

1                   **CHAPTER 20. FLORIDA REGISTERED PARALEGAL PROGRAM**

2  
3                   20-1. PREAMBLE

4  
5                   **RULE 20-1.1. PURPOSE**

6           The purpose of this chapter is to set forth a definition that must be met in order to use  
7 the title paralegal, to establish the requirements to become a Florida Registered Paralegal,  
8 and to establish the requirements to maintain Florida Registered Paralegal status. This  
9 chapter is not intended to set forth the duties that a paralegal may perform because those  
10 restrictions are set forth in the Rules of Professional Conduct and various opinions of the  
11 Professional Ethics Committee. Nothing contained herein shall be deemed relevant in  
12 charging or awarding fees for legal services rendered by nonlawyers under the  
13 supervision of a member of The Florida Bar, such fees being based on the nature of the  
14 services rendered and not the title of the person rendering the services.

15  
16                   20-2. DEFINITIONS

17                   **RULE 20-2.1. GENERALLY**

18           For purposes of this chapter, the following terms shall have the following meaning:

19  
20           (a) Paralegal. A paralegal is a person with education, training, or work experience,  
21 who works under the direction and supervision of a member of The Florida Bar and who  
22 performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a member of The  
23 Florida Bar is responsible.

25        **(b) Florida Registered Paralegal.** A Florida Registered Paralegal is someone who  
26        meets the definition of paralegal and the requirements for registration as set forth  
27        elsewhere in these rules.

28  
29        **(c) Paralegal Work and Paralegal Work Experience.** Paralegal work and  
30        paralegal work experience is specifically delegated substantive legal work performed by  
31        a person with education, training, or work experience under the direction and supervision  
32        of a member of The Florida Bar for which a member of The Florida Bar is responsible.  
33        In order to qualify as paralegal work or paralegal work experience for purposes of  
34        meeting the eligibility and renewal requirements set forth herein the paralegal must  
35        primarily perform paralegal work and the work must be continuous and recent. Recent  
36        paralegal work for the purposes of meeting the eligibility and renewal requirements set  
37        forth herein, means work performed during 3 of the previous 5 years in connection with  
38        an initial registration and during the preceding year in the case of a registration renewal.  
39        Time spent performing clerical work is specifically excluded.

40  
41        **(d) Approved Paralegal Program.** A program approved by the American Bar  
42        Association (“ABA”), or a program that is in substantial compliance with the ABA  
43        guidelines and accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency approved by the  
44        United States Department of Education.

45

46 (e) Employing or Supervising Attorney. An employing or supervising attorney is  
47 the attorney having direct supervision over the work product of the paralegal or Florida  
48 Registered Paralegal.

49  
50 (f) Board. The board is the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar.

51

52 (g) Respondent. A respondent is the individual whose conduct is under  
53 investigation.

54

55 (h) Designated Reviewer. The designated reviewer is a member of the board of  
56 governors appointed by the president of The Florida Bar from the district of the district  
57 paralegal committee and is responsible for review and other specific duties as assigned by  
58 the board of governors with respect to a particular district paralegal committee or matter.  
59 If a designated reviewer recuses or is unavailable, another board member from the district  
60 may be appointed by the president of The Florida Bar to serve as designated reviewer in  
61 that matter.

62

63 (i) Probable Cause. A finding that there is cause to believe that a Florida  
64 Registered Paralegal is guilty of misconduct justifying disciplinary action.

65

66 (j) Bar Counsel. Bar counsel is a member of The Florida Bar representing The  
67 Florida Bar in any proceeding under these rules.

68

69 20-3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

70  
71 **RULE 20-3.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION**

72  
73 In order to be a Florida Registered Paralegal under this chapter, an individual must  
74 meet 1 of the following requirements.

