

# NALS

## Certification Resource Manual



### *National Association for Legal Support Professionals*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION .....	3
NALS CERTIFYING BOARD.....	3
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS FOR NALS EXAMS.....	4
THE ACCREDITED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL .....	6
CERTIFIED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL .....	8
Overview of Part 1 – Communication & Advanced Legal Terminology .....	9
Overview of Part 2 – The Law Firm: Office Procedures & Knowledge .....	11
Overview of Part 3 – Legal Ethics & Authority .....	13
Overview of Part 4 – Substantive Law: Legal Procedure & Document Preparation .....	14
PROFESSIONAL PARALEGAL.....	16
Overview of Part 1 – Advanced Communications & Legal Terminology.....	17
Overview of Part 2 – The Law Firm: Office Procedures & Knowledge .....	19
Overview of Part 3 – Advanced Legal Ethics.....	21
Overview of Part 4 – Advanced Substantive Law.....	22
EXAM POLICIES & DEFINITIONS .....	24
ELIGIBILITY.....	24
EXAMINATION APPLICATION.....	24
STUDENT DEFINED .....	24
CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY.....	24
RESCHEDULING POLICY .....	25
CONFIDENTIALITY.....	25
SCORING REVIEW PROCESS.....	25
EXAM RESULTS .....	25
VERIFICATION PROCEDURE .....	26
REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION.....	26
EXAM REGISTRATION & ACCESS .....	27
UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS .....	28
Prolydian: TEST TAKER FAQ .....	30
STUDY MATERIALS & COURSES .....	30
EFFECTIVE STUDY HABITS.....	31
TIPS FOR EXAMINATION DAY .....	32
NALS CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY (WITH DISCUSSION) .....	32

# INTRODUCTION

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This manual is designed to help you achieve your goal of becoming certified. It contains:

- Information about the certification program;
- Exam content outlines for the NALS certification exams;
- Policies & Processes regarding the certifications;
- Useful information to support your certification journey.

This manual will aid you in determining the extent of your knowledge of the areas covered in the examinations. How you prepare for the examination may differ from the way someone else will prepare for it depending on your individual experience in a law office and the knowledge you already have in the areas of communication, office procedures, technology, billing and accounting, legal ethics, and legal authority, the courts, and substantive law.

This manual also contains materials on how to study. These materials will be especially helpful to the individual who has been removed from a formal study program for an extended period of time.

Whether you are studying for the ALP (Accredited Legal Professional), the CLP (Certified Legal Professional), or the PP (Professional Paralegal), we wish you the best in achieving your goal of becoming certified!

*Membership in NALS is not a requirement for any of the examinations.*

## NALS CERTIFYING BOARD

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The NALS Certifying Board develops, promotes, and administers the certification programs and certifies the examination results. The examinations are awarded under the supervision of the Certifying Board.

The Certifying Board continually revises and updates all examinations for relevance in the ever-changing legal profession. Therefore, the examinations serve as a comprehensive measure of the proficiency of those studying to be employed or who are currently employed in the legal profession.

The Certifying Board is composed of NALS members who are certified CLPs and/or certified PPs from around the country, and non-NALS members who are educators and/or attorneys. The members have expertise in the subject areas tested, a deep interest in the legal profession, recognition in their respective fields, leadership ability, and the willingness to devote their time and efforts toward upholding the high standards of NALS' certification programs.

# REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS FOR NALS EXAMS

(See "Resources" Tab under Certification at [www.nals.org](http://www.nals.org))

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## ACCREDITED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL (ALP)

### **NALS Basic Manual for the Legal Professional, 15th Edition**

ISBN: 9781539230816

Hardbound and Digital versions available through NALS Store:

<https://www.nals.org/store/ListProducts.aspx?catid=381785>

### **Gregg Reference Manual, 11th Edition**

ISBN: 9780073397108

Brand: McGraw Hill Publishing

Ordering Methods: 1-800-334-7344

Softbound and eBook - Instructors May Request a FREE Copy

## CERTIFIED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL (CLP)

### **NALS Advanced Manual for the Legal Professional, 15th Edition**

ISBN: 9781539284161

Hardbound and Digital versions available through NALS Store:

<https://www.nals.org/store/ListProducts.aspx?catid=381785>

### **Gregg Reference Manual, 11th Edition**

ISBN: 9780073397108

Brand: McGraw Hill Publishing

Ordering Methods: 1-800-334-7344

Softbound and eBook - Instructors May Request a FREE Copy

### **Rotunda's Black Letter Outline on Professional Responsibility, 9th Edition**

ISBN-13 9780314275530

Brand: West Academic

Ordering Methods: 1-800-328-9352

Softbound and eBook

### **The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citations, 21<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordering**

Information: Online Softbound and Online Subscription

## PROFESSIONAL PARALEGAL (PP)

### **NALS Advanced Manual for the Legal Professional, 15th Edition**

ISBN: 9781539284161

Hardbound and Digital versions available through NALS Store:

<https://www.nals.org/store/ListProducts.aspx?catid=381785>

### **Gregg Reference Manual, 11th**

Edition ISBN: 9780073397108

Brand: McGraw Hill Publishing

Ordering Methods: 1-800-334-7344

Softbound and eBook - Instructors May Request a FREE Copy

### **Rotunda's Black Letter Outline on Professional Responsibility, 9th Edition**

ISBN-13 9780314275530

Brand: West Academic

Ordering Methods: 1-800-328-9352

Softbound and eBook

### **The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citations, 21st Edition**

Ordering Information: ONLINE

Softbound and Online Subscription

### **Paralegal Today: The Legal Team at Work, 8th Edition**

ISBN 9780357710685 (*eBook*) | ISBN 9780357454053 (*Hardcover*)

Brand: CENGAGE Learning

Ordering Methods: [ONLINE](#)

### **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct**

<https://www.americanbar.org>

# THE ACCREDITED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL (ALP) CERTIFICATION EXAM

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One way to demonstrate your readiness for the demanding field of law is by attaining the ALP designation. The foundational knowledge gained by preparing for the examination hones your on-the-job skills, so you are ready for the next step of your legal support journey!

