

# YORK COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 7466  
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA 17404-0466

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**Definition of a Paralegal:** “*Paralegal*” shall mean a person who is qualified through education, training and/or work experience to perform substantive legal work requiring knowledge of legal concepts and ethics and is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency, or other entity to work under the direction of a lawyer or pursuant to state statute, administrative regulation or court authority in a capacity that, in most instances, would be performed by a lawyer in the absence of a Paralegal.”

**History:** The York County Paralegal Association (“YCPA”) was established in 1992 and is committed to the advancement and support of the paralegal profession. YCPA promotes continuing legal education through monthly lunch and learn meetings, encourages networking among its members, and maintains an employment referral bank. Through the Association's newsletter, *Paralegal Focus*, members are apprised of issues affecting the paralegal profession locally, within the state, and nationally. YCPA maintains an open working relationship with local bar associations and participates in a variety of pro bono projects benefiting the general community. YCPA has adopted the Keystone Professional Responsibility Guidelines for Paralegals in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

### **Purposes:**

- To promote paralegals and maintain high standards of ethical and professional achievement in the profession.
- To encourage and foster continuing legal education of its members.
- To advance the creative expansion of paralegal roles.
- To edify the public about the skills and function of the paralegal in the legal community.
- To support and carry out the purposes and initiatives of the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations.
- To communicate and work collaboratively with other paralegal associations.

**Affiliations:** The YCPA is a member of the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations. The Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations <http://www.keystoneparalegals.org/> is a professional organization comprised of paralegal organizations located throughout Pennsylvania. Keystone Alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit organization, formalized in 1996, from groundwork laid in the 1980's by paralegal associations in Pennsylvania. The Alliance provides a state-wide voice for paralegals/legal assistants in Pennsylvania, monitors development in the profession and promotes the profession in Pennsylvania. The member associations represent in excess of 1,400 paralegals of varying backgrounds, experience, education, and job responsibilities, reflecting the diversity of the paralegal profession.

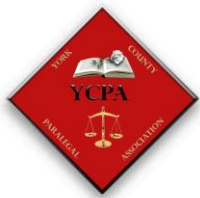
### **Distinctions in Membership Classes:**

1. **All** members are eligible to participate in the YCPA events and programs.
2. **All** members are eligible to receive CLE credits at programs sponsored by the YCPA.
3. **All** members are eligible to participate on any (or numerous) YCPA committee(s).
4. **Only Voting Members** are eligible to hold YCPA officer or director positions and chair committees in the YCPA.

### **Membership Requirements:**

The Keystone Alliance Pennsylvania Certified Paralegal Program requires that an applicant be in good standing with one of its member associations. In order for the YCPA to accurately and fairly confirm to Keystone that a member is in good standing, the YCPA has implemented the following criteria:

1. The member must have been a member for the immediate past twelve months prior to certification;
2. The member's dues with the YCPA must be current; AND
3. The member shall have attended within the immediate past twelve-month time period at least two membership meetings and actively participated on at least one committee in any capacity.



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## **BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE YCPA**

All YCPA members are entitled to the following benefits:

**Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations:** By virtue of being a member in the YCPA, you automatically become a member of the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations. This membership entitles you access to information regarding state-wide issues that involve the paralegal profession.

**York County Bar Association:** The YCPA works collaboratively with the York County Bar Association in its endeavors to provide professional legal services to the local community.

**Website:** At <http://www.ycpaonline.com>, YCPA members have access to the “Membership Only” section of the website, featuring the membership list, job postings, upcoming events, newsletters and board minutes.

**Subscription to Newsletter:** The YCPA newsletter, *The Paralegal Focus*, which includes articles on career issues and legislative activities, is published quarterly and is a benefit provided exclusively to the membership. Archival issues of *The Paralegal Focus* are also available to all members online via the YCPA website.

**Job Listings:** Job advertisements are placed on the YCPA website or are disseminated directly to the members by e-mail.

**Activities and Services:** Monthly membership lunch and learn meetings. These meetings feature guest speakers on a variety of topics, some of which offer continuing education credits. The YCPA also holds student conferences, Paralegal Day celebrations, and numerous other special events throughout the year.

**Networking Opportunities:** Participation in one or more of the YCPA Committees. This is a great opportunity to contribute to the Association and meet other professionals who share a common interest.

**Individual Involvement:** Individuals can volunteer as much or as little time as they desire as a member of a Committee, by participating in monthly membership meetings, or sponsored community activities.

**Scholarship Program:** A \$750 scholarship is awarded annually to a student enrolled in a post-secondary paralegal program. Applications are available on the YCPA website.