75  
76 **(a) Educational and Work Experience Requirements.** A person may become a  
77 Florida Registered Paralegal by meeting 1 of the following education and paralegal work  
78 experience requirements:

79  
80 (1) a bachelor's degree in paralegal studies from an approved paralegal program  
81 plus a minimum of 1 year of paralegal work experience;

82  
83 (2) a bachelor's degree from an institution accredited by a nationally recognized  
84 accrediting agency approved by the United States Department of Education or the  
85 Florida Department of Education plus a minimum of 3 years of paralegal work  
86 experience;

87  
88 (3) an associates' degree in paralegal studies from an approved paralegal  
89 program plus a minimum of 2 years of paralegal work experience;

90

91           (4) an associates' degree from an institution accredited by a nationally  
92           recognized accrediting agency approved by the United States Department of  
93           Education or the Florida Department of Education plus a minimum of 4 years of  
94           paralegal work experience; or

95  
96           (5) a juris doctorate degree from an American Bar Association accredited  
97           institution plus a minimum of 1 year of paralegal work experience.

98  
99           **(b) Certification.** A person may become a Florida Registered Paralegal by  
100          obtaining 1 of the following certifications:

101  
102           (1) successful completion of the Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE  
103           certification as offered by the National Federation of Paralegal Associations  
104           "NFPA") and good standing with NFPA; or

105  
106           (2) successful completion of the Certified Legal Assistant/Certified Paralegal  
107           examination (CLA/CP certification as offered by the National Association of Legal  
108           Assistants "NALA") and good standing with NALA.

109  
110           **(c) Grandfathering.** A person who does not meet the requirements of (a) or (b)  
111          may become a Florida Registered Paralegal by providing attestation from an employing  
112          or supervising attorney(s) that the person has paralegal work experience as defined  
113          elsewhere in these rules for 5 of the 8 years preceding the date of such attestation. Any

114 such attestation must be received by The Florida Bar not later than 3 years after the  
115 effective date of this chapter.

116

117 20-4. REGISTRATION

118

119 **RULE 20-4.1. GENERALLY**

120

121 The following shall be filed with The Florida Bar by an individual seeking to be  
122 registered as a Florida Registered Paralegal:

123

124 **(a) Educational, Certification, or Experience Requirement.**

125

126 (1) evidence that the individual has satisfied the requirements of rule 20-3.1(a)  
127 by supplying evidence of the degree and attestation from the employing or  
128 supervising attorney(s) showing that the individual has the appropriate paralegal  
129 work experience; or

130

131 (2) a certificate showing that the individual has completed 1 of the certifications  
132 set forth in rule 20-3.1(b); or

133

134 (3) attestation from the employing or supervising attorney(s) that the individual  
135 has met the requirements of 20-3.1(c).

136

137 **(b) Statement of Compliance.** A sworn statement by the individual that the  
138 individual has read and will abide by the Code of Ethics and Responsibility set forth  
139 elsewhere in this chapter.

141 **(c) Registration Fee.** An appropriate registration fee set by the board.

143 **(d) Review by The Florida Bar.** Upon receipt of the items set forth in subdivision  
144 20-4.1(a), The Florida Bar shall review the items for compliance with this chapter. Any  
145 incomplete submissions will be returned. If the individual meets all of the requirements  
146 of this chapter, the individual shall be added to the roll of Florida Registered Paralegals  
147 and a certificate evidencing such registration shall be issued.

149 **(e) Annual Renewal; Content and Registration Fee.** The registration pursuant to  
150 this section shall be annual and consistent with that applicable to an attorney licensed to  
151 practice in the state of Florida. An annual registration fee shall be set by the board in an  
152 amount not more than the annual fees paid by inactive members of The Florida Bar. The  
153 renewal shall contain a statement that the individual is primarily performing paralegal  
154 work as defined elsewhere in this chapter and a statement that the individual is not  
155 ineligible for registration set forth elsewhere in this chapter. A Florida Registered  
156 Paralegal who is not primarily performing paralegal work shall not be eligible for  
157 renewal of the registration but may reapply for registration.

