



# ATTORNEY HIRING GUIDE

by Geiger Legal Group, LLC

Choosing the right lawyer to represent you is one of the most important things you can do for your personal injury case. Every accident victim needs a personal injury attorney who is skilled, experienced, knowledgeable, and compassionate. You want to hire an attorney who is best suited for your unique situation.

A good personal injury attorney will fight to hold the negligent parties accountable and fight for the maximum compensation you need and deserve for your injuries.

If you have been seriously injured in an accident, it is critical that you hire a personal injury lawyer you trust to handle your claim. The North Georgia personal injury attorneys at Geiger Legal Group, LLC, have earned the trust of countless clients over the years because we get results for injury victims.

If you have been seriously injured due to the negligence or recklessness of someone else, we are ready to help. Call now to schedule a free initial consultation.

## *When Do You Need a Personal Injury Lawyer?*

Below are some example scenarios of when you would likely benefit from the help of an experienced personal injury attorney:

- **You Are Suffering from Serious Injuries**

Many people in Georgia suffer especially serious injuries as a result of a car accident, motorcycle accident, truck accident, slip and fall, or another common personal injury. These injuries may be permanent and cause lifelong disabilities. In cases such as these, it is absolutely imperative that you talk to a personal injury lawyer. They can assist by calculating the value of the damages you have suffered and fighting for appropriate compensation from that at-fault parties.

- **Multiple Parties Were Involved and Liability Is Not Clear**

Sometimes there are personal injury cases where it is not obvious who is liable for the injuries that the person suffered. For instance, a car accident could happen where there are multiple vehicles involved and multiple different parties that have conflicting accounts of what occurred.

An experienced personal injury lawyer can be a huge help in situations like this. An attorney can give you legal guidance when it comes to determining who is at fault for your damages and owes you financial compensation. There are often more liable parties than an injured victim realizes.

- **A Settlement Is Offered**

The insurance adjuster may pressure you into signing a settlement agreement. It may seem like accepting a settlement is a smart idea so you can receive immediate compensation following your accident. However, your injuries could end up costing much more than you anticipated.

If you accept a quick settlement, you won't be able to seek additional compensation for your injuries. This is why you need an experienced and knowledgeable personal injury attorney to help you determine the extent and cost of your injuries so you will be able to receive the full compensation you deserve.

- **When Insurers Refuse to Pay**

In some cases, you need to hire an attorney simply because the insurance companies refuse to pay up. If the insurance companies know you have a personal injury lawyer on your side, they will realize you are serious about pursuing your claim for compensation.

- **Wrongful Death**

In tragic cases where you lose a loved one due to an accident, you may be entitled to file a wrongful death claim. You need a skilled and compassionate personal injury lawyer in your corner. Wrongful death can result in a criminal prosecution of the responsible party. Additionally, there may be a civil case, in which the person responsible will also be required to pay for the damages and losses incurred due to the death from the accident. You need a personal injury attorney to defend your rights and seek the compensation you deserve for the tragic loss.

## *When You Don't Need an Attorney*

Not all accidents require the help of an attorney. For example, minor car accidents, or fender benders, may cause minimal property damage and no injuries. For such cases, it's probably not necessary to hire a personal injury lawyer to handle your case. If the damage is limited, you can likely sort through the particulars of the case without the need of a lawyer.

However, there are many scenarios where a car accident or another personal injury incident may be more complicated than originally believed. This is especially true when it comes to injuries. It's normal for the body to go into shock immediately following an accident. If your adrenaline is pumping, it can mask the pain and symptoms of potentially serious injuries. It's best to see a doctor before making the call that you are truly uninjured. If you have been seriously injured in an accident, it's likely that you'll need the help of an attorney to ensure you receive proper compensation for these damages.

## *Choosing the Right Lawyer*

**When looking for an attorney to hire for your personal injury case, you want someone who will look after your best interests.**

**Some key qualities to look for a personal injury attorney include:**

- Experience
- Education
- Legal knowledge
- Communication skills
- Compassion
- Trust
- Reputation
- Accessibility
- Great reviews
- Enthusiasm
- Charisma
- Kindness
- Gets results

## *Doing Your Research*

Before deciding which attorneys to meet with about your personal injury case, it's critical that you do your homework. It's a good idea to start by talking with your friends, family members, and trusted friends about their experiences with personal injury lawyers in your area.

Referrals are how many people find the right attorney for their case. When you are researching, keep an eye out for issues with their reputation that could affect your case. It's usually not hard to find plenty of information online about any attorney or firm you are considering. This can greatly aid in making your decision about who to hire to handle your case.