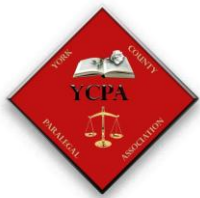
**Mentoring Program:** A volunteer mentoring program has been launched to provide our new members with an opportunity to pair up with a mentee based on similar interests and career goals. This program has been designed to provide assistance to new YCPA members with practical tips and locating resources. Our Association is replete with experienced paralegals, many of whom have expressed an interest in mentoring. Applications are available on the YCPA website.

**Special Projects:** The YCPA engages and strongly encourages pro bono and special projects which benefit the general community.

### **Other Benefits:**

- Professional recognition and promotion of the paralegal profession.
- Networking opportunities with paralegals in a variety of specialized practices who share similar goals and interests.
- Career enhancement opportunities.
- And so much more...!!





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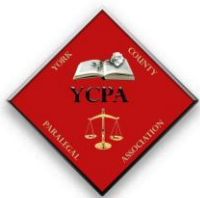
## Membership Application

For the Membership Year January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012

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### I AM INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE(S):

- Bar Liaison** YCPA's Bar Liaison is the contact person between the Paralegal Association and the York County Bar Association. The Bar Liaison keeps the Bar Association informed of YCPA events and makes sure that meetings being held at the Bar Center are scheduled. The primary responsibility is to provide the Bar Association with a brief update on YCPA events by writing a short article to be included in the Bar Brief. The time commitment for this position is very small and no physical meetings are required.
- CLE/Programs** This committee assists in planning the monthly membership meetings and CLE programs. Since we have switched over to most of the meetings being "brown bag" lunches, the work involved has decreased substantially. The most important aspect is getting new ideas for topics from YCPA members and then lining up an appropriate speaker. The time involved is usually just a few e-mails or phone calls to line up the speaker, sending out the monthly meeting notices, and tracking the RSVP's. In the past, this has usually fallen into the lap of one person. If a committee could be formed of 3-4 members, there would be relatively little work required for each person. The CLE committee does not usually involve any personal meetings and most business is conducted by e-mail. The amount of time required is minimal and will depend on the number of members participating and the topic/speaker of the monthly meeting. This committee provides the greatest benefit to our members by giving them a chance to meet on a monthly basis and attend informative and relevant speaking engagements.
- Finance/Fundraising** The Fundraising Committee is in charge of raising much needed funds for the Association. Our most recent projects have included a basket lottery and a cookbook fundraiser. Our committee meets approximately once a month usually during lunch. We ask our committee members to assist with ideas, acquiring sponsors, and some creative labor is necessary during the projects. Between meetings, our committee corresponds a great deal via e-mail.
- Membership** The Membership Committee is responsible for sending out and tracking membership applications on a yearly basis. This committee keeps and updates the membership list and oversees the Mentoring Program. The Membership Committee also addresses questions regarding membership from potential and current members and assists with publications for membership drives, etc. The members of the Membership Committee should offer assistance to the Membership Chair as needed. It is estimated that minimal assistance may be requested by the Chair on a periodic basis, no more than every few weeks or once a month. Additional help will be needed towards the end of the calendar year (when renewal requests are to be submitted) and the beginning of the following year (when there will be an influx of new applications received for processing). Periodic assistance with recruiting initiatives may also be needed throughout the year. Primary method of communication is e-mail.
- Newsletter/Website** YCPA publishes a quarterly newsletter called the *Paralegal Focus*. The goal of the newsletter is to keep members informed of Association events and provide them with general information related to the paralegal profession. Members of this committee may be asked to compose brief articles on upcoming events or informative articles for the membership. All articles are submitted to the chair of the committee who formats the layout of the newsletter and prepares it for distribution. Members may also be asked to proofread draft newsletters prior to publication. For general committee members, the time commitment is small. No more than a few hours every quarter for article drafting and proofreading will be required. This committee does not require regular physical meetings and the majority of the work can be completed via e-mail or telephone. The chair of this committee will have a greater time commitment for designing and preparing the newsletter for distribution. This committee is a great way to stay on top of Association developments and network with fellow members.
- Special Events** The Special Events Committee is in charge of organizing social/networking gatherings for the Association (i.e. Paralegal Day social). This mostly entails planning the events for the specific occasion such as food, activities and door prizes, when necessary. The Special Events committee only requires active participation when planning a particular event. A member interested in joining should be prepared to make reservations for venues, buy decorations (for reimbursement) and solicit for door prizes and giveaways. Committee members may also be asked to assist with set up and clean up for an event. Regular physical meetings are not required to be a member of this committee and the majority of the communications can be conducted via e-mail or telephone. The Special Events committee may also be responsible to assist with important meetings that the Association may be hosting. This committee is a wonderful way to network with other members of the Association by creating fun social events for the membership.
- Scholarship** YCPA awards a \$750.00 scholarship to a student enrolled in a post-secondary paralegal program. A brief cover letter and the application are mailed out in February to all high schools in York County, as well as those school/colleges offering a paralegal program. In order to be eligible, a student must submit a written essay along with an application by the May deadline. The deadline for a decision from the committee is in August. When applications are received, the chairperson redacts the personal information and e-mails the essays to the committee members for a decision. The majority of the work for this committee can be conducted via e-mail. The amount of time required is minimal, as noted above. It is preferable to have 3-5 members on the committee who are willing to review the applications and decide on a winner.
- Keystone Alliance** YCPA's Primary Representative to Keystone Alliance is required to attend two (2) annual meetings during the year and shall keep the YCPA Board informed of issues and activities of the Keystone Alliance. When issues are scheduled for a vote, the Primary Representative shall present the issue to the Board and poll the Board to accurately represent the opinions of the majority. The Secondary Representative shall also be familiar with all Keystone Alliance issues and projects. The Secondary Representative should also attend the two (2) annual meetings and may be called upon to represent YCPA in the absence of the Primary Representative. The time commitment for these positions is attendance at two (2) annual meetings (5-6 hour) per year held on Saturdays (April & November). Any business which may come up between meetings is discussed via e-mail or phone conferences. This is a great way to network with members of other Pennsylvania paralegal associations and get a feel for what is going on statewide. These positions are important to keep YCPA involved in statewide activities and have a voice in decisions affecting the paralegal profession.