158

159 20-5. INELIGIBILITY FOR REGISTRATION OR RENEWAL

160  
161 **RULE 20-5.1. GENERALLY**

162  
163 The following individuals are ineligible for registration as a Florida Registered  
164 Paralegal or for renewal of a registration that was previously granted:

165  
166 (1) a person who is currently suspended or disbarred or who has resigned in lieu  
167 of discipline from the practice of law in any state or jurisdiction;

168  
169 (2) a person who has been convicted of a felony in any state or jurisdiction and  
170 whose civil rights have not been restored;

171  
172 (3) a person who has been found to have engaged in the unlicensed  
173 (unauthorized) practice of law in any state or jurisdiction;

174  
175 (4) a person whose registration or license to practice has been terminated or  
176 revoked for disciplinary reasons by a professional organization, court, disciplinary  
177 board, or agency in any jurisdiction;

178  
179 (5) a person who is no longer primarily performing paralegal work as defined  
180 elsewhere in these rules; or

182           (6) a person who fails to comply with prescribed continuing education  
183           requirements as set forth elsewhere in this chapter.

184

185                                   **RULE 20-5.2. DUTY TO UPDATE**

186

187           An individual applying for registration as a Florida Registered Paralegal or who has  
188           been registered as a Florida Registered Paralegal has a duty to inform The Florida Bar  
189           promptly of any fact or circumstance that would render the individual ineligible for  
190           registration or renewal.

191                                   20-6. CONTINUING EDUCATION

192

193                                   **RULE 20-6.1. GENERALLY**

194

195           In order to maintain the status of Florida Registered Paralegal, a Florida Registered  
196           Paralegal must complete a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education every 3 years, 5  
197           hours of which shall be in legal ethics or professionalism. Courses approved for credit by  
198           The Florida Bar, the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA), or the National  
199           Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA) will be deemed acceptable for purposes of  
200           this rule.

201

202 20-7. CODE OF ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY

203  
204 **RULE 20-7.1. GENERALLY**

205  
206 A Florida Registered Paralegal shall adhere to the following Code of Ethics and  
207 Responsibility:

208  
209 **(a) Disclosure.** A Florida Registered Paralegal shall disclose status as a Florida  
210 Registered Paralegal at the outset of any professional relationship with a client, attorneys,  
211 a court or administrative agency or personnel thereof, and members of the general public.

212  
213 **(b) Confidentiality and Privilege.** A Florida Registered Paralegal shall preserve  
214 the confidences and secrets of all clients. A Florida Registered Paralegal must protect the  
215 confidences of a client, and it shall be unethical for a Florida Registered Paralegal to  
216 violate any statute or rule now in effect or hereafter to be enacted controlling privileged  
217 communications.

218  
219 **(c) Appearance of Impropriety or Unethical Conduct.** A Florida Registered  
220 Paralegal should understand the attorney's Rules of Professional Conduct and this code in  
221 order to avoid any action that would involve the attorney in a violation of the rules, or  
222 give the appearance of professional impropriety. It is the obligation of the Florida  
223 Registered Paralegal to avoid conduct that would cause the lawyer to be unethical or even

224 appear to be unethical, and loyalty to the lawyer is incumbent upon the Florida  
225 Registered Paralegal.

226

227 **(d) Prohibited Conduct.** A Florida Registered Paralegal should not:

228

229 (1) establish attorney-client relationships; accept cases; set legal fees; give legal  
230 opinions or advice; or represent a client before a court or other tribunal, unless  
231 authorized to do so by the court or tribunal;

232

233 (2) engage in, encourage, or contribute to any act that could constitute the  
234 unlicensed practice law;

235

236 (3) engage in the practice of law;

237

238 (4) perform any of the duties that attorneys only may perform nor do things that  
239 attorneys themselves may not do; or

240

241 (5) act in matters involving professional legal judgment since the services of an  
242 attorney are essential in the public interest whenever the exercise of such judgment is  
243 required.