The ALP examination may also be viewed as the first step toward attaining the CLP or PP designation as it is an indicator of the examinee's aptitude and interest in earning the qualifications necessary to achieve success as a legal support professional. Educators interested in using the ALP exam for their students should visit <https://www.nals.org/page/ALPSchools>.

## THE EXAM

- The ALP is a computerized, multiple-choice exam.
- There is no minimum age requirement to sit for the exam or earn the ALP designation, provided the examinee has met the eligibility criteria.
- Effective March 2025, the exam is composed of five content sections under one comprehensive exam.
- Those who have passed part(s) of the former ALP (version with three parts) may continue retesting on those parts until August 31, 2025 or may opt to sit for the new exam.
- Examinees will have access to a digital notepad within the exam platform. Physical paper/pencil is prohibited without prior approval from NALS.
- Those passing the exam will be certified as an ALP for five years.
- Recertification is required every five years to maintain the designation. Recertification is achieved through the accumulation of a minimum of 50 hours of continuing legal education (CLE) credits and activities. See <https://www.nals.org/page/recertification> for full details.

## 2025 ALP Exam Content Outline

Content Area	Exam Percentage
<b>Legal Practice Administration and Financial Management</b>	<b>13%</b>
Legal Office Financial Basics Calendaring Computer Skills Written Record Management Copier/Scanner/Fax Basics Firm Organization/Types of Firms Trial Management	
<b>Legal Client Engagement and Service Skills</b>	<b>17%</b>
Phone Communication Interview Skills Client Intake Customer Service Basics	
<b>Legal Professional Skills and Ethics</b>	<b>26%</b>
Professionalism Ethical Conduct Unauthorized Practice of Law (UPL) Awareness Maintaining Confidentiality/Discretion Electronic Communications Social Media Time Management Professional Development Cultural Competence and Diversity	
<b>Legal Systems &amp; Terminology</b>	<b>23%</b>
Legal System Structure Court Levels/Systems Preparing for Trial Trial Procedure Legal Terminology	
<b>Legal Written Communication Skills</b>	<b>21%</b>
Basic Written Communications Legal Written Communications	

# CERTIFIED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL

## (CLP) CERTIFICATION EXAM

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The CLP designation is a recognized standard for assessing the qualifications of a legal assistant or legal support professional. The CLP designation indicates the mastery of key skills and the commitment to a high standard of conduct and professionalism.

### THE EXAM

- All four parts of the examination are multiple choice and must be taken on the first attempt.
- If you do not pass the entire examination on the first attempt, but do pass one or more parts, you may retake the part (or parts) you failed.
- Examinees will have access to a digital notepad and calculator through the exam portal. The use of a physical notepad or calculator is not permitted without prior approval from NALS.
- All failed parts must be retaken at the same time.
- Passed parts remain valid for two years after which the entire exam must be retaken.
- Those passing the exam will receive a certificate which is valid for five years.
- Recertification is required every five years and may be achieved through the accumulation of 75 hours of continuing legal education hours and activities, with 5 hours of those 75 hours being in ethics. See <https://www.nals.org/page/recertification> for details.



# Overview of Part 1 – Communication & Advanced Legal Terminology

## DICTION – Grammar

1. Adjectives
2. Adverbs
3. Basic rules and troublesome areas
4. Conjunctions
5. Nouns
6. Plurals
7. Possessives
8. Prepositions
9. Pronouns
10. Subject and verb agreement
11. Verbs

## PUNCTUATION – Rules for:

1. Apostrophes
2. Asterisks
3. Brackets
4. Colons
5. Commas
6. Dashes
7. Diagonals
8. Ellipsis marks
9. Exclamation points
10. Hyphens
11. Parentheses
12. Periods
13. Question marks
14. Quotation marks
15. Semicolons
16. Underscores

## NUMBER USAGE

1. Basic Rules
2. Rules for Expressing Numbers in Both Words and Figures
3. Special Rules
  - Addresses
  - Adjacent numbers
  - Ages and anniversaries
  - Beginning of sentences
  - Clock time
  - Dates
  - Decimals
  - Fractions
  - Indefinite numbers and amounts
  - Measurements
  - Money
  - Ordinal numbers
  - Percentages
  - Periods of time
  - Ratios and proportions
  - Roman numerals

## CAPITALIZATION

1. Basic Rules
  - Common nouns
  - First words
2. Special Rules
  - Proper nouns

## ABBREVIATIONS

1. Acts, laws, bills, and treaties
2. Computer terminology
3. Concepts, programs, and movements
4. Course titles, subjects, and academic degrees
5. Family titles
6. Government bodies
7. Holidays, seasons, events, and periods
8. Hyphenated words
9. Money
10. Nouns with numbers or letters
11. Organizations
12. Personal, professional, and civic titles
13. Places, areas, and directions
14. Races, peoples, and languages
15. Titles of literary and artistic works

## SPELLING

1. Rules
2. Compound words
3. Prefixed and suffixes
4. Troublesome words

## SYNTAX

1. Clarity
2. Conciseness
3. Outmoded and Overused expressions
4. Sentence structure
  - Dangling construction
  - Misplace modifiers
  - Parallel structure
5. Tone
  - Positive
  - Tactful

## INTRAOFFICE AND INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATIONS

1. Editing and Proofreading Guidelines
2. Letters
  - Address placement
  - Delivery and copy notations
  - Letter styles
  - Parts of a letter
  - Postscripts
  - Punctuation styles
  - Salutations
3. Social-Business Correspondence
4. Interoffice Memoranda
5. E-Mail
6. Text Messages

## ADVANCED LEGAL TERMINOLOGY

1. Usage of Latin Terms
2. Usage of Legal Terms

# Overview of Part 2 – The Law Firm: Office Procedures & Knowledge

## OFFICE PROCEDURES: RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND FILING PROCEDURES

1. General Principles
2. Files Management
  - Alphabetic indices
  - Cross-references
  - Indexing and coding
3. Filing Procedures
  - Charge-out methods
  - File organization
  - Preparing material for files
  - Retention of files
4. Filing Rules

NOTE: The Gregg Reference Manual (11<sup>th</sup> Edition) is the only accepted authority for filing questions.

