



MAGGIANO, DIGIROLAMO & LIZZI P.C.
201 COLUMBIA AVENUE FORT LEE, NJ 07024
201-585-9111 | WWW.MAGGIANOLAW.COM

FAQ: WHAT TO EXPECT, AND HOW TO DEAL WITH

PERSONAL INJURY LAW FIRMS

WHY DO YOU NEED A LAWYER?

Let's face it – if you are dealing with criminal charges and preparing yourself for trial, there may be a lot at stake. You could hire a personal injury attorney for several reasons – perhaps you aren't receiving workers' compensation benefits that you deserve from a construction accident, or maybe you have been involved in a car accident and received serious injuries you believe you should be compensated for. When a personal injury accident occurs, you may think that you can handle it yourself. However, you never know what will happen. What seems like minor injuries may actually morph slowly into major ones and you may regret settling on an offer that an attorney could have helped you avoid. Your attorney will make sure that you get the full spectrum of damages that you are actually entitled to and help negotiate when it comes to maximizing your recovery.

When it comes to insurers, your claim may be taken more seriously if you have the guidance of an experienced attorney on your side. You may believe that receiving help from an attorney is well beyond what you can afford; however, in the end, it pays off because you may have had even more expenses if you didn't allow an attorney to take on your case. The fact of the matter is simple – the help and knowledge of an experienced attorney will go far beyond what you would find yourself in books or on the Internet if you were representing yourself.



HOW DO I FIND A LAWYER?

There are some important questions you will want to ask yourself if you are seeking help from an experienced personal injury attorney. For instance, you may ask yourself, How long has this lawyer been in practice? Have they taken on important personal injury cases and had success? Does the lawyer tend to represent plaintiffs in need? At Maggiano, DiGirolamo & Lizzi, we have the experience you are looking for. We have been in practice for over 35 years with many years experience between attorneys. Furthermore, we represent plaintiffs in varying situations and help them get the rightful compensation they deserve on many spectrums. We have gained compensation successfully in situations like car, construction, motorcycle, trucking, and medical malpractice accidents.

Listen to what the clients have to say. You can take a good word of advice from those recommending you an attorney after your accident has occurred. You can speak to friends and acquaintances to see what they went through in the attorney process. However, making a decision about an attorney should not fall solely on the basis of someone's recommendation. No, you should take the time to look into the lawyer's style and exactly whom they have represented in the past and what they did to get there. All attorneys will fight differently for you to retain your rights. Our style is to work with you on a more personal level, tailored perfectly to your needs, but to fight aggressively nonetheless when it comes to time spent in the courtroom. Does this sound like something you would benefit from?

DO LAWYERS SPECIALIZE?

Many lawyers are generalized and indeed are known by a specific "type," also known as specializing themselves. In many cases, the answer to this is a solid "yes." Many attorneys since as early as the 1970s have been becoming certified in select practice areas.

Many times, you will approach an attorney that you are interested in and they will more than likely use the phrase, "I concentrate my practice in..." or, "I focus my practice on..." but the fact remains the same – if they have the experience you are looking for and you have no doubt that they can represent you, they may be right for your case!

Take our attorneys at Maggiano, DiGirolamo, & Lizzi for example. We are specifically tailored to suit a client's needs in personal injury law. We can work in a personal injury lawsuit that is either complex or very minor, earning you rightful compensation and a shoulder to lean on. However, our successes are not small – we offer a wide range of specialized services.

To give you a few examples – we take on cases involving motor vehicle crashes, which involve devastating effects and things like brain and head injuries, neck injuries, psychological injuries, and so much more. We also specialize in liquor liability, where we defend you based on "dram shop" laws put in place to hold businesses liable for injuries sustained by patrons involving alcohol that was sold to them by specific establishments.

Another personal injury law that we specialize in are construction accidents, which are some of the most dangerous workplaces in the U.S. where you can sustain injuries from things like getting caught between objects, falling, or even electrocution. As you can see, we are a very unlimited firm offering a wide array of services!

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THE LAWYER ASK FOR MY BUSINESS?

Before you make this huge and possibly life-changing decision, you should consider the elements of what you have seen thus far in the process. You may speak with several attorneys before you decide to stick to one particular attorney above the rest. You should never stop at just the first one and "shop" around based on reviews you have taken, experience they have, and what they specialize in and if it is tailored to your needs or not.

You should pay attention the things you hear and see at your initial consultation. Did the lawyer take the time to listen to everything involved with your accident? Did they offer to collect evidence needed to back up your case and learn about all the details? Did they introduce you to the legal fees that you will be expected to cover associated with your case?

Every attorney is going to be very different from the next with how they choose to handle a case. Some firms will do a lot of phone screening before they meet with you in person, or ask to approach you right away to speak with you about a case. There are some things you must consider based on what you have seen.

