

PARALEGALS CONNECT

Second Quarter

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JUNE 2020 NEWSLETTER

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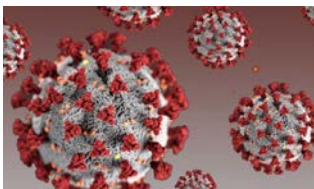
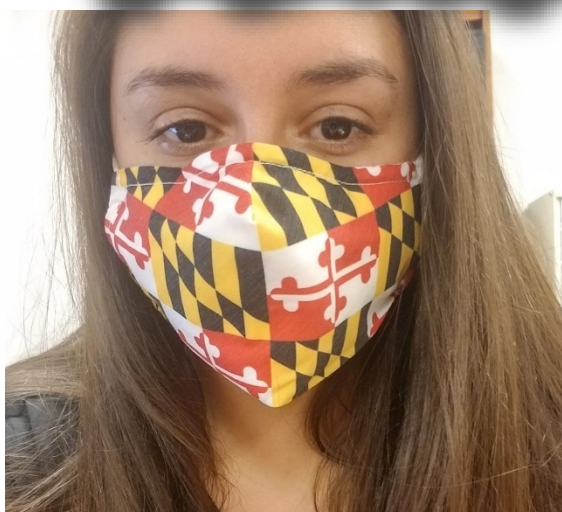
Unproductivity in the Time of Crisis: How to Not Be Your Worst Enemy

By: Candess Zona-Mendola

“Our Groups are accelerating Paralegals, Future Paralegals, and Future Attorneys Worldwide”



WORKING THROUGH COVID-19



Currently, our groups have approximately **19,700+** *combined active members worldwide.*

WHAT IS PARALEGALS CONNECT?

***“Our Groups are
Accelerating Paralegals,
Future Paralegals, and
Future Attorneys
Worldwide”***

Paralegals Connect was established in 2013 and we have grown significantly since that time. We now have five groups which are all dedicated to providing valuable information and support to succeed in the legal industry. Our groups provide support at every stage of your paralegal career.

Currently, our groups have approximately **19,700+ combined active members worldwide**. We have become the largest paralegal networking group worldwide!



Paralegals Connect

www.facebook.com/groups/ParalegalsConnect

Our first and largest group created for paralegals and paralegals-in-the-making to interact with other paralegals worldwide and provide valuable information to succeed in the paralegal industry.

Virtual/Freelance Paralegals Connect

www.facebook.com/groups/Virtual.FreelanceParalegalsConnect

A group designed for Virtual and/or Freelance Paralegals and those intending to break free of their 8-5 to go out on their own.

Paralegals Connect: Employment Board

www.facebook.com/groups/PCEmploymentBoard

A group designed for those seeking legal employment or internships, and for those seeking to hire legal professionals for their firm.

Paralegals Connect: Study Group

www.facebook.com/groups/ParalegalsConnectStudyGroup

A group created for those attending a paralegal school or studying for a Paralegal Certification Exam where you can post questions about your legal studies.

LSAT Connect

www.facebook.com/groups/LSATConnect

A group designed for those studying for the Law School Admission Test.

MEET OUR ADMINS

These are the busy women behind the scenes of Paralegals Connect. We work hard to make these professional, successful groups, and create ideas to help paralegals, future paralegals, and future attorneys become a legal success!



Crystal Cornett

Crystal@ParalegalsConnect.com

Founder of Paralegals Connect. Crystal has been a Paralegal since 2004. She earned her first Paralegal Certificate from University of Houston in March 2006.

Crystal received the degree of Associate of Applied Science from the Center for Advanced Legal Studies and her second Paralegal Certificate in 2010. She is a member of the Lambda Epsilon Chi National Honor Society for Paralegal / Legal Assistant Studies (LEX).

Crystal currently practices Real Estate Law in Houston, Texas. Crystal also serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee (PAC) for Center for Advanced Legal Studies.



Eunice Colón

Eunice@ParalegalsConnect.com

Eunice has been a paralegal since 2003. Eunice earned a Bachelor's in Psychology and Spanish from University of Houston.

Eunice is also the owner of a hand-made jewelry business, and she has extensive experience in creating and running Facebook Groups and websites.

Eunice currently practices Real Estate Law in Houston, Texas.



Kira Muren

Kira@ParalegalsConnect.com

Kira joined the Paralegals Connect team in 2018. In addition to helping with the groups, she manages our Instagram and Twitter accounts.

