

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR ATTORNEY FEES

Attorney fees can add up quickly. This has a lot to do with local rules of the courts and the requirements that the courts put on parties before allowing any court dates to be set. If you would like to know how you can help reduce your attorney fees and greatly assist your attorney to prepare for your case, here are a few reminders and tips that you can follow:

1. **Time is Money.** Remember that unless you have a flat fee agreement, your attorney bills by the hour. Time is money, so the more time you spend with your attorney or on the phone with your attorney, the more it will cost.
2. **Limit Telephone Calls.** Unless you have an emergency, save questions that you may have to either make one phone call or set a meeting to answer all of your questions at one time. Most firms have a minimum billing amount per call, so a quick call will cost you the same as a call of 15 minutes or more.
3. **Organize Documents.** When you turn over documents, have them organized. If they are financial documents, have them separated by account numbers and then in chronological order. If it is correspondence, have them organized in chronological order. (If you give your attorney documents that have to be organized, you will be paying your attorney to organize them.)
4. **Write Detailed Notes.** Write detailed notes for documents that you think are important. Don't write on the document. These documents may be copied and sent out. If you write on the document your notes will be sent with it. Use either a post-it note or write on a separate piece of paper.
5. **Be Settlement Minded.** Identify the things that you are willing to give up to keep from having to go to Court. Identify those things that you are willing to fight for. Listen carefully to what your attorney says is realistic and what isn't. If you take your dispute to Court, it will cost you more in attorneys' fees.
6. **Follow your attorney's advice, and tell the truth.** Legal cases can be highly emotional. This will lead folks to disregard their attorney's advice or choose not to tell the whole truth about a situation. This definitely leads to more attorneys' fees because the truth will most likely come out, and then your attorney will spend a lot of time trying to repair any damage that has been done.