Is the lawyer asking for your business competent and believes they can meet all of your deadlines and represent you every step of the way? Do they communicate well with you? Are they ethical in nature and don't charge you way too much for their services? Then, in the end, you may have found the lawyer for you. It may be a good idea to accept their offer and trust them with your case!

HOW WILL I KNOW WHICH LAWYER IS BEST FOR ME?

Look at things on a more personal level. Pay attention to the personality of the lawyer and the chemistry that you have between them and yourself. If you feel uncomfortable at your initial meeting and the answers that they are giving you to your questions, or it feels like they are blowing off your case, you may never achieve the relationship that a typical person strives for with their lawyer.

Trust your instincts and always seek someone that has a personality compatible to your own. If they are experienced and accessible on top of this, then you may have chosen a good one!

Communication and promptness is also a huge deciding factor. If you believe you have found a prospective lawyer that you may stick with, don't be afraid to ask them how you will be able to contact them and how long it will take them to get back to you.

Many lawyers are not the best at communication because they take on too much to handle with various clients.

If you have heard that it takes several days for a specific lawyer to get back to clients, then you may be experiencing this issue and it will be a good idea to seek the help of another attorney so you can avoid losing precious time that you have paid for.

Another detail that is important for deciding whether or not a lawyer is right for you is a willingness to work with you.

Many lawyers will not just rob you of your precious funds and leave you with nothing to handle by yourself – no, a good lawyer will typically apply their knowledge to your case and give you information on legal principles you will need to understand and leave you on your own to come up with some good decisions.

SHOULD I HIRE A LAWYER?

If you believe a personal injury attorney in mind will get you the compensation that you deserve for your damages, then you should certainly hire them for the job. One thing to remember is that there is a statute of limitations for most personal injury claims, and so you will want to act as quickly as possible, even though it may be a tedious and time consuming process to find the lawyer that you can trust.

Contacting an attorney can protect your rights and leave you time to heal. While you are healing, a good attorney will make sure that all of the deadlines for your case are met.

A lawyer that chooses to fully dedicate their time to a case is the one you need for such a complex case as one that involves personal injury. Personal injury cases hit close to home and involve a lot of deep, traumatic feelings while you are healing and wondering where to turn. Clients, when asked about our firm, will realistically tell you – we are a law firm that cares!

Many clients from the past will recommend us and they all have one idea in mind that stays true: We work with you through our guidance, support, and legal advice while being both caring and understanding. If you can't come to us, we will come to you – just so that, in the end, you get the compensation and understanding you need. So, should you hire a lawyer that gives you all of that? Sure thing!



HOW CLOSELY WILL I BE INVOLVED IN MY LAWYER'S WORK?

This really depends on the arrangement that you have and what they need from you. Perhaps you need to gather evidence together for your case; then that will be left to you to provide to them however you need to (through email, over the phone, in person, etc.) Have you talked to witnesses?

Do you have phone calls, texts, or recordings from these witnesses? Do you have documentation that will help the case? These are all things that you need to provide because they can only help your lawyer help you.

If there is any information that is damaging to your case, it is good to mention because they will need to have a defense ready for you when information is brought up during the trial.

Sometimes, a lawyer will just need to take time speculating about your case and where to turn next. If you need things explained to you because you wonder where the lawyer is in the process and what their next move is, then it may be in your best interest to ask and see where things are.

If your lawyer is working on preparing your case, you can always request copies of all the letters and documents that they have gotten ready. This is where arrangements come into play to stay updated through your lawyer. Will they contact you once a week? Twice? Three times? You may be charged for the time spent talking about your case, but they will not let you down.

This is one thing we promise – we will always keep you updated on where we are at in the process. We will keep you involved as possible at all times.

HOW CAN I HELP BUILD A SUCCESSFUL LAWYER-CLIENT TEAM?

Once again, communication is key, as it is for many aspects in this nation. Every time communication takes place between a client and a lawyer, you are either increasing or decreasing the trust that you have.

You do not want to be left in the dust, and neither does your lawyer. You want to feel like you are engaged with them every step of the way throughout the law process, right?

You want somebody who is on your side and it doesn't feel like they're miles away from your expectations? Then communication is exactly what you need. Thankfully, communication is one of the most important aspects to us when it comes to helping you on a legal level.

We will go above and beyond your needs to make sure that you feel like you have not only an aggressive lawyer on your side seeking compensation for you, but also a friend and shoulder that you can lean on. That's important when it comes to choosing an attorney.

Developing a plan of action is helpful as well. Meeting up several times and discussing what you want from the case is vital if you want to feel like your lawyer is getting to understand your case and not just to what suits them and their paycheck.

No, a lawyer-client relationship goes deeper than that. A helpful attorney will not just say, "This is what we're going to do." Instead, they will ask, "What do you want to get out of your case? And how do I help you achieve that?"

As your attorneys, you should always understand that we are working for you. And if you think that sounds good – then give us a call today and we can discuss your case. We want to work with you and give you the guidance you need.

IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE A FEE AGREEMENT AND WHAT SHOULD BE IN IT?