Kira has been working as a civil litigation paralegal in Frederick, Maryland since 2013. She has an Associate's in Paralegal Studies from Frederick Community College and a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Frostburg State University.

Kira also serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee for Frederick Community College.



Amanda DeVincenzo

Amanda@ParalegalsConnect.com

Amanda heads up our Virtual/Freelance Paralegal group and our Employment Board.

Amanda runs her own virtual paralegal biz and offers business coaching for paralegal entrepreneurs. Her 20+ years of experience includes legal, administrative, IT, training, consulting, and supervisory roles in private and public sectors.

Amanda holds her A.S./Certificate in Paralegal Studies and A.A. in Journalism from Southwestern College, B.A. in Sociology from University of Oregon, and M.A. in Public Policy and Administration from Northwestern University.

MEET OUR AFFILIATES

We would like to thank our Affiliates because they are the ones that make it possible to print and distribute our Newsletter to our members and various paralegal schools and large firms throughout the U.S.

Becoming an Affiliate with our groups offers worldwide visibility to approximately **19,700+ combined group members** in the legal industry.

**Only Affiliates are permitted to advertise within our Groups.*



Paralegals Connect is always looking for Affiliates that can offer our paralegals, legal assistants, future paralegals, and future attorneys the skills and services to help them succeed in their legal careers. We strive to provide information to the latest resources, education, and cost-effective opportunities that will enhance the skills, knowledge, and competencies of our members.

To Become an Affiliate with Paralegals Connect, please contact Crystal@ParalegalsConnect.com for additional information or visit:

www.paralegalsconnect.com/become-an-affiliate.html

Center for Advanced Legal Studies

Center for Advanced Legal Studies was founded in 1987 to provide education and training for those seeking to enter the legal profession as a paralegal. The **Paralegal Certificate** program provides students with essential paralegal skills and includes courses such as Introduction to Law and Ethics, Legal Research and Writing, Interviewing and Investigation, Corporate and Business Law, Civil Procedure, Computers and the Law, Family Law and Personal Injury. Students can choose from on-campus morning or Saturday courses, or attend 100% online.

www.paralegal.edu

Those seeking a more comprehensive preparation for their paralegal career, or those seeking their first college degree, can continue to the Associate of Applied Science Degree Paralegal program which includes additional paralegal electives such as E-Discovery, Oil and Gas, Intellectual Property, and Immigration Law. Academic general education courses round out this paralegal degree program.



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DeVincenzo Consulting also offers life and business coaching for **Paralegal Entrepreneurs** looking to launch or scale their virtual paralegal business. For your *free* clarity call, reach out to coach@DeVincenzoConsulting.com.

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Virtual Paralegal Services | Career Coaching

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Curated Information about Judges across the Nation

LegalBevy provides information about what individual judges expect in their courtrooms, giving you practical insights that you simply cannot get elsewhere.

Conversation & Collaboration

Join or create a **LegalBevy** Forum to engage in productive conversations with other legal professionals. Share your knowledge by adding comments to specific rules, judges, and court pages. **LegalBevy** harnesses the power of the community to help each user individually.

Central information Hub for the Rules of Civil Procedure

Whether you are looking for a specific state rule of civil procedure or a local rule, **LegalBevy** has you covered. All rules are searchable, and users may comment on any rule or rule section.

Courthouse information for all 50 states

Contact information for court personnel, tips about parking and dining near the courthouse, and more.

www.LegalBevy.com

LegalBevy

Bev-y /'be-vē/

n./ a large group of people or things of a particular kind

Although the **LegalBevy** site is live, we are improving several features. Accordingly, we are actively seeking paralegals to provide user input.

If you are willing to participate in a 30-minute Google Meeting feedback session, we are providing a \$25.00 Amazon Gift Certificate as a token of our appreciation.

Please note that this offer is limited to the first 25 paralegals who respond. If interested, please contact Lee Blaylock at LBlaylock@LegalBevy.com

Michele L. Savoy, Inc.

Are you and your clients paying for services and extras that you are not getting or simply do not need during the pandemic? Office space and staff cost a lot of money that court reporting agencies are still paying for, and they pass on those costs in their invoices for court reporting services to you.

I am a merit-certified freelance stenographic court reporter with over thirty years of experience, and I can offer you cost-effective saving by providing stenographic services via Zoom, Webex, and other online platforms.