  - Basic Principles
  - Business names
  - Governmental names
  - Organizational names
  - Personal names

## TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

1. Computer Hardware Components
  - Central processing unit
  - Input devices
  - Output devices
  - Storage devices
2. Computer Software
  - Applications software
  - Operating systems software
3. Computer Systems
  - Mainframe
  - Micro
  - Mini
4. Conflicts Check Systems
5. Equipment Characteristics
  - Disk drives
  - Display monitors
  - Keyboards
  - Memory
  - Printers
6. Internet
7. Processing Documents
  - Creating
  - Editing
  - Formatting
  - Inputting
  - Preparing special layout design

## BILLING AND ACCOUNTING

### 1. Accounting Terminology and Procedures

- Balance sheets
- Billing clients
- Depositing funds
- Completing deposit slips
- Endorsements
- Firm bank account and trust bank accounts
- Handling retainers, contingent fees, forwarding fees, and collection charges
- Keeping activity registers, time sheets, diaries, etc.
- Petty cash funds
- Profit and loss statements (income statements)
- Recording advances made on behalf of clients
- Writing checks
- Stopping payment on checks
- Using special checks
  - Bank drafts
  - Cashier's checks
  - Certified checks

# Overview of Part 3 – Legal Ethics & Authority

## ETHICS & JUDGMENT

1. Avoiding the Appearance of Impropriety
2. Dealing with Confidential Information
3. Guarding Privileged Communications
4. Preserving the Identity of Funds and Property of Clients
5. Promoting Confidence in the Legal Profession
6. Supporting Integrity in the Legal Profession
7. Understanding What Constitutes the Unauthorized Practice of Law (UPL)
8. Other Ethical Considerations for the Legal Profession

A thorough review of the American Bar Association Model Rules of Professional Conduct (2013), and the comments portion thereof, and the American Bar Association Model Code of Professional Responsibility (1986), and the comments portion thereof, will best help you understand this portion of the exam. See also the list of suggested references. Remember, you are being tested as though you work for a lawyer in any state, rather than your state or your law firm. For purposes of the CLP exam, you are a lawyer's assistant, not a lawyer.

## LEGAL AUTHORITY

1. Distinction between common law and civil law
2. Categorizing the law
3. Types of legal actions
4. The nature of law
5. The sources of law
6. Conflicts of law
7. Jurisdiction
8. The federal and state court systems
9. The state courts
10. Legal and court systems information

# Overview of Part 4 – Substantive Law: Legal Procedure & Document Preparation

## CITATIONS

NOTE: The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (20<sup>th</sup> Edition) is the only accepted authority for citation-style questions.

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Books         | 4. Court Rules        |
| 2. Cases         | 5. Periodicals        |
| 3. Constitutions | 6. Statutes and Codes |

## LEGAL PROCEDURE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Civil Procedure                              |  |
| • Legal and equitable actions                   | • Discovery                                  |
| • Cause of action, right to action, and remedy  | • Witness subpoenas                          |
| • Parties                                       | • Finality of judgment                       |
| • Special procedures                            | • Motion for new trial                       |
| • Rules of civil procedure                      | • Costs                                      |
| • Commencement of litigation                    | • Execution of judgment                      |
|   | • Appeals                                    |
| 2. Criminal Procedure                           |  |
| • Criminal law                                  | • Arrest of judgment motion for new trial    |
| • Criminal procedures                           | • Correction or reduction of sentence        |
| • Commencement of proceedings                   | • Minor certified as an adult                |
| • Procedure in misdemeanor cases                | • Extradition                                |
| • Right to counsel Grand Jury                   | • <i>Habeas corpus</i>                       |
| • Disclosure by prosecutor                      | • Probation/parole                           |
| • Disclosure by defense counsel                 | • Expungement                                |
| • Requirements of the defendant                 | • Sealing and inspection of records          |
| • Motion <i>in Limine</i>                       | • Guarantees of justice for the accused      |
| • Plea bargains or trial                        |  |
| • Trial procedure sentencing                    |  |
| 3. Torts  |  |
| • Distinction between criminal law and tort law | • Defenses to intentional Torts - negligence |
| • Scope of tort law                             | • Proof of negligence                        |
| • Kind of torts                                 | • Defenses to a negligence action            |
| • Proof of intentional torts                    |  |
| 4. Torts: The Products Liability Case           |  |
| • Strict liability                              | • Defenses                                   |
| • Negligence                                    | • Filing the lawsuit                         |
| • Breach of warranty                            | • Products liability practice                |
| • Limitations on liability                      |  |

## LEGAL KNOWLEDGE

### 1. Areas of Law

- Administrative
- Admiralty and maritime
- Antitrust
- Bankruptcy
- Business organizations
- Civil litigation
- Conservatorships and guardianships
- Consumer protection
- Contracts
- Criminal
- Electronic discovery
- Environmental
- Estate planning
- Estates
- Family
- Federal civil rights and employment discrimination
- Immigration
- Intellectual property
- Labor and employee rights
- Oil and gas
- Pension and profit-sharing plans
- Real estate
- Taxation
- Water
- Workers' compensation

# PROFESSIONAL PARALEGAL (PP) CERTIFICATION EXAM

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The PP designation is a recognized standard for assessing the qualifications of a paralegal professional. The PP designation reflects proficiency in the area of legal knowledge and the ability to perform substantive legal tasks, as well as commitment to a higher standard of conduct and professionalism.