# YORK COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

## Membership Application

For the Membership Year January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012

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Each member of the York County Paralegal Association shall maintain a high level of professional competency. Continuing legal education programs focusing on legal, technical and general developments as well as ethical and professional considerations are sponsored by the YCPA, the York County Bar Association, and educational institutions.

All applications are subject to the review and approval of the Board of Directors. Any person convicted of a felony or comparable crime as defined by an individual state or jurisdiction that does not have a felony designation; shall have been suspended or disbarred from the practice of law or disciplined for unethical conduct in any state or jurisdiction; and for reasons of misconduct, shall be currently under suspension, termination or revocation of certification, registration or license to practice by a professional organization, court, disciplinary board, or agency in any jurisdiction, is not eligible for membership in the YCPA.

Renewal dues are payable annually. Members who join in the last quarter of the calendar year will be assessed the full membership fee; however, their membership shall remain valid until December of the following year. No person eligible for membership in the YCPA shall be denied admission on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical disability or political ideology.

**YCPA has adopted the Keystone Professional Responsibility Guidelines for Paralegals in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which are as follows:**

- *A paralegal shall not engage in the unauthorized practice of law and shall not encourage or contribute to any act which would constitute the unauthorized practice of law.*
- *A paralegal shall not represent a client before any court or administrative agency unless expressly permitted by statute or administrative regulation.*
- *A paralegal may perform services under the direction of a lawyer or pursuant to state statute, administrative regulation, or court authority.*
- *A paralegal shall fully disclose his/her professional status.*
- *A paralegal shall preserve and protect the confidences of a client.*
- *A paralegal shall maintain the integrity of the profession.*
- *A paralegal shall not share legal fees with a lawyer or law firm.*
- *A paralegal shall not form a partnership with a lawyer if any of the activities of the partnership consist of the practice of law.*
- *A paralegal shall not participate in matters where there may be a conflict of interest and shall disclose any possible conflicts.*
- *A paralegal shall maintain a high level of professional competency.*
- *A paralegal's conduct shall be guided by the Rules of Professional Conduct for Lawyers adopted by Order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.*

### AFFIRMATION

I understand that my membership status may change during the course of the calendar year to reflect current employment. I will notify the YCPA Board of Directors of any change in my employment status and any change of my mailing address.

By signing below, I authorize the Board of Directors to call references, conduct a criminal background check, and perform any action as it deems appropriate as part of its application review process. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of facts requested herein is cause for disqualification for membership in the YCPA.

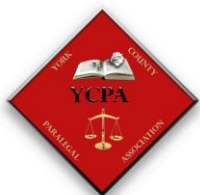
I agree to be bound by the Articles of Incorporation, By-laws and general procedures adopted by the Board of Directors of the YCPA and by the Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility Guidelines for Paralegals as set forth above. I understand that this application is subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of the YCPA.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Applicant Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Printed Name]

Please submit this application, along with a check or money order for the appropriate dues made payable to the **York County Paralegal Association**, to: York County Paralegal Association, P.O. Box 7466, York, Pennsylvania 17404-0466.



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## Membership Application

*For the Membership Year January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012*

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FOR ASSOCIATION USE ONLY:

Dues Payment Received:

Amount:

Date of Board Approval:

Membership Category:

Check No.: