

In preparing a written complaint (grievance), keep in mind the following suggestions:

- Organize any documents that will be submitted to support the allegations of attorney misconduct.
- Prepare a timeline as a guide in the preparation of the complaint and to help the investigator understand the circumstances surrounding the events and alleged misconduct.
- Be factual in describing any and all events and behavior. Be thorough in describing the issues, events, and alleged misconduct.
- It is helpful to reference the documents that support particular claims, facts and allegations. The documents may be given reference or exhibit numbers that may help the investigator in evaluating the allegations.
- Have someone assist in writing or reviewing the grievance for clarity, particularly if grammar and spelling are a challenge.

When a grievance is filed, JCBA CAAP may not be able to provide assistance that involves contacting the attorney.

**CONTACTING
THE
JCBA CAAP**

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**HELPFUL
INFORMATION
FROM
CAAP**



**CLIENT
ATTORNEY
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM**



1. What is the Client Attorney Assistance Program?

The Client Attorney Assistance Program is a service of the local bar association. Its objective is to assist the public in resolving concerns, disputes and misunderstandings with Southeast Texas lawyers and to facilitate and improve communications between clients and their lawyers. Most problems can be resolved by providing information, suggesting various self-help options for dealing with the situation, or contacting the attorney either on the phone or by letter.

2. What kind of information does the JCBA CAAP provide?

JCBA CAAP does not provide legal advice. CAAP volunteer lawyers attempt thru mediation to help provide a voluntary conciliation between you and your attorney. Many people contact CAAP because they don't know where else to turn.

3. What are some of the self-help options JCBA CAAP may suggest?

The most common reason a client contacts JCBA CAAP is because an attorney is not returning phone calls. If an attorney is not returning phone calls for extended periods of time, it is often effective to send a letter to the attorney. Written correspondence accomplishes two important objectives: (1) the attorney has the clients concerns in writing so there is no misunderstanding about the clients concerns; (2) the letter documents the communication problems that are occurring. Many clients have used these letters successfully to request an appointment with the attorney, ask questions regarding the case, request information, etc. Sending the letter by certified mail also documents when the attorney received the client's letter. Emails and faxes are also effective in documenting client concerns.

4. When and how does JCBA CAAP intervene?

If an attorney does not respond to a client's efforts by telephone and written correspondence, or if the client is dissatisfied with the attorney's response, the client may request assistance from JCBA CAAP. CAAP may be contacted by telephone to request a CAAP "Request for Assistance" form. A CAAP volunteer lawyer will contact you to address the situation and provide other suggestions, strategies, or options that may be appropriate to the particular circumstances. In cases that do not involve misconduct according the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional

Conduct, A CAAP volunteer attorney will contact the client's attorney in an effort to resolve the situation. JCBA CAAP makes every effort to help both parties achieve an acceptable result.

5. What if I need to file a grievance?

The disciplinary process for attorneys is the appropriate option when an attorney violates any one or more of the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. One does not need to know what rules were violated in order to file a grievance. To initiate an investigation into the attorney's alleged misconduct a grievance against a Texas attorney must be submitted in writing to the State Bar Of Texas Chief Disciplinary Counsel. When the grievance is received, it will be evaluated initially by an investigator. The investigator will "classify" the grievance as a formal "Complaint" or dismiss it as a "Inquiry" after determining whether or not the written allegation describes misconduct according to the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Misconduct.

**To file a grievance
contact the
State Bar of Texas
800-204-2222
Option #9**