## THE EXAM

- All four parts of the examination are multiple choice and must be taken on the first attempt (unless you are a current CLP).
- Individuals with a valid, current CLP credential need only sit for Part 4 of the PP Exam.
- If you do not pass the entire examination on the first attempt, but do pass one or more parts, you may retake the part (or parts) you failed.
- Examinees will have access to a digital notepad through the exam portal. The use of a physical notepad is not permitted without prior approval from NALS.
- All failed parts must be retaken at the same time.
- Passed parts are valid for two years after which the entire exam must be retaken.
- Those passing the exam will receive a certificate which is valid for five years.
- Recertification is required every five years and may be achieved through the accumulation of a minimum of 75 hours continuing legal education hours and activities, with a minimum of 5 hours of the 75 hours in ethics and 50 hours in substantive legal topics.
- See <https://www.nals.org/page/recertification> for more details.



# Overview of Part 1 – Advanced Communications & Legal Terminology

## DICTION – Grammar

1. Adjectives
2. Adverbs
3. Basic rules and troublesome areas
4. Conjunctions
5. Nouns
6. Plurals
7. Possessives
8. Prepositions
9. Pronouns
10. Subject and verb agreement
11. Verbs

## PUNCTUATION – Rules for:

1. Apostrophes
2. Asterisks
3. Brackets
4. Colons
5. Commas
6. Dashes
7. Diagonals
8. Ellipsis marks
9. Exclamation points
10. Hyphens
11. Parentheses
12. Periods
13. Question marks
14. Quotation marks
15. Semicolons
16. Underscores

## NUMBER USAGE

1. Basic Rules
2. Rules for Expressing Numbers in Both Words and Figures
3. Special Rules
  - Addresses
  - Adjacent numbers
  - Ages and anniversaries
  - Beginning of sentences
  - Clock time
  - Dates
  - Decimals
  - Fractions
  - Indefinite numbers and amounts
  - Measurements
  - Money
  - Ordinal numbers
  - Percentages
  - Periods of time
  - Ratios and proportions
  - Roman numerals

## CAPITALIZATION

1. Basic Rules
  - Common nouns
  - First words
  - Proper nouns
2. Special Rules
  - Abbreviations
  - Course titles, subjects, and academic degrees
  - Family titles
  - Government bodies
  - Holidays, seasons, events, and periods
  - Hyphenated words
  - Money
  - Nouns with numbers or letters
  - Organizations
  - Personal, professional, and civic titles
  - Places, areas, and directions
  - Races, peoples, and languages
  - Titles of literary and artistic words

## SPELLING

1. Rules
2. Compound words
3. Prefixed and suffixes
4. Troublesome words

## SYNTAX

1. Clarity
2. Conciseness
3. Outmoded and Overused Expressions
4. Sentence structure
  - Dangling construction
  - Misplace modifiers
  - Parallel structure
5. Tone
  - Positive
  - Tactful

## INTRAOFFICE AND INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATIONS

1. Editing and Proofreading Guidelines
2. Letters
  - Address placement
  - Delivery and copy notations
  - Letter styles
  - Parts of a letter
  - Postscripts
  - Punctuation styles
3. Salutations Social-Business Correspondence
4. Interoffice Memoranda
5. E-Mail
6. Text Message

## ADVANCED LEGAL TERMINOLOGY

1. Usage of Latin Terms
2. Usage of Legal Terms

# Overview of Part 2 – The Law Firm: Office Procedures & Knowledge

## OFFICE PROCEDURES: RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND FILING PROCEDURES

1. General Principles
2. Files Management
  - Alphabetic indices
  - Cross-references
  - Indexing and coding
3. Filing Procedures
  - Charge-out methods
  - File organization
  - Preparing material for files
  - Retention of files
4. Filing Rules

NOTE: The Gregg Reference Manual (11<sup>th</sup> Edition) is the only accepted authority for filing questions.

  - Basic Principles
  - Business names
  - Governmental names
  - Organizational names
  - Personal names

## TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTERS

1. Computer Hardware Components
  - Central processing unit
  - Input devices
  - Output devices
  - Storage devices
2. Computer Software
  - Applications software
  - Operating systems software
3. Computer Systems
  - Mainframe
  - Micro
  - Mini
4. Conflicts Check Systems
5. Equipment Characteristics
  - Disk drives
  - Display monitors
  - Keyboards
  - Memory
  - Printers
6. Internet
7. Processing Documents
  - Creating
  - Editing
  - Formatting
  - Inputting
  - Preparing special layout design

## BILLING AND ACCOUNTING

### 2. Accounting Terminology and Procedures

- Balance sheets
- Billing clients
- Depositing funds
- Completing deposit slips
- Endorsements
- Firm bank account and trust bank accounts
- Handling retainers, contingent fees, forwarding fees, and collection charges
- Keeping activity registers, time sheets, diaries, etc.
- Petty cash funds
- Profit and loss statements (income statements)
- Recording advances made on behalf of clients
- Writing checks
- Stopping payment on checks
- Using special checks
  - Bank drafts
  - Cashier's checks
  - Certified checks

## Overview of Part 3 – Advanced Legal Ethics

### ETHICS & JUDGMENT

1. Avoiding the Appearance of Impropriety
2. Dealing with Confidential Information
3. Guarding Privileged Communications
4. Preserving the Identity of Funds and Property of Clients
5. Promoting Confidence in the Legal Profession
6. Supporting Integrity in the Legal Profession
7. Understanding What Constitutes the Unauthorized Practice of Law (UPL)
8. Other Ethical Considerations for the Legal Profession

A thorough review of the American Bar Association Model Rules of Professional Conduct (2013), and the comments portion thereof, and the American Bar Association Model Code of Professional Responsibility (1986), and the comments portion thereof, will best help you understand this portion of the exam. See also the list of suggested references. Remember, you are being tested as though you work for a lawyer in any state, rather than your state or your law firm. For purposes of the CLP exam, you are a lawyer's assistant, not a lawyer.