If you need guidance on how to conduct a deposition through Zoom; i.e., how to share your screen, how to display PDF documents/exhibits to all participants, I am available to help.

Please email me at MSavoyRMR@gmail.com for my rates. I hope we can work together soon. 854-258-2360

Michele L. Savoy, RMR

Certified merit freelance
stenographer with over 30 years
experience available for remote
proceedings



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<https://www.cobblestonesoftware.com/paralegals>



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SCREENING FOR MEDICAL MALPRACTICE. Pursuing the wrong case is a costly mistake. Using my medical knowledge and analytical skills, I can help you clearly understand the medical issues to be better prepared in the courtroom.

ANALYZING PERSONAL INJURY CASES. Ensure clients receive the settlements they deserve. I help determine what injuries are consistent with the acute injury and/or pre-existing conditions exacerbated by the injury.

EVALUATING CRIMINAL CASES. My extensive background in critical care medicine and forensic nursing contributes valuable experience and knowledge to analyze your case.

LOCATING EXPERT WITNESSES. A bad witness can ruin your case. With my nationwide network of physicians, nurses, medical and forensic experts, you can count on getting the BEST.

<https://criticalanalysisrn.com/>



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www.streamlined.legal



This is Your Year: Become a Leader in Contract Management

In 2020 CobbleStone is offering in-person and interactive opportunities for legal and contract professionals to learn about advancements in contract management - from source-to-contract best practices to AI-based contract management and more! Choose your education track and sign up today.

1 Education Track

Free Contract Management Seminar
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Sessions Include:

- Intro to Contract Insight*
- Drafting Better Templates
- Risk Management & Artificial Intelligence
- And More!

ENROLL TODAY!

Visit CobbleStoneSoftware.com/Free-Seminar for details and to enroll today.

2 Education Track

Contract Management Conference
Oct. 8, 2020, Austin, Texas

Immerse In:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Breakout Sessions
- Keynote Speakers
- And More!

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Visit CobbleStoneSoftware.com/Contract-Management-Conference for details and to save your seat.



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Space is limited. Contact Conference@CobbleStoneSoftware.com with questions or call 866-330-0056.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Message to Our Members: Coronavirus

The whole world has been rocked by Covid-19. Completely shaken to its core. People are full of anxiety right now and trying their best to make it through each day. This is an unprecedented time that we all hope to soon forget. But, for now, let us appreciate that we are not alone—even if we must stay at least 6 feet apart!

We know many of you are now working from home, which is challenging even for the seasoned remote worker. It is tricky juggling work, home life, your children's education, and countless distractions all day long. Now is a great time to join our [Mentorship Program](#)¹, so you can get or give support to another member of our community.

We know some of you are still expected to be in the office every day, regardless of social distancing. We understand you are in between a rock and a hard place. You may want to talk with your boss about reconsidering a work-from-home option.

We are aware that many of you have been laid off or fired from your jobs. Worst. Timing. Ever. Know that the Paralegals Connect community is here for you! Keep your eye on our [Employment Board](#)² for the latest job opportunities.

We have compiled a list of resources to answer some of your questions and help you through this time.

- [Tax Day Extended to July 15](#)³
- [Coronavirus Tax Relief and Economic Impact Payments](#)⁴
- [Coronavirus Tax Relief for Businesses and Tax-Exempt Entities](#)⁵
- [Coronavirus: Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources](#)⁶
- [Unemployment Insurance Relief During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)⁷

Most importantly, please stay safe out there and continue taking every precaution to **#flattenthecurve**.

¹ https://www.facebook.com/groups/ParalegalsConnect/mentorship_application/

² <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PCEmploymentBoard/>

³ <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-day-now-july-15-treasury-irs-extend-filing-deadline-and-federal-tax-payments-regardless-of-amount-owed>

⁴ <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments>

⁵ <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-tax-relief-for-businesses-and-tax-exempt-entities>

⁶ <https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>

⁷ <https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus/unemployment-insurance>

Keeping Professional Development Continuous During Coronavirus

By: Tami Riggs

As a range of containment measures are implemented to mitigate the spread of coronavirus, consider how you can make the best use of your time. The following activities can help you gain valuable work skills to stand out in today's competitive job market.

1. Attend class!

Attendance in class is a big indicator of your reliability and performance. Be in class and take advantage of the expertise and experience offered by our faculty.

