

Do You List Your Fees on Your Website?

Hi Firm,

For 99% of my cases, I bill a flat fee up front. This fee is based on the difficulty of the case, etc., but generally starts at X. I do not currently have X listed on my website. Should I list it?

Do you list yours? Do you recommend it?

NO. I understand flat rate bankruptcy could be listed on the web site. I occasionally do, in advertising but not on the web site.

First, it seems tacky.

Second, it gives no leeway for change in price, depending on circumstances. Client gets that price fixed in their head and will not budge.

Third, it gives clients a an opportunity to haggle your price down. With you and with other attorneys.

Fourth, I am not web savvy enough to change price on the internet if i want to.

Fifth, you want to get people in the door, give them a free consult and see where it goes. My experience is people who call or check the internet for price, are tire kickers.

But if they come in, that takes some effort on their part.

It shows interest, and then I have a chance to convert into clients.

Gilberto Valdes Alba, Miami

Hell no.

John Davidson, Pennsylvania

For an amicable divorce, sure.

Matthew Rosenthal, California

http://www.rickrutledgelaw.com/documents/Client_Distribution/Reference_Fee_Schedule.pdf

YMMV,

-Rick

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr., North Carolina

If I could be assured I could do the work and wouldn't ever have to deal

with clients, I would post it. Given that much of the hassle in the work comes from clients who won't or can't do what I need when I need it, I need the leeway to charge for that. I can generally spot those folks a mile away and adjust my fees accordingly.

Michelle Kainen, Vermont

I don't know about CA's ethics rules, but some state bars require you to honor your listed fees for a certain period of time. I think in PA, there is an ethics rule or opinion that states if you publish your fee on-line, you need to keep a copy of the fee listed for up to 2 years (meaning you need to keep a screenshot or some other copy of the publication)?

Sharon Barney, California

That's why they're "Reference Rates." My policy clearly states that I reserve the right to adjust for urgency, complexity, etc.

On the point of honoring posted rates, my list is clearly dated, and I keep copies of all superseded lists. In fact, I'm planning a July update with a couple of adjustments.

I've been doing it for a couple of years, and it *seems* to have virtually eliminated "price check calls."

-Rick

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr.

I do, but I also put in a disclaimer that the fees are for the simplest types of legal matters (mechanical patent applications for example), and the more complex the matter the more it will cost. I like to be transparent and open, I do not like it when people "hide the ball" from me, and I try not to hide the ball from my clients.

Michael A. Blake, California

That makes sense. It's consistent with many bars' requirements to keep a history of all posted advertisements.

Best regards,

Rackham Karlsson, Massachusetts