### LEGAL AUTHORITY

1. Distinction between common law and civil law
2. Categorizing the law
3. Types of legal actions
4. The nature of law
5. The sources of law
6. Conflicts of law
7. Jurisdiction
8. The federal and state court systems
9. The state courts
10. Legal and court systems information

# Overview of Part 4 – Advanced Substantive Law

## CITATIONS

NOTE: The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (20<sup>th</sup> Edition) is the only accepted authority for citation-style questions.

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Books         | 4. Court Rules        |
| 2. Cases         | 5. Periodicals        |
| 3. Constitutions | 6. Statutes and Codes |

## LEGAL PROCEDURE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Civil Procedure                              |  |
| • Legal and equitable actions                   | • Discovery                                  |
| • Cause of action, right to action, and remedy  | • Witness subpoenas                          |
| • Parties                                       | • Finality of judgment                       |
| • Special procedures                            | • Motion for new trial                       |
| • Rules of civil procedure                      | • Costs                                      |
| • Commencement of litigation                    | • Execution of judgment                      |
|   | • Appeals                                    |
| 2. Criminal Procedure                           |  |
| • Criminal law                                  | • Arrest of judgment motion for new trial    |
| • Criminal procedures                           | • Correction or reduction of sentence        |
| • Commencement of proceedings                   | • Minor certified as an adult                |
| • Procedure in misdemeanor cases                | • Extradition                                |
| • Right to counsel Grand Jury                   | • <i>Habeas corpus</i>                       |
| • Disclosure by prosecutor                      | • Probation/parole                           |
| • Disclosure by defense counsel                 | • Expungement                                |
| • Requirements of the defendant                 | • Sealing and inspection of records          |
| • Motion <i>in Limine</i>                       | • Guarantees of justice for the accused      |
| • Plea bargains or trial                        |  |
| • Trial procedure sentencing                    |  |
| 3. Torts  |  |
| • Distinction between criminal law and tort law | • Defenses to intentional Torts - negligence |
| • Scope of tort law                             | • Proof of negligence                        |
| • Kind of torts                                 | • Defenses to a negligence action            |
| • Proof of intentional torts                    |  |
| 4. Torts: The Products Liability Case           |  |
| • Strict liability                              | • Defenses                                   |
| • Negligence                                    | • Filing the lawsuit                         |
| • Breach of warranty                            | • Products liability practice                |
| • Limitations on liability                      |  |

## LEGAL KNOWLEDGE

### 1. Areas of Law

- Administrative
- Admiralty and maritime
- Antitrust
- Bankruptcy
- Business organizations
- Civil litigation
- Conservatorships and guardianships
- Consumer protection
- Contracts
- Criminal
- Electronic discovery
- Environmental
- Estate planning
- Estates
- Family
- Federal civil rights and employment discrimination
- Immigration
- Intellectual property
- Labor and employee rights
- Oil and gas
- Pension and profit-sharing plans
- Real estate
- Taxation
- Water
- Workers' compensation

# EXAM POLICIES & DEFINITIONS

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## ELIGIBILITY

Each exam (ALP; CLP; PP) has its own eligibility requirements comprising of education and/or employment experience. Visit [www.nals.org](http://www.nals.org) > Certification > specific exam tab > “Requirements” for full details regarding eligibility. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure eligibility for their chosen exam is met prior to applying. Ineligible applicants will be subject to refund policies.

## EXAMINATION APPLICATION

All applications are available to be completed and submitted online from [NALS.org/Certification](http://NALS.org/Certification). Payment is due at the time of application. Applications received without payment will not be reviewed until payment is made in full. Unpaid applications will be deleted after 45 days, and a new application must be submitted.

Candidates interested in retaking part(s) of the exam not passed on the original attempt should complete the online application but select “*Retake Applicant*” to receive discounted pricing. Candidates must then select which part(s) they are retaking.

## STUDENT DEFINED

A student is defined as anyone currently enrolled and taking nine (9) hours or more in an accredited college course of study with current student identification. Student exam candidates must submit copies of their academic transcripts for review and approval during the online application process.

## CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

A candidate can postpone their online exam due to unforeseen circumstances. All postponements must be submitted via email and approved by the Certification/Education Manager. Upon approval, the exam candidate’s registration will be moved to the desired exam month. The Certification/Education Manager will update your application and record accordingly – do not complete a new online exam application. The deadline to postpone your exam is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before your exam.

Candidates unable to sit for the examination after applying, may request a refund of their fee, less a 25% processing fee, if requested within seven days of submission. Cancellations after this period will forfeit the full amount of their registration.

It is the responsibility of each exam candidate to complete their exam during the specified time frame. Exam candidates who are unable to complete their exam during their eligibility window may pay a \$50 fee to receive a 30-day extension. Payment is required before the request is processed and are non-refundable. Extensions may be requested here: <https://www.nals.org/page/examextenapp>. Processing may take up to 3 business days, so please plan accordingly.



## RESCHEDULING POLICY

Candidates are advised to login and schedule their exam within five days of receiving their access instructions. Exam appointments must fall within the 30-day window. Candidates who wait to schedule their exam may not have as many options available to them and do not allow any time to resolve technical, scheduling, or personal situations. **Exam appointments must be made more than 24 hours in advance.** Day-of appointments may be available for a \$25 premium scheduling fee. NALS is not responsible for a candidate's inability to complete their exam due to the candidate's delay in scheduling or failure to meet technical requirements.

Rescheduling your exam is easy with Prolydian. Candidates may reschedule their exam as many times as needed but must do so **at least** four (4) hours in advance of their appointment. Instructions will be included in the authorization email. Candidates who do not reschedule their exam in time may either sit for their exam as scheduled or forfeit their appointment and associated exam fees. Candidates do not need to contact NALS when rescheduling their exam within their approved exam month. NALS cannot reschedule an exam for a candidate.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The exam questions must remain confidential. You may not discuss the exam questions or answers with anyone for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to, discussing the exam with other examinees or discussing the exam with others who have already passed the exam. Within the exam delivery platform, candidates will have the option to leave a comment for NALS on a specific exam question. If you have any questions about the exam, please direct your questions to the Certifications Manager, at [cert-edu@nals.org](mailto:cert-edu@nals.org).