2. Work on your resume and cover letter.

Create these documents from scratch or customize existing ones. The Office of Career Services at Center for Advanced Legal Studies ("CALs") has moved to a remote format of service but remains available to assist students and alumni and can provide sample templates and expert advice.

3. Craft your elevator speech and define your professional persona.

This is a brief but compelling summary (1 minute or less) of your background and experience and what skills you offer. It should be short but adequately explain who you are, what you can do, and why you should be considered. This introduction can be used during interviews, when you meet a potential business connection, at networking events, job fairs, career expos, in your resume, and on social media profiles.

4. Clean up your social media presence.

Hiring managers look at social media accounts and posts to learn about potential candidates and their personalities, interests, and activities. Assess your online presence from an outside perspective, implement privacy settings, and scrub material that might be considered inappropriate. A regrettable post or photo could hurt your job search.

5. Create a professional e-portfolio and link it to your resume.

An electronic portfolio is a digital compilation of work and other activities and evidence that showcases student learning, skill development, and career progression. It is assembled and managed on the web and typically includes files, images, multimedia, blog entries, and hyperlinks. Your class assignments can be used to customize and personalize the collection.

6. Access free online tutorials to improve your writing and typing.

Many lessons are available that address spelling, grammar, punctuation and keyboarding skills. Online learning tools and resources can help you build upon your academic and technical skills.

7. Listen to podcasts and webinars.

There is a rich landscape of informative recordings that support professional skills development and provide practical tips and inspiration on how to develop and succeed in your career.

8. Continue learning and reading.

Employers value candidates who stay abreast of the latest industry trends and engage in activities that deepen their knowledge and improve career readiness.

There is fear and uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 situation. We are all grappling with it in different ways. However, you can take steps to keep your professional development continuous and strengthen yourself personally during this crisis. Hang in there!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Tami Riggs is Director of Outreach and Career Services at [Center for Advanced Legal Studies](#) in Houston, Texas. She has an extensive and varied professional background that spans criminal justice, paralegal education, and international school marketing and communication. Her career has been guided by a focus on developing strategic partnerships that facilitate school growth and student opportunity. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Texas State University. Connect with Tami on [LinkedIn](#).



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CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

Pursue your interest in law and become a paralegal.

Center for Advanced Legal Studies (CALs) is a private, nationally accredited paralegal college. Established in 1987, our focus is providing exceptional paralegal education to our students and dedicated career services for our graduates.



Specialized Paralegal Training

"100 percent of our resources are devoted to paralegal education and training."

What is a Paralegal?

- + Paralegals and legal assistants perform a variety of tasks to support lawyers, including maintaining and organizing files, conducting legal research, investigating the facts of a case, interviewing clients and witnesses, and drafting documents to file with the court.
- + Paralegals and legal assistants are found in all types of organizations, but most work for law firms, corporate legal departments, or government agencies.

Your Success is Our Priority

- + Expect smaller classes and more attention from instructors.
- + Courses are designed to educate and prepare graduates for gainful employment.
- + Practicing attorneys and experienced paralegals teach law specialty courses.
- + Financial Aid is available for those who qualify. (**FAFSA School Code: 026047**)









Attend Class Online or On Campus

- + **Online** - Attend your paralegal program in a highly interactive online classroom where students can see and speak with their professor and classmates in real-time. Attend classes on your computer, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. We bring the classroom to you.
- + **On Campus** - If a classroom setting is your preference, we've got you covered. Classroom instruction provides traditional in-person lecture and increased opportunity for teamwork and collaboration. Weekday and Saturday classes are available.

Secure Employment after Graduation

- + **Career Services** - We offer a multitude of services to help graduates begin their careers.
- + **Resume Review** - Professional guidance in preparing your resume.
- + **Employer Connections** - Leverage our relationship with hundreds of law firms and employers.
- + **Externships Available** - Gain real world experience before you graduate.

Accreditation, Memberships & Associations

 Council on Occupational Education	 American Association for Paralegal Education
 Higher Education Coordinating Board	 National Federation of Paralegal Associations
 Texas Workforce Commission	 National Association of Legal Assistants
 Texas Veterans Commission	 Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas

Curriculum

Paralegal Certificate
Essential Paralegal Skills
8 months . 24 semester hours
\$9,300

If you already have a college degree or are working toward your first college degree, this program is perfect for you!