# Important Things to Ask Before Hiring

The free initial consultation is an opportunity to get to know the lawyer that you are considering hiring for your personal injury case. Asking the following questions will give you a better idea of the attorney's skills, experience, qualifications, and more.

1. *How much of your practice is focused on personal injury?*
2. *How long have you been handling personal injury cases?*
3. *What is your track record with personal injury cases?*
4. *How often do you take cases to trial?*
5. *How long do you expect my case will take to resolve?*
6. *How long can you spend on my case?*
7. *How much do you think my injury case is worth?*
8. *How confident are you that you can win my case?*
9. *Are you ready to take my case to trial if need be?*
10. *What are your fees?*
11. *Do you work on a contingency-fee basis?*
12. *Will I have to pay advanced case costs if we lose?*
13. *Will you be the lawyer who handles my case?*
14. *How often will I get updates about my personal injury case?*
15. *Will I be able to speak directly with you if I have questions?*

## What Are Your Practice Areas?

The legal field is extremely broad. Laws apply to virtually all industries. This is why it's critical that you be specific in your search for a lawyer. The attorney you hire should be skilled and experienced in handling cases similar to yours.

## How Many Similar Cases Have You Handled?

You should ask the potential lawyer how many similar cases they have handled. It's important that your attorney has the detailed legal knowledge needed to uphold your rights, but it's also crucial that your lawyer has practical experience at the negotiating table and in the courtroom in order to advocate effectively for you. Having handled similar cases equips the lawyer with the proficiency to spot problems that others with less experience may miss.

## Who Will Actually Handle My Case?

Find out if the personal injury attorney you are considering hiring plans to actually work on your case or give it to another attorney or paralegal to work on. With large firms, especially, it is not uncommon for your case will be handed off to other team members who work with your attorney. Some firms introduce you to the name on their letterhead, and then quickly pass your

case to an associate who may not have the skill and experience of the attorney you want working on your personal injury case.

### **Do You Try Lawsuits in Court?**

The way to get maximum compensation for your case is to show the insurance company that you are ready and willing to take the case to trial. If you hire a personal injury attorney who always settles and never goes to court, you may not be able to secure the maximum compensation you deserve. This is because the insurance companies and their attorneys know which lawyers try cases and which do not. You want a personal injury attorney who is willing and able to try your case in front of a judge and jury.

## *Things to Know About Legal Fees and Agreements*

Discussed below are some of the most common types of legal fees.

### **Types of Fees**

- **Consultation Fees:** Some lawyers charge an upfront fee to meet with them and determine whether they will be able to assist you with your case. Most personal injury lawyers do not charge an initial consultation fee.
- **Contingency Fees:** These are the most common types of fees among personal injury attorneys. The attorney's fee is a percentage of the financial award in a judgment or negotiated in a settlement. If you lose the case, the attorney does not get a fee. However, should you lose, you will still often be required to pay expenses, so read your representation agreement carefully.
- **Flat Fees:** An attorney charges a specific fee for handling the matter. This type of fee is typically offered only if the case is relatively straightforward, such as an uncontested divorce.
- **Hourly Rate:** The attorney charges you for every hour that they work on your case. For instance, if the attorney's fee is \$200 per hour and the lawyer works 5 hours, the total fee will be \$1,000. Some lawyers charge different fees for different types of work. Attorneys who work in large firms generally have different fee scales, with more experienced and accomplished lawyers charging higher fees than younger associates.

## Fee Agreements

Fee agreements set out the fees and the terms of the attorney-client relationship. The fee agreement should explain how the attorney's fees will be paid and how the court costs will be paid. Because a fee agreement is a binding contract, you should only sign it after you are certain that you understand all its terms and conditions and are satisfied with them.

If something in the contract is not clear, ask the attorney for an explanation. If you get a clear answer, you will feel more confident in your decision to hire an attorney. If you don't get a clear and honest answer, that's a red flag.

## *Contact an Experienced Georgia Personal Injury Attorney*

The skilled and compassionate North Georgia personal injury lawyers at Geiger Legal Group, LLC, understand what it takes to represent individuals who have been seriously injured due to someone else's fault. Our attorneys have dedicated their careers to helping injured people pursue justice and compensation for their losses. We have the skills, experience, and resources needed to help in any type of personal injury situation.

If the settlement offered is less than what you deserve, we will not hesitate to take your case to trial. Call us today to schedule a free, no-obligation consultation.