244

245 **(e) Performance of Services.** A Florida Registered Paralegal must act prudently in  
246 determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of an

247 attorney. A Florida Registered Paralegal may perform services for an attorney in the  
248 representation of a client, provided:

249

250 (1) The services performed by the paralegal do not require the exercise of  
251 independent professional legal judgment;

252

253 (2) The attorney is responsible for the client, maintains a direct relationship  
254 with the client, and maintains control of all client matters;

255

256 (3) The attorney supervises the paralegal;

257

258 (4) The attorney remains professionally responsible for all work on behalf of  
259 the client and assumes full professional responsibility for the work product,  
260 including any actions taken or not taken by the paralegal in connection therewith;  
261 and

262

263 (5) The services performed supplement, merge with and become the attorney's  
264 work product.

265

266 **(f) Competence.** A Florida Registered Paralegal shall work continually to maintain  
267 integrity and a high degree of competency throughout the legal profession.

268

269 (g) Conflict of Interest. A Florida Registered Paralegal who was employed by an  
270 opposing law firm has a duty not to disclose any information relating to the  
271 representation of the former firm's clients and must disclose the fact of the prior  
272 employment to the employing attorney.

273  
274 (h) Reporting Known Misconduct. A Florida Registered Paralegal having  
275 knowledge that another Florida Registered Paralegal has committed a violation of this  
276 chapter or code shall inform The Florida Bar of the violation.

277

278 20-8. REVOCATION OF REGISTRATION

279

280 The following rules and procedures shall apply to complaints against Florida  
281 Registered Paralegals:

282

283 **RULE 20-8.1. PARALEGAL COMMITTEES**

284

285 There shall be paralegal committees as are herein provided, each of which shall have  
286 the authority and jurisdiction required to perform the functions hereinafter assigned to the  
287 paralegal committee and which shall be constituted and appointed as follows:

288

289 (a) District Paralegal Committees. There shall be at least 1 paralegal committee  
290 for each appellate district of this state and as many more as shall be found desirable by  
291 the board. Such committees shall be continuing bodies notwithstanding changes in

292 membership, and they shall have jurisdiction and the power to proceed in all matters  
293 properly before them.

294

295 **(b) Membership, Appointment, and Eligibility.** Each district paralegal committee  
296 shall consist of not fewer than 3 members, at least 1 of whom is a Florida Registered  
297 Paralegal and at least 1 of whom is a member of The Florida Bar. Members of district  
298 paralegal committees shall be nominated by the member of the board designated to  
299 review the actions of the committee and appointed by the board. All appointees shall be  
300 of legal age and shall be residents of the district or have their principal office in the  
301 district. For each district paralegal committee there shall be a chair designated by the  
302 designated reviewer of that committee. A vice-chair and secretary may be designated by  
303 the chair of each district committee.

304

305 **(c) Terms.** The terms of the members shall be for 3 years from the date of  
306 administration of the oath of service on the district paralegal committee or until such time  
307 as their successors are appointed and qualified. Continuous service of a member shall not  
308 exceed 6 years. A member shall not be reappointed for a period of 3 years after the end  
309 of the member's second term; provided, however, the expiration of the term of any  
310 member shall not disqualify such member from concluding any investigation or  
311 participating in disposition of cases that were pending before the committee when the  
312 member's term expired.

313

314 **(d) Disqualification.** No member of a district paralegal committee shall perform  
315 any district paralegal committee function when that member:

316

317 (1) is related by blood or marriage to the complainant or respondent;

318

319 (2) has a financial, business, property, or personal interest in the matter under  
320 consideration or with the complainant or respondent;

321

322 (3) has a personal interest that could be affected by the outcome of the  
323 proceedings or that could affect the outcome; or

324

325 (4) is prejudiced or biased toward either the complainant or the respondent.

326

327 Upon notice of the above prohibitions, the affected members should recuse  
328 themselves from further proceedings. The district paralegal committee chair shall have  
329 the power to disqualify any member from any proceeding in which any of the above  
330 prohibitions exist and are stated of record or in writing in the file by the chair.