Core Courses
Introduction to Law and Ethics
Interviewing and Investigation
Legal Research and Writing
Corporate and Business Law
Civil Procedure
Computers and the Law

+ **2 Electives chosen from**
Personal Injury*
Family Law*
Intellectual Property
Real Estate

* *Recommended for those continuing on to AAS Degree Paralegal Program*

★★★

AAS Degree Paralegal Program
Comprehensive Paralegal Skills
22 months . 62 semester hours
\$23,550 (\$14,350 after Paralegal Certificate)

Our Paralegal Degree Program includes all 24 semester hours completed in the certificate program plus an additional 18 to 21 semester hours of law specialty courses. These electives provide students with the opportunity to study some of the most interesting and exciting areas of law.

This program meets or exceeds the law specialty requirements suggested by various state and national paralegal authorities.

Core Courses (included in certificate)
Introduction to Law and Ethics
Interviewing and Investigation
Legal Research and Writing
Corporate and Business Law
Civil Procedure
Computers and the Law
Personal Injury
Family Law

General Education
English Composition I
English Composition II
General Psychology
American Government I
Introduction to Speech Communication
Anatomy & Physiology I

Advanced Electives
+ 6 Electives including Externship (7 w/o Externship)
Wills, Trusts and Probate
Criminal Law and Procedure
Real Estate
Intellectual Property
Immigration Law
E-Discovery
Advanced Civil Procedure
Advanced Research and Writing
Oil and Gas Law
Externship

Other Requirements: Business Math

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The Top 20 Things I Wish I Would've Known as a New Paralegal

By: Kylie Clayton

DO YOU EVER SIT BACK AND THINK TO YOURSELF, "I WOULD HAVE DONE THIS SO DIFFERENTLY, IF I JUST WOULD HAVE KNOWN _____?"

That was my first thought when I was asked to present to a college paralegal course. What better way to educate the next group of paralegals than to tell them what I wish I would have known. When I reached out to an online group of paralegals, the responses were very quick and on point.

In no particular order, the **top 20 things I wish I would have known** are:

1. **Be nice**—especially to the court clerks and the bailiffs. They are your lifeline with the courts.
2. **Document everything**—each time you touch a file, notes, and time entries for referencing back to.
3. **Double-check** your calendar hearings, dates, and deadlines.
4. **Admit to your mistakes**—right away! Someone will find them. Better you point them out instead of opposing counsel.
5. **Embrace change**, nothing stays the same.
6. **Always be prepared** when you meet with your attorney.
7. **Know your courts!** They all have different local rules and Judges want different things in different ways.
8. **Do not wait** until you are swamped to let your attorney know you are behind, ask for help when you need it.
9. **Slow down**—proofread again and again.
10. **Ask questions and take notes**—each firm does things differently, be a sponge and learn all that you can from day one.
11. **Create a procedure book for yourself** for all you do for quick reference. At some point you will be asked to train a new paralegal, and this will be a major time saver.
12. **Take pride in your work**—when your attorney looks good, you look good!
13. **Follow your gut**—if something seems off, say something.
14. **It's okay to play the devil's advocate with your attorney**—sometimes a new perspective on an old case can make all the difference.
15. **Never give your attorney originals** of anything.
16. **Know your worth**, don't let people walk all over you.
17. **Save as a template** every type of document that you prepare, with all confidential information removed for future use.
18. **Learn on the job**—what they teach you in school is not generally what you will be doing on a day-to-day basis.
19. **Don't take an attorney's bad day personally**—we all have them.
20. **Breathe**—it will all be okay.

All in all, when it comes to a new paralegal the most important thing is to know that **you are not alone**, and we have all been there. There are now so many great resources and mentors ready and willing to assist in all aspects. We have been in your shoes and are excited to help bring up the newest group of paralegals into the ever-growing profession.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Kylie Clayton has worked in finance and debt resolution for over 15 years. As the paralegal at Patino Law Office, Kylie supports clients in all types of debt resolution cases from Chapter 13 plans for individuals to complex agricultural and business workouts. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and completed her paralegal certification through the College of St. Mary.

COMMUNITY Q&A

Members ask great questions and offer even better insights! Here are some comments from our community:

Q: Any advice for paralegal students graduating? Was it easy to get a job as a paralegal soon after school? Even without any legal experience?