Persons breaking the confidentiality of the exam may, upon investigation by the NALS Certifying Board, lose their certification designation and/or be prohibited from future examinations.

## SCORING REVIEW PROCESS

You will be certified after attaining at least 70% per part. Parts with scores below 70% will have to be retaken. If it is necessary for you to retake parts of the examination, only your new scores will be considered on the retaken parts. If you fail any part(s) of the exam, you may reapply online for an exam as soon as the next available exam window.

Results will not be finalized until the Certifying Board has reviewed the exam results and proctoring video. In the unlikely event that a candidate is found to be in violation of a proctoring rule, their entire attempt will be voided and all fees forfeited. Additionally, they must wait at least six months to sit for another NALS certification exam. Questions may be directed to the Certifications Manager, at [cert-edu@nals.org](mailto:cert-edu@nals.org).

## EXAM RESULTS

Upon verification by the National Certifying Board, candidates will be notified via email of their results. Candidates earning a certification will also receive a certificate by U.S. mail approx. 45 days after their examination. If you are taking the exam through a school or learning institution, your instructor or institution is responsible for disseminating your results. Students may be notified of their results sooner than the time frame listed above through prior arrangement with their instructor or institution. Your certificate will be suitable for framing.

# VERIFICATION PROCEDURE

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While the National Certifying Board implements extensive quality control measures in the scoring process for each exam, it is recognized that an examinee may wish to verify the accuracy in scoring. To have an exam part graded manually, the request must be in writing, accompanied by a fee of \$25 per score/part, and received within 45 days from the date of the Report of Scores. The request should be sent to the National Certification/Education Manager at [cert-edu@nals.org](mailto:cert-edu@nals.org).

Within 30 days from the date of receipt of the written request and accompanying fee, the score in question will be verified, and the examinee will be provided an "Official Score Verification Report." Any resultant change in score (up or down) will be noted on the examinee's records.

# REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

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Any certification may be revoked for any one of the following reasons:

- Conviction of a felony; or
- Determination by appropriate authority of the unauthorized practice of law; or
- Divulging the contents of any examination; or falsification of information on application form; or
- Violation of the NALS Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility.

Individuals currently serving a prison term are ineligible to sit for any NALS certification examination.

# EXAM REGISTRATION & ACCESS

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- Visit our events page and select the month you wish to complete the online exam. Each exam candidate must register for the exam of their choosing by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous month (i.e. apply by July 1 for an August exam).
- Applications are reviewed once monthly after the application deadline for that month. Upon review of your application, you will be notified via email of your application status.
- Candidates who are not approved will be given the opportunity to correct their application by providing the requested material or switch to an exam for which they are eligible.
- Candidates who are approved will receive an email from NALS with instructions on how to access their Prolydian account and schedule their exam appointment.
- Applications and payments are valid for six months. See the cancellation & refund section for information on rescheduling/extensions. Candidates who do not complete their exam within six months of their application may forfeit their fee and be asked to reapply.

# UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

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Candidates who are approved for their exam month will receive an email prior to the start of the exam window with their Prolydian account information and instructions on scheduling their exam. For full information including a step-by-step guide, visit <https://www.nals.org/page/OnlineExamProcess>.

## Before the exam:

The exam is a computer-based AI-proctored online assessment (by Rosalyn.ai) and must be taken on a desktop or laptop. Rosalyn is a fully on demand platform and candidates can test at any time within their 30-day window. Tablets and mobile devices are not supported.

Prior to beginning the exam, candidates must setup their Prolydian profile. You will need a government-issued photo ID on the day of your exam and the name on the ID **must** match the name on your profile. Contact NALS if the name in your profile needs to be updated. **Candidates MUST complete the Prolydian profile setup and computer requirements check prior to beginning an exam.**

Follow the steps below prior to your exam:

1. Log in to your Prolydian account (provided by NALS in application approval email).
2. Update contact and profile information. Your name must match the name on your ID (see 3e).
3. Review the system requirements and test your equipment on the device and internet you plan to use on exam day to make sure your system is compatible:
  - a. [Internet connection test](#)
  - b. [Camera test](#)
  - c. [Download and install the Rosalyn application](#) if you don't have it already, and [grant the necessary permissions](#)
  - d. You are encouraged to take the exam on a personal computer. **If you must use a work computer, please have your IT department review [port and firewall settings](#).**
  - e. [Prepare identity verification documents](#). Acceptable ID documents include: Government-issued driver's license, College/University-issued staff photo ID, Passport, or any Physical Government-issued Identification Card (must include photo).

## On exam day:

Be sure you have your photo ID ready (that matches the name in your Prolydian account) and complete the following steps to take your exam:

1. Log in to your Prolydian account at <https://app.prolydian.com/>
2. Go to the **My Exams** page
3. Under the exam name, click the "Read/Accept Terms and Conditions" button
4. When a pop-up window appears, review and accept the terms
5. Next, click the "Launch Exam" button to proceed to the check-in process for your Rosalyn AI Proctoring session.
6. You will need a valid Photo ID to verify your identity prior to taking the exam.

Proceed through your exam and click Submit when done. Candidates will have the ability to 'flag' test questions they wish to review later and review all items before submitting their exam. If an exam is not submitted by the time limit, the exam will automatically submit.

### Technical Requirements

- Windows 7/10/11 or Mac OS
- Working camera and microphone
- Desktop computer or laptop (tablets, Chromebook and cell phones do not meet the proctoring requirements) with:
  - Dual-core CPU
  - At least 2 GB available of RAM memory
  - At least 500 MB of available disk space
  - Minimum Internet download/upload speed 500 Kb/s
- Dual Monitors are NOT supported
- Laptops must remain connected to a power source for the duration of the exam
- Minimum Internet download/upload speed 500 Kb/s. Hot spots are not recommended.