331

332 **(e) Removal.** Any member may be removed from service by the designated  
333 reviewer of that committee or by the board.

334

335 **(f) District Paralegal Committee Meetings.** District paralegal committees should  
336 meet at regularly scheduled times, not less frequently than quarterly each year, and either  
337 the chair or vice-chair may call special meetings.

338

339 **RULE 20-8.2. DUTIES AND AUTHORITY**

340

341 It is the duty of the district paralegal committees to receive and evaluate complaints  
342 against Florida Registered Paralegals. The district paralegal committees shall have the  
343 authority to remove or revoke an individual’s registration as a Florida Registered  
344 Paralegal in accordance with the procedures set forth elsewhere in this chapter. A  
345 registration certificate issued pursuant to these rules may be suspended or revoked for  
346 any of the following reasons:

347

348 **(a) conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude,**  
349 **dishonesty or false statement;**

350

351 **(b) fraud, dishonesty or corruption which is related to the functions and duties of a**  
352 **Florida Registered Paralegal;**

353

354 **(c) gross incompetence or unprofessional or unethical conduct;**

355

356 **(d) willful, substantial or repeated violation of any duty imposed by statute, rule or**  
357 **order of court;**

358

359 (e) fraud or misrepresentation in obtaining or renewing registration status;

360

361 (f) noncompliance with continuing education requirements;

362

363 (g) nonpayment of renewal fees; or

364

365 (h) violation of the Code of Ethics and Responsibility set forth elsewhere in these  
366 rules.

367

368 **RULE 20-8.3. COMPLAINT PROCESSING**

369

370 (a) Complaints. All complaints against a Florida Registered Paralegal may be  
371 initiated either by a sworn complaint asserting a violation of these rules or by The Florida  
372 Bar on its own motion.

373

374 (b) Review by Bar Counsel. Bar counsel shall review the complaint and determine  
375 whether the alleged conduct, if proven, would constitute a violation of these rules. Bar  
376 counsel may conduct a preliminary, informal investigation to aid in this determination  
377 and, if necessary, may employ a Florida Bar staff investigator to aid in the preliminary  
378 investigation. If bar counsel determines that the facts, if proven, would not constitute a  
379 violation, bar counsel may decline to pursue the complaint. The complainant shall be  
380 notified of a decision not to pursue a complaint and shall be given the reasons therefor.

381

382        **(c) Closing by Bar Counsel and Committee Chair.** Bar counsel may consult with  
383 the appropriate district paralegal committee chair to determine whether the alleged  
384 conduct of a complaint, if proven, would constitute a violation of these rules. If bar  
385 counsel and the district committee chair concur in a finding that the case should be  
386 closed, the complaint may be closed on such finding without referral to the district  
387 paralegal committee.

388

389        **(d) Referral to District Paralegal Committee.** Bar counsel may refer a file to the  
390 appropriate district paralegal committee for further investigation or action as authorized  
391 elsewhere in these rules.

392

393        **(e) Notification of Violation.** If a majority of the district paralegal committee finds  
394 probable cause to believe that a violation of these rules has occurred, bar counsel or the  
395 chair of the district paralegal committee will send written notice thereof to the Florida  
396 Registered Paralegal identifying the alleged violation. The notice shall be sent by  
397 certified U.S. mail directed to the last mailing address on file.

398

399        **(f) Response to Notice of Violation.** Within 30 days from the receipt of the  
400 notification, the Florida Registered Paralegal shall file a written response. If the Florida  
401 Registered Paralegal does not respond, the violations identified in the finding of probable  
402 cause shall be deemed admitted.

403

404 (g) Committee Review. After the filing of the written response to the finding of  
405 probable cause or following the expiration of the time within which to file a response if  
406 none is filed, the district paralegal committee shall review the complaint, the finding of  
407 probable cause, the response (if any), and any other pertinent materials, and decide  
408 whether to dismiss the proceeding or issue a proposed disposition. The committee shall  
409 promptly send written notice of its decision to the Florida Registered Paralegal by  
410 certified U.S. mail directed to the last mailing address on file.