"I worked as a legal assistant while getting my paralegal certificate. Then, over the course of the next 10 years I was a – paralegal, paralegal assistant, legal assistant, corporate executive administrator and then a paralegal again. My advice – focus on the work, not the title and get your foot in the door any way you can."
-Elissa E.

"Something to consider... my only experience was in customer service and hospitality. No degree whatsoever. I got hired at a law firm as a legal assistant. I just went on my 3rd year, and will start a job at another firm, same thing, different law field. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT CAN HAPPEN!!"
-Montserrat K.

"Network, network, network and don't be discouraged about donating some time to a local solo practitioner. They tend to be more forgiving about your tight school/family schedule, more forgiving about mistakes, and more patient with training you, when you are an intern or volunteer helping them out. It also gives you a reference, and real office experience." -Melissa A.

Q: Any advice on how to get started as a virtual/freelance paralegal? Best ways to advertise and market yourself?

"Good old boots on the ground. Get out there and start meeting attorneys and paralegals in your area. Good luck." -Monique H.

"It all depends on your background and where you're starting. If you have no in-office experience, then I'd recommend finding a job in a firm for a few years so you can learn the basics and learn to do them well. If you have experience in a certain area, create a business and then market yourself to the attorneys in your state who practice that type of law." -Deirdre H.



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As a medical legal expert, my job is to help be your eyes and ears when preparing for medical malpractice cases, personal injury cases, and criminal cases involving injuries. As a Forensic Nurse/Forensic Consultant and Registered Nurse with over 25 years of experience, I'm ready to provide medical analysis to insure **your attorney(s) can present their case with expertise**. You know what your firm must prove in court—I know how to analyze and explain the issues involved so you can win!

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE


Much is at stake in a medical malpractice case—the costs, the potential recovery for the plaintiff and the reputations of the defendants. Using my medical knowledge, resources and analytical skills, I **can help you prepare an effective case leading to a more successful outcome**. Let me thoroughly and succinctly screen your medical malpractice case to provide you with the details, related standard of care issues and the strengths and weakness of the case. My priority is to provide the expert information you need to achieve the optimal outcome for your case.

PERSONAL INJURY

Personal Injury cases can be complicated medically, especially if your client has multiple injuries and possible pre-existing conditions. Determining what injuries are consistent with the acute injury and what conditions were exacerbated by the acute injury can be a challenge. As an attorney, **you need to know ALL of what is involved with the medical issues of your client**. With my decades of experience as a Registered Nurse, I'm ready to assist in understanding your case fully.

CRIMINAL CASES

My legal nurse specialty is in forensics, as a Certified Forensic Nurse and Certified Forensic Consultant. My forensic education has included adult and pediatric sexual assault training (SANE), forensic nursing, nurse death investigations and a Bachelor of Science degree. As a Certified Forensic Nurse and a Nurse Expert Consultant, **I help criminal defense attorneys** on cases involving injuries such as gunshot wounds, stabbings, strangulation, assaults and issues of child abuse. I also provide mitigation reports to aid in the reduction of sentencing for your clients and prepare cross-examination questions for you against the DA's experts.



Recently, one of my personal injury attorney's came to me to request that I look at a woman's medical records and write up a report about her injuries, how they happened and what her future medical issues, and treatment would look like. The opposition's insurance adjuster was holding out on giving her the final \$25,000, but potential future medical issues are an important issue in a case like this one. I was so happy that my report not only had the adjuster approve of the \$25,000 payment, but also opened up the attorney's ability to pursue an additional \$250,000 in uninsured motorist insurance money. These amounts were not obvious to the attorney or the adjuster, but my expertise in looking at the medical records meant this attorney didn't leave money on the table.

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Unproductivity in the Time of Crisis – How to Not Be Your Own Worst Enemy

By: Candess Zona-Mendola

I have worked remotely for several years. So, when the stay-home orders hit, my firm did not have downtime. We continued as if it were any other day. But there was something new going on at home. I still had to work. I still have an attorney and clients who need me. When I am working, I need to focus. I cannot work distracted. But how was I going to find focus during crisis panic, homeschooling, mothering, and isolation? It has not been easy.

I have one mantra: *I will survive and thrive*. Why do I tell you this? Because I want you to know that you still have control over your work. You still have the ability to be productive during this time.

