

*The Law Office  
Of  
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**Fee Schedule  
Business Representations  
2012**

**Overview.** I have a fee-for-service law practice. Payment of legal fees by a client for legal services rendered is required before I deliver legal services to a client.

Legal fees are paid by retainers and are set forth in Billing Statements detailing legal services rendered and legal fees earned and paid, as further described below.

Some legal representations are paid by fixed legal fees. Examples of such fixed legal fees are listed on my website for estate plans or starting new businesses or starting new nonprofit organizations, or for consultations about them, or for consultations about other matters.

If a legal representation is not specifically listed as a fixed legal fee charge, it's not a fixed legal fee charge.

For many legal representations, I do not provide a fixed legal fee charge because so many variables influence the time and work required to reach the outcomes desired by my clients.

**Fees and Costs.** (i) My standard billing rate for legal fees is \$200 per hour; (ii) for some specialized representations, my billing rate for legal fees is \$250 per hour, discussed with clients beforehand; (iii) I charge \$250 in legal fees for a consultation, payable before a consultation; once I receive the consultation fee, I will contact you and schedule the consultation; allotted time for a consultation is up to an hour; there may be an additional consultation fee if time greater than one hour is needed; (iv) I also charge for costs that may be incurred for a representation, whether for filing fees, mailings, materials, and so forth, in an amount that I'll provide before a representation commences.

**Business Representations.** Most business representations fall into the category of legal representations not eligible for fixed legal fees, and, by business representations, I include, as typical examples, transactions

involving buying or selling a business; leasing real or personal property; preparing instruments that involve property transfers; drawing up contracts, agreements, or other documents for specified purposes; reviewing and analyzing documents for content and result; preparing and handling compliance filings that may be required by governmental agencies or others.

For business representations that are not charged by fixed legal fees, I provide a range of legal fees charged, based on my judgment and experience handling such matters. Most business representations I handle will conclude within the range of legal fees quoted. Because I cannot control other circumstances which may arise during a representation, often because of third-party requirements, the range of legal fees may change until the transaction or representation is closed or concluded.

For every business representation, I request payment of an initial retainer of legal fees which I'll hold in escrow, against which I'll bill legal fees for my legal services, and for which I'll provide detailed Billing Statements on a recurring basis or at the end of the representation, showing legal services rendered, legal fees earned, costs paid, along with payment of legal fees and costs from the retainer.

I do not undertake a business representation, or start the legal work, until I receive the initial retainer of legal fees.

Legal fees are earned when legal services are delivered, as set forth by me on Billing Statements provided to clients.

Depending on the time anticipated to complete a business representation, or the legal work generated, additional retainers for legal fees may be requested before closing or before completing a representation, the amount and payment of which will be discussed with the client before starting the work. Such additional retainers will be within the range of legal fees quoted, or beyond the range quoted if generated by other circumstances.

If, during a representation, a client chooses not to remit an additional retainer of legal fees requested by me, within the time set forth by me, then I will withdraw from the representation, giving notice to the client.

If a representation is ended or completed, and there is a portion of a retainer not earned, it'll be returned by me to the client.

**Conclusion.** Making a decision to engage a lawyer is always important for a client and how much it costs should always be a factor in any such decision. Clients expect legal excellence from their lawyers, as they should. What should not be expected by clients or lawyers are surprises

about legal fees, about costs. That's why it's equally important we speak about legal fees and costs, fully and frankly, before starting and undertaking every representation.

Please know that I very much look forward to the opportunity to handle this important representation for you. With continuing best regards, I remain

Very truly yours,

*J. Steven Erie*

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