### Following the exam:

Score reports will be available via email within 24 hours of the exam. These are preliminary results until reviewed/approved by the NALS Certifying Board. Score confirmation will be sent via email approximately 30 days after the exam. You may contact [cert-edu@nals.org](mailto:cert-edu@nals.org) if you do not receive your preliminary results.

# Prolydian: TEST TAKER FAQ

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Many questions can be answered by visiting: <https://prolydian.ladesk.com/190898-Starting-Your-Exam--Rosalyn> and reviewing this FAQ: <https://prolydian.ladesk.com/525946-Test-Taker-FAQs>. Find information on remote proctored exams, technical requirements, an overview exam-day experience and more.

Prolydian Support is here to assist you through the examination process.

Phone: (850) 739-8992 | Phone Support Hours: 9 AM – 5 PM ET (weekdays)

Chat (must be logged in to your Prolydian account > click the “?” in the top right)

Chat Support Hours: 9 AM – 8 PM ET (weekdays) | 8 AM – 5 PM ET (weekends)

Email: [support+nals@prolydian.com](mailto:support+nals@prolydian.com)

## STUDY MATERIALS & COURSES

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*The Certifying Board does not release previous examinations for study, nor will individual evaluations of any examination be given.* However, the following study materials and courses are available through the NALS Resource Center:

1. Online Practice Exams are available for purchase at the [NALS Online Store](#).
2. *Suggested References* – See “Resources” and “Train for the Exam” Tabs under Certification at [www.nals.org](http://www.nals.org).

As new texts are published, all examinations are updated accordingly. See the Suggested References for the most current list of references that will aid in your preparation for the examinations.

# EFFECTIVE STUDY HABITS

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Consider the following suggestions as you prepare for the exam.

A. WHEN to study:

- Be dedicated to a specific time for study.
- Begin your study program early—don't wait until a week or two before the exam. Begin a year ahead if you wish—just keep notes for review a short time before the exam.
- Consider packing your lunch two or three days a week. Study where you aren't disturbed. Lunchtime is a good time to meet with other students for short study group sessions.
- Get to the office an hour early one or two days a week. Close your door, turn off the phone, and study.
- If you are carpooling or using public transportation, perhaps you can review notes as you travel or listen to prerecorded study materials; *e.g.*, phrases or legal terminology from the reference glossaries.
- Systematically chart your study plan on a calendar and stick to it.

B. WHERE to study:

- Home can be filled with interruptions and tasks just waiting to be done. Studying outside the home may be more desirable or even essential.
- Returning to the office, if you will have an uninterrupted evening, can provide a comfortable study environment with easy access to study aids, the photocopy machine, etc.

C. WHAT to study:

- This manual contains a list of all areas that may be tested on the examinations and a list of suggested references.

D. HOW to study:

- Do your most difficult studying during your best concentration periods.
- Exercise to break up the monotony of long study periods.
- Gather necessary materials. Consider all available suggested resources. Check the NALS website for assistance in locating materials.
- Schedule definite times and outline specific goals for your study time.
- Use loose-leaf, punched paper for notes that can be arranged advantageously.

# TIPS FOR EXAMINATION DAY

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A. Nerves and Stress

Imagine your success. Be positive! Know you can do it! Try hard; give yourself a chance; and remember to breathe.

Spend your energy on the examination, not on fear. Think about the examination, not the worry! Focus on the questions, not your fear or nerves.

Understand why you are studying. Failing to study and taking the examination “cold” may hurt your chances to pass.

B. Respect your Right Answers

People with examination nerves are often perfectionists. Don't dwell on missed answers. CREDIT YOURSELF WITH WHAT YOU DO RIGHT!

C. Understanding the Examination Format

- All parts of the examination have an objective format (*i.e.*, multiple choice). Any unanswered question is considered incorrect.
- Because these are objective questions, only one answer is acceptable.
- Carefully read all written directions.

## NALS CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY (WITH DISCUSSION)

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Members of NALS are bound by the objectives of this association and the standards of conduct required of the legal profession.

Every member shall:

- Encourage respect for the law and the administration of justice
- Observe rules governing privileged communications and confidential information
- Promote and exemplify high standards of loyalty, cooperation, and courtesy
- Pursue a high order of professional attainment

Integrity and high standards of conduct are fundamental to the success of our professional association. This Code is promulgated by NALS and accepted by its members to accomplish these ends.



## Canon 1.

Members of this association shall maintain a high degree of competency and integrity through continuing education to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide quality legal services to the public.

The purpose of continuing legal education, supported by NALS, is to expand and refine the knowledge of a member of this association, both to increase the self-esteem of the member and to make the member of greater assistance to the lawyer in the delivery of quality legal services. NALS encourages continuing education by offering national educational institutes, local and national seminars, and legal training courses.

The association encourages every legal secretary/lawyer's assistant/legal support professional/paralegal to become certified as an ALP and/or a CLP and/or a PP. Certification is used as a standard of measurement that signifies above-average skills and abilities, initiative and good judgment, and dedication to the profession. Certification is a valuable form of career insurance once a commitment is made. The growth of a profession and the attainment and maintenance of individual competence require an ongoing incorporation of new concepts and techniques. Continuing education enables law office staff to become aware of new developments in the field of law and provides the opportunity to improve skills used in the delivery of legal services.

A member of this association recognizes the importance of maintaining an interest in the development of continuing legal education. Professional competence is each member's responsibility. The exchange of ideas and skills benefits the legal profession and the general public.

A member of this association recognizes the necessity of membership and participation in a professional association. One of the hallmarks of any profession is its professional association, founded for the purpose of determining standards and guidelines for the growth and development of the profession. Through a professional association, a member is able to promote a cooperative effort with others in the legal community for the delivery of legal services.

The continued and increased contribution by members of this association to the delivery of legal services is dependent upon a further delineation of their skills, qualifications, and areas of responsibility. It is, therefore, incumbent upon each member to promote the growth of the legal profession through support of and participation in the endeavors of NALS.

