2023.

TBLS Helpful Hints Guide

The Paralegal Division developed a TBLS Helpful Hints Guide to prepare for and study for the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) specialty certification exam(s) for paralegals. This Guide offers tips for each specialty area of law, along with general tips for taking the exam. It is created by PD leaders and available to members of the Paralegal Division. You can find it after logging in to the PD website under the My Account section. www.txpd.org.

Definition & Paralegal Standards Adopted by the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors

In 2005, the State Bar Board of Directors unanimously approved standards for the previously approved paralegal definition. The standards will assist the public in understanding the paralegals' role in quality legal services, assist attorneys in the effective utilization of paralegals, and guide judges when awarding attorney fees. These standards are on the PD's and State Bar's websites. For more information, log onto <https://txpd.org/> and view under "About Paralegal Definition and Standards" or at this [link](#). The Paralegal Standards are also attached as an appendix to the Paralegal Division's Standing Rules.

► Mentor Program

The Paralegal Division's Mentor Program is available! You don't need to be a student or new paralegal; if you are working in an area of law that is new to you and need a mentor in that area of law, take advantage of this wonderful benefit of membership. **Please do not forget to reapply as a mentor or protégé each year.** Logon to the PD website and go to the My Account to learn how to sign up to become a mentor or protégé of the program.

► Membership Directory

PD members are listed in the *Texas Legal Directory (the "Blue Book")*, as well as online at www.txpd.org under My Account, after logging into the website. As a member of the Paralegal Division, you may update your record to include your practice area(s) of law by choosing Edit my Profile, also under My Account on the PD website.

► 100 PD Club

Law firms and legal departments with 100% of their paralegals enrolled as PD Members will qualify for the "100 PD Club" and receive recognition in the *TPJ*. For a questionnaire, please e-mail TPJ@txpd.org and type "100 PD Club" in the subject line.

► PD Ambassadors

PD Ambassadors are past PD Presidents who travel throughout the state, offer quality CLE and provide information about the PD. If your local organization is interested in having a presentation by a PD Ambassador, please contact Susi Boss, Chair of the Paralegal Division's Ambassador Ad Hoc Committee at Ambassador@txpd.org or find the form located on the PD website under "PD Speakers." *Note: PD will cover the travel expenses of an Ambassador coming to your area to speak (one time on an annual basis).*

► **The Texas Bar College (formerly, College of the State Bar of Texas)**

If you have ever considered joining the Texas Bar College, please follow the [link](#) on the [PD website](#) and read all the great benefits that are offered, along with the prestige of being a member. Becoming a member of the Texas Bar College represents another aspect of your professional attainment. In order to be eligible, you must have a minimum of 12 hours of CLE, two of which **must** be in legal ethics or professional responsibility. By attending TAPS, you have almost all the CLE credit needed! Great benefits including discounts for attending live or video programs of Texas BARCLE; discounts on College's annual "Summer School Course" presented by TexasBarCLE; free annual subscription to the On-Line Library which provides searchable 24-7 access to CLE course materials as far back as 1998; Set up and present "Flash CLE" programs for your Districts with discounts from the retail price. Display your membership on your letterhead, business cards, website, etc. Become a member of this elite group of lawyers, judges and paralegals.

► **Pro Bono College of the State Bar of Texas**

Paralegals may join the Paralegal Pro Bono College if they have performed a minimum of 50 hours of eligible pro bono services in addition to their normal work hours, without compensation, as stated in the membership requirements. To view guidelines and download an application, go to [Pro Bono College](#).

► **Pro Bono Opportunities**

The Paralegal Division has created a list of Pro Bono programs in Texas. If you would like to volunteer your time for a Pro Bono program, you can now find the list of available programs by accessing the "Membership" tab, and then choosing "[Pro Bono Programs](#)" from the drop-down menu. To search the database, enter the County in which you work or live and a list of Pro Bono opportunities will appear on the screen. Help us keep it up to date by letting us know if a new program is developed or information changes!

For additional pro bono [opportunities](#), you may also sign up at Texas Lawyers Help via their website at www.texaslawyershelp.org. Texas Lawyers Help is a website for pro bono lawyers and legal services staff. The website contains password-protected resources to help attorneys provide free legal services to [low-income](#) Texans. Free membership to TexasLawHelp.org is available to staff of Texas-based programs funded by LSC or the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, and Texas attorneys [and](#) **paralegals who are interested in volunteering with a Texas pro bono program.**

Information on other pro bono efforts can be found on the State Bar of Texas TexasLawyersHelp website (join in order to receive information on how you can provide pro bono services). You may also access at www.txpd.org and choose from the buttons on the right hand of the home page.

► **Keep Track of Your Pro Bono and CLE Hours**

As a Member of the Paralegal Division (PD), you can track your pro bono hours as well as your CLE hours in your individual member record on the PD website. This repository can be a very helpful tool in managing both your pro bono and continuing legal education (CLE) hours. The Paralegal Division can also use this tool to tabulate and report on the pro bono efforts of its members to the State Bar of Texas. Add to or view your CLE hours or Pro Bono volunteer history by logging into the website, and then go to My Account, then Membership Links, and choose either **Manage My Pro Bono Records** or **Manage My CLE Records**. To enter the hours for either Pro Bono or CLE, click on "**Add a Pro Bono (or CLE) Item to Your History**."