Neither sides of the spectrum want to feel cheated – the client or the attorney. This is why it is important to settle on a fee agreement that you discuss with the attorney on all levels.

A lawyer will require written fee agreements for the sake of keeping money disputes at bay and avoid issues of wondering who agreed to what. But what should these agreements include?

An agreement can touch base on hourly fees, contingency fees, and other costs involved with the lawsuit. If you are paying a lawyer by the hour, the agreement should set out hourly rates of the lawyer and anyone else who might work on the case, including when you will be billed.

A contingency fee, on the other hand, is when the lawyer waits until the case is over and takes a percentage of the amount that the client wins. These are very common in many personal injury cases above all else.

Litigation costs should also be explained, because they will pay a huge part in all of this. This includes court fees, fees charged by expert witnesses, private investigators, and much more!

Fee agreements are unlimited; in fact, sometimes they cover even more than what you will be paying. For instance, things that may be in a fee agreement may include the extent of the lawyer's representation, who will do the work, how each party will be able to end the relationship, and how you will work together on the case.

WHAT ADDITIONAL OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS WILL I HAVE TO PAY?

There are several other fees that you may be responsible for paying when you seek the help of a lawyer. For instance, in personal injury cases, you may hear about something known as a deposition. Sometimes, in fact, they are a requirement. For instance, in personal injury cases, you may hear about something known as a deposition. Sometimes, in fact, they are a requirement.

Depositions are out-of-court meetings where an individual is sent to answer an attorney's questions under oath, and could entail severe substantial costs. Depositions require court reporters, which are paid by the party taking the deposition. Transcripts for the deposition must be paid for, and can range anywhere from \$100 to thousands of dollars depending on the length of the deposition. You may have to pay for transportation costs for the lawyer as well.

They are taking time out of their day to go to locations such as the courthouse, places where depositions take place, and more. The fact of the matter is that personal injury lawyers spend a significant amount of time and many costs identifying and collecting evidence to present to judges and juries. Witnesses play a huge role in this and sometimes they are reluctant to testify, therefore, they will often request compensation for their time and expenses as a result.

Filing fees are considered to be out-of-pocket expenses during the litigation process as well. Court filing fees can range anywhere from a few tens of dollars; however, over the course of trial, several hundred or even several thousands of dollars can be thrown into this matter. It is a good idea to discuss all up-front costs and ones that will be added on as the case gets more involved.

WHEN IS MY LAWYERS BILL DUE?

As we discussed, sometimes a retainer will pay for many costs. If you throw all of those costs in at the beginning, you may stay within your retainer and still have money left over – and if not, you will owe the attorney for the expenses that were not taken care of.

In reality, many attorneys are paid ahead of time, but then again, many are paid after they get you the compensation that you deserve. When a contingency agreement is made in a personal injury case, the lawyer will only be paid if the client wins the case and then will be based off of the percentage mentioned previously.

Flat fees can reduce the chance that the attorney will not be paid in the end because of lack of funds. Flat fees are dollar amounts that an attorney and the client will agree on before the attorney begins their actual work.

They will typically choose this method because it is not only a simple transaction, but it comes with the added promise that they will actually be paid – this is because the fee is paid up front!

The attorney may spend more on the case than they originally anticipated, which means that they may keep the excess fee amount unless he or she has agreed with the client otherwise.

There should be no surprises with how much you owe your attorney. Just remember that many attorneys will actually be paid beforehand whether due to agreements or because they keep that portion of the final settlement or court award.

WHAT IF I CAN'T PAY?

The moment you choose not to pay your attorney, they will ask themselves two things. "Did the client refuse to pay the invoice because they couldn't afford it?" and, "Does the client have an unresolved complaint about his or her legal representation?"

Regardless of if you are dissatisfied with your attorney or not, it is never a good idea to withhold pay when you have continuously received services from someone. An attorney will look at the situation as, "I am not being paid" and wonder how they can receive the invoice. If there are no funds to pull from, they must take steps to assure that they are paid.

The fact of the matter is that you, as the plaintiff or defendant paying to go to court, should consider the monetary situation beforehand. There are many options for free legal representation for those who do not have the funds. Because of this, paying is not a good enough excuse.

They are offering services just as anybody else and are working hard on your time and on your case! With that being said, many lawyers will work with a client on terms of payment when asked. The truth is that many lawyers just want to help a client and gain satisfaction by helping others.

We feel the same way at our firm and want to help a client in any way, even if that involves money issues that can be further discussed in a consultation.

To avoid the attorney pursuing you on a legal level to obtain the money they are owed, make sure that you act quickly and discuss the issues with the attorney. You may be able to work out something. As mentioned, they tend to work with the client on many levels.

MAGGIANO, DIGIROLAMO & LIZZI P.C.
201 COLUMBIA AVENUE FORT LEE, NJ 07024
201-585-9111 | WWW.MAGGIANOLAW.COM