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rule 1.1.

## Canon 2.

Members of this association shall maintain a high standard of ethical conduct and shall contribute to the integrity of this association and the legal profession.

The highest degree of ethical conduct and integrity is the backbone of the legal profession. Because of the close professional relationship of a lawyer and a member of this association, it is essential that the member maintain an equally high standard of both ethical conduct and integrity. The public expects and deserves such ethical conduct and integrity by the lawyer and also expects and deserves such conduct by all non-lawyer staff with whom the client comes in contact.

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rules 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, and 8.4.

## Canon 3.

Members of this association shall avoid a conflict of interest pertaining to a client matter.

Loyalty is an essential element in the lawyer's relationship to a client. An impermissible conflict of interest may exist on behalf of a member of this association before representation is undertaken. In that event, such conflict of interest must be disclosed to the lawyer because of the lawyer's requirement to avoid such a conflict, even to the extent of declining representation. In the event a conflict occurs after representation has been undertaken, the member must disclose such conflict to the lawyer.

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rules 1.7(b), 1.8, 1.9, and 1.10.

## Canon 4.

Members of this association shall preserve and protect the confidences and privileged communications of a client.

The obligation of a member of this association to preserve the confidences and secrets of a client continues after the termination of employment of the lawyer by the client and after employment of the member by the lawyer.

Both the fiduciary relationship between the lawyer and the client and the proper functioning of our legal system require that the lawyer preserve confidences of the person who employs or seeks to employ the lawyer. A client must feel free to discuss anything and everything with the lawyer, and the lawyer must be equally free to ask the client questions to obtain information beyond that volunteered by the client.

The normal operation of a law office exposes confidential personal information to non-lawyer employees, particularly those having access to files. The requirement of confidentiality obligates a lawyer to exercise extreme care in selecting and training law office personnel so that the sanctity of the client's confidences and privileged communications may be preserved.

Preserving client confidences is a vital part of the relationship between the client and the law office staff in the delivery of legal services. The confidentiality of information must be respected at all times.

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rule 1.6.

## Canon 5.

Members of this association shall exercise care in using independent professional judgment and in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of a lawyer and shall not act in matters involving professional legal judgment.

It is permissible, and indeed it often occurs, that lawyers delegate tasks to members of the law office

staff. In a specific ethical opinion by the American Bar Association, it was held:

A lawyer can employ lay secretaries, lay investigators, lay detectives, lay researchers, accountants, lay scriveners, non-lawyer draftsmen, or non-lawyer researchers. In fact, he may employ non-lawyers to do any task for him except counsel clients about law matters, engage directly in the practice of law, appear in court, or appear in formal proceedings as part of the judicial process, so long as it is he who takes the work and vouches for it to the client and becomes responsible to the client.

ABA Comm. on Professional Ethics, Formal Op. 316 (1967).

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rule 5.5(b).

## Canon 6.

Members of this association shall not solicit legal business on behalf of a lawyer.

Selection of a lawyer by a layperson should be made on an informed basis. Advice and recommendation of third parties—relatives, friends, acquaintances, business associates, or other lawyers— and disclosure of relevant information about the lawyer and his practice may be helpful. A layperson is best served if the recommendation is disinterested and informed. In order that the recommendation is disinterested, a lawyer should not seek to influence another to recommend his employment. A lawyer should not compensate another person for recommending him, for influencing a prospective client to employ him, or to encourage future recommendations.

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rule 7.2.

## Canon 7.

Members of this association, unless permitted by law, shall not perform paralegal functions except under the direct supervision of a lawyer and shall not advertise or contract with members of the general public for the performance of paralegal function.

See discussions under Canons 5, 8, and 9 and the comparisons to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics referred to in those discussions.

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, *see* AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rules 5.3 and 5.5.

## Canon 8.

Members of this association shall not perform any of the duties restricted to lawyers or do things which lawyers themselves may not do and shall assist in preventing the unauthorized practice of law.

Canon 8 is similar to Canon 9, but Canon 8 specifically states that members may not do things or engage in activities “which lawyers themselves may not do.”

## Canon 9.

Members of this association not licensed to practice law shall not engage in the practice of law as defined by statutes or court decisions.

Although the rules of professional conduct of the various state bar associations may not directly govern members of this association except through a supervising lawyer, it is incumbent upon a member of NALS to know the provisions of the lawyers' rules applicable in the member's state and to avoid any action that might involve a member of this association or a lawyer in a violation of a state code or in the appearance of professional impropriety.

The practice of law includes but is not limited to accepting cases or clients, setting fees, giving legal advice, and appearing in a representative capacity in court or before an administrative or regulatory agency. The definition of the practice of law varies from state to state. A member of this association should consult the appropriate definition in the member's state.

A member of this association may perform tasks assigned by a lawyer so long as the lawyer maintains a direct relationship with the client, supervises the delegated work, and has complete professional responsibility for the work product. The requirement that a lawyer must maintain a direct relationship with the client does not preclude a member of the law office staff from meeting with the client when such a meeting is necessary to carry out the professional duties assigned by the lawyer.

Various states have adopted requirements applicable to the practice of legal assistants. Any member of this association employed as a legal assistant or whose responsibilities include those of a legal assistant should consult the appropriate requirements in that state. Where conflict exists, the requirements of that state shall control.

This canon is intended to protect the public from receiving legal services from unqualified individuals. "The prohibition of lay intermediaries is intended to insure [sic] the loyalty of the lawyer to the client unimpaired by intervening and possibly conflicting interest." Cheatham, *Availability of Legal Services: The Responsibility of the Individual Lawyer and of the Organized Bar*, 12 UCLA L. Rev. 438, 439 (1965).

For a comparison to other rules of professional responsibilities and ethics, see AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MODEL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, Rule 5.5(b).

## Canon 10.

Members of this association shall do all other things incidental, necessary, or expedient to enhance professional responsibility and participation in the administration of justice and public service in cooperation with the legal profession.