

ARE YOU SPENDING TOO MUCH ON LEGAL FEES?

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It is important for an attorney to always put the interest of their client ahead of their own. At Flynn Law Group our goal is to be the effective attorneys that managers want; instead of serving our better interest. For example in the last few weeks I was able to consolidate two preliminary injunction hearings with the trial. By doing that I was able to save my client time and money; instead of appearing in court multiple times, and asking the manager to testify more than once, we were able to complete everything in one day.

Not all law firms and attorneys have your (or your budget's) best interest at heart, or they may not have the experience to know the difference. Always make sure your lawyer has experience in the areas of law that you actually need. Sometimes it is clear to me in court that other attorneys are not experienced in these areas of law, and are wasting significant amounts of time on drawn out legal matters, where an experienced attorney would have concluded the matter much quicker. There is no substitute for experience!

It's not always obvious when an attorney is wasting your time and money, but one way to know is by looking at your bill. Here are the top three things you should watch for on your legal bill to make sure that you are not being gouged by your lawyer.

1. High Hourly Rates

As we have been taking over many properties over the last two years, we've been coming across old bills from prior counsel that contain very high hourly rates. We have been surprised to see hourly rates of \$300 per hour and more for partner time and \$250 per hour for associate attorneys. At those

outrageous prices are you really getting your money's worth? In an effort to safe guard your legal budget we provide our clients extremely reasonable hourly rates, for very high quality representation.

2. Failure to Differentiate the Rate for Paralegal Time

Sometimes it appears, from the bills we have seen, that other lawyers fail to specify the hourly rates for paralegals. In other words paralegals are begin being charged at higher rates than are appropriate. A legal bill should always show a detailed account of the work you are being charged for and who did it: a partner, an associate or a paralegal. The rates should be different between the work of an attorney and a paralegal, take a look at your bill and make sure you are charged a lower rate for paralegal work. It would be inappropriate for a law firm to charge paralegal time at the same rate as a lawyer.

3. Repetitive Court Appearances

If you're looking at your bill and it seems as though your attorney has made numerous appearances in court on the same case, it may be that you're being billed for unnecessary status conferences or continuances. For example we were asked to take over a property recently and when we did we discovered that the previous counsel had set up monthly status conferences with the judge simply to monitor Non-Payment court agreements. The manager was unaware that status conferences are unnecessary and that their lawyer should only go to court when the tenant fails to pay; if the tenant continues to follow the agreement there is no need for your attorney to appear in court. By our taking over and stopping this practice we saved the property thousands.

If you would like to discuss this information, or if you have additional questions about your legal fees, don't hesitate to call me! At Flynn Law Group we effectively and aggressively represent your property at a reasonable cost!