► **[MyTexasBar.com](http://www.texasbar.com)**

This is a wonderful tool made available by the State Bar of Texas through PD membership. The MyTexasBar page provides legislative tracking, form access, notification of TexasBarCLE opportunities, access to both CaseMaker and FastCase at no charge, and much more. This tool makes your paralegal skills look great to your attorneys! To access this page, go to www.texasbar.com and click on *My Bar Page*. Must be a member of the Paralegal Division to access "MyBarPage."

► **PD E-Group**

The PD offers its members the benefit of the PD E-Group! Postings are distributed immediately upon entry and answers to your queries are provided by your peers. Members of the PD E-Group enjoy ready access to paralegals throughout Texas with a rich body of experience and expertise in the many different practice areas of the law. Other benefits offered by the e-group include statewide networking, access to information on vendors throughout Texas, sharing of forms, expertise in areas of law outside your own practice area, identification of hard-to-find subject matter experts, just to name a few. Note: You must sign up for the PD E-Group to be able to take advantage of this Member Only Benefit. Go to the PD website at www.txpd.org, then follow these steps:

- Log into the [My Account](#) page
- Go to Profile & Orders block
- Click the Egroup Subscription
- Scroll to the eGroup Status and Information section near the bottom of the page
- Click the Subscribe link in the Action column
- The page will refresh. You can scroll down to confirm that you are subscribed.

► ***The Paralegal Ethics Handbook***

The Paralegal Ethics Handbook, 2022 ed., is the newest edition and serves as a resource that addresses ethical considerations for 17 practice areas, as well as consideration for in-house, corporate, freelance, administrative, governmental, and regulatory law paralegals.

This resource is used in offices and education programs both statewide and nationally. Order your copy [here](#).

“Paralegal Pulse” E-Newsletter

This monthly E-Newsletter is e-mailed to members and highlights the various events and happenings of the PD. If you have not received your monthly e-newsletter notification, please log into My Account on the PD website and look at the email listed in the Edit My Profile section. If your email is not correct you can correct it in the Edit My Profile tab. If your email is correct see whether we need to be added to your non-junk/safe list; it is sent from paralegalpulse@txpd.org.

► **PD Job Bank**

The Job Bank is accessible only to PD members. Job postings are for positions throughout the State of Texas. Members may post jobs for their firms and corporations through this site, free of charge. To post a job, please go to www.txpd.org, access the log in and go to My Account, find the Job Bank Block and choose **“Post a Job.”**

Law Firms and Companies may also post a paralegal job vacancy to the PD Job Bank at no charge by going to www.txpd.org under **Contact/Job Bank Submissions**.

Texas Paralegal Journal – Digital!

The Texas Paralegal Journal has been digital now for approximately 7 years and is the official quarterly magazine of the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas. It offers useful articles on various areas of substantive law, practice tips, information on controversial issues at hand in the state, tips on technology, various events scheduled or those having occurred, announcements about the successes of our members, and an ethics column. Check out the [digital version!](#)

Have an article you personally have written and would like to see published or have an idea for one or...know someone you might want to recommend that has an article of interest, Contact: TPJ@txpd.org

► ***Texas Bar Journal***

A monthly publication of the State Bar of Texas for attorneys (and paralegals) which includes current statewide matters and events. This benefit allows you access to the same information being received by your attorneys. A great source for articles on topics from all areas of law as well as matters and events.

► PD Social Networking

The Paralegal Division is on **Facebook**. We hope to have it on Twitter and LinkedIn soon. Search “Paralegal Division” in **Facebook** to find us. Take a look at your District’s facebook (and other Districts as well). Great information for your District events as well as events and CLE from all of the individual PD Districts.

► Members Eligible for Health Insurance

The State Bar of Texas officials announced the Texas Bar Private Insurance Exchange available to members of the Bar, including Paralegal Division members. The Exchange is a multi-carrier private exchange exclusively designed for members and their dependents. It offers a comprehensive suite of products including dental, vision, disability, life, accident, wellness and more at very competitive prices. For more information on this benefit, go to www.memberbenefits.com/texasbar. **Members must maintain their membership in the PD in order to qualify for this benefit, so ensure that you timely renew your membership each year.**

► TLAP – Texas Lawyer’s Assistance Program

TLAP although designed for the attorneys will guide the paralegals to support resources in your individual areas of the state. Anxiety, grief, depression, and substance abuse problems. 1-800-343-8527.

► Additional Perks for your \$\$

- Active Members receive a membership certificate suitable for framing and displaying in your office. We encourage our members to proudly display such certificate, as it is symbolic of your professionalism and involvement in your professional organization;
- Discounts on CLE seminars and webinars sponsored by the PD and many State Bar of Texas CLE programs (notably the Texas Paralegal Advanced Seminar and District CLE seminars);
- Notification of continuing legal education courses offered by the State Bar of Texas by signing up at *My Bar Page*;
- Non-voting membership in State Bar of Texas sections, upon payment of section dues;
- Participation in [State Bar activities and benefits](#), including health, life, and dental insurance programs and credit unions (contact the State Bar Insurance Trust at 1-800-460-7248 or visit their website at <https://texasbar.memberbenefits.com>);
- Car Rental discounts;
- Car and Home Insurance offered through the State Bar of Texas;
- State networking through involvement/service on state-wide committees;
- Professional recognition;
- Communication and promotion of professional conduct and responsibility;

- Continued individual and professional growth as a paralegal; and
- Sense of fulfillment that comes from being involved in the direction of the paralegal profession.

Log on to www.txpd.org for more information on the Paralegal Division!