Here are tips to help get you through this:

1. Create a dedicated workspace.

I have learned that without one, I never “leave” work to be “home.” Instead, I am working from the moment I wake to the moment I go to sleep. By having a dedicated workspace, I can walk away from work (even if I’m just walking to the next room). I can go outside for a break. I can leave work to make dinner for my kids. I can sleep.

Whether you have an apartment or a multi-bedroom home, you too can do this. Take over the bedroom or the kitchen table. Go outside and work in the fresh air. Create a workspace and hours where no one will bother you.

2. Communication.

If you don’t communicate with your attorney every day, now is the time to start. I’ve established “morning check-ins” where I email my attorney a list of what I’m working on for the day. We set up calls or video conferences when there are projects we’re working on together. He also keeps me posted on what he’s doing.

Communication is not just about work. You need to be real with your attorney about what is going on at home. You have been told to leave your personal life at home, but that does not work here. Your bosses need to know what is going on. They can’t help you or make creative solutions without this knowledge.

3. You have Control.

Many paralegals have lost their jobs recently because they (or their law firms) haven’t found a way to make it work. There have been many reasons for this. “I just can’t focus at home.” “My house has slow internet.” “I don’t know how to use the software the firm wants me to use.” These are excuses, not solutions.

You *can* make this work. You need to take control. It is okay to change or reduce your work hours because you need to care for kids. But it is not ok to assume you’re going to get paid to “not work.” There are solutions out there as long as you are willing to look for them.

4. De-Stress and Prioritize.

You are likely overwhelmed right now. I get it. I was too. If you feel anxiety coming on, try meditating: Stop what you are doing, set your alarm for three minutes, and breathe deeply in and out. Your brain will wander but bring it back to now. Feel what your body feels. Listen to what is happening around you. Do this often. It helps relieve your stress.

Now, let’s talk priorities. If your plate is like mine, it is overflowing. But not everything is pressing. And you can’t do everything at once. You have to prioritize. What deadlines are coming up? Do those first. What does your attorney need? Do that next. Ask yourself what matters now and what can be done later. Prioritizing makes it all more manageable, and it helps you focus on one thing at a time.

5. Be Productive Amid Chaos.

How do you eat a whole elephant? One bite at a time. Productivity will come as you find your workflow. Be flexible. What works one week may not work the next one. That’s okay. Just don’t give up. Continue to look for creative solutions until there’s normalcy again. You will find that you are able to be as productive, if not more, than you were before.

Remember, you can do this!

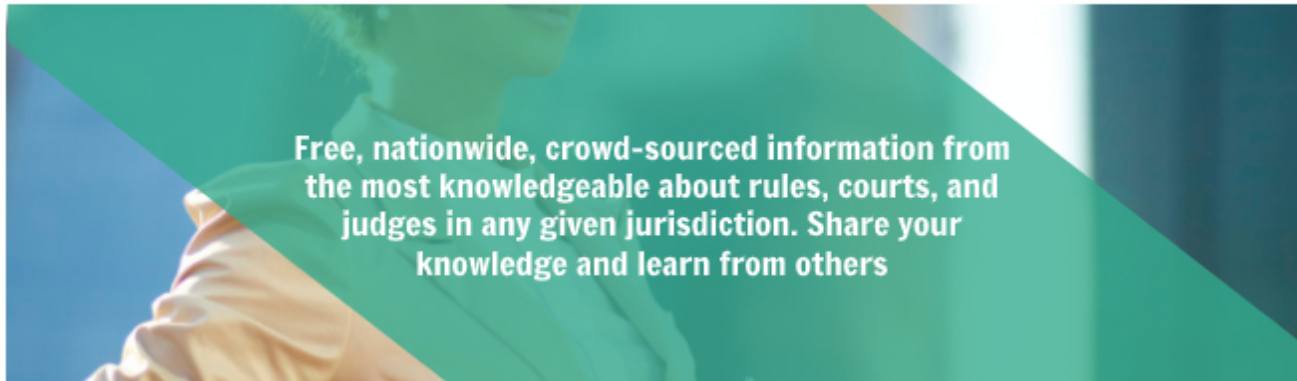


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Candess Zona-Mendola is a Trial Paralegal at a national law firm that helps victims of food poisoning outbreaks. She is the author of *The Indispensable Paralegal—Your Guide to Getting It All Done*, a paralegal guidebook published by Trial Guides. She has been featured on several paralegal media sites and podcasts, including *The Paralegal Voice through the Legal Talk Network*, and NALA’s webinar series.

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