411

412 **RULE 20-8.4. INVESTIGATION**

413

414 (a) Conduct of Proceedings. The proceedings of district paralegal committees  
415 when testimony is taken may be informal in nature and the committees shall not be bound  
416 by the rules of evidence.

417

418 (b) Taking Testimony. Bar counsel, each district paralegal committee, and  
419 members thereof conducting investigations are empowered to take and have transcribed  
420 the testimony and evidence of witnesses. If the testimony is recorded stenographically or  
421 otherwise, the witness shall be sworn by any person authorized by law to administer  
422 oaths.

423

424 (c) Rights and Responsibilities of Respondent. The respondent may be required  
425 to appear and to produce evidence as any other witness unless the respondent claims a

426 privilege or right properly available to the respondent under applicable federal or state  
427 law. The respondent may be accompanied by counsel.

428

429 **(d) Rights of Complaining Witness.** The complaining witness is not a party to the  
430 investigation. The complainant may be granted the right to be present at any district  
431 paralegal committee proceeding when the respondent is present before the committee to  
432 give testimony. The complaining witness shall have no right to appeal the finding of the  
433 district paralegal committee.

434

435 **RULE 20-8.5. SUBPOENAS**

436

437 Subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and the production of documentary  
438 evidence before a district paralegal committee shall be issued as follows:

439

440 **(a) District Paralegal Committees.** Subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and  
441 the production of documentary evidence shall be issued by the chair or vice-chair of a  
442 district paralegal committee in pursuance of an investigation authorized by the  
443 committee.

444

445 **(b) Bar Counsel Investigations.** Subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and the  
446 production of documentary evidence before bar counsel when bar counsel is conducting  
447 an initial investigation shall be issued by the chair or vice-chair of a district paralegal  
448 committee to which the matter will be assigned.

449

450 (c) Service. Subpoenas may be served by an investigator employed by The Florida  
451 Bar or in the manner provided by law for the service of process.

452

453 **RULE 20-8.6. DISPOSITION OF COMPLAINTS**

454

455 Upon concluding its investigation, the district paralegal committee shall determine  
456 which of the following action(s) should be taken:

457

458 (a) close the matter on a finding of no violation;

459

460 (b) require that a specified continuing education course be taken;

461

462 (c) accept an affidavit from the Florida Registered Paralegal acknowledging that the  
463 conduct surrounding the complaint was a violation of these rules and that the Florida  
464 Registered Paralegal will refrain from conduct that would create a violation of these  
465 rules;

466

467 (d) suspension of the Florida Registered Paralegal's registration certificate for a  
468 period not to exceed 1 year;

469

470 (e) revocation of registration certificate; or

471

472 (f) denial of request for renewal.

473

474 **RULE 20-8.7. REVIEW OF DISTRICT PARALEGAL COMMITTEE ACTION**

475

476 **(a) Review by the Designated Reviewer.** Notice of district paralegal committee  
477 action recommending either revocation or denial of renewal shall be given to the  
478 designated reviewer for review. Upon review of the district paralegal committee action,  
479 the designated reviewer may affirm the action of the district paralegal committee, request  
480 the district paralegal committee to reconsider its action, or refer the district paralegal  
481 committee action to the disciplinary review committee of the board of governors for its  
482 review. The request for a district paralegal committee reconsideration or referral to the  
483 disciplinary review committee shall be in writing and must be made within 30 days of  
484 notice of the district paralegal committee action. If the designated reviewer fails to make  
485 the request for reconsideration or referral within the time prescribed, the district paralegal  
486 committee action shall become final.

487

488 **(b) Review by Disciplinary Review Committee.** The disciplinary review  
489 committee shall review those district paralegal committee matters referred to it by a  
490 designated reviewer or the district paralegal committee and shall make a report to the  
491 board. The disciplinary review committee may confirm, reject, or amend the  
492 recommendation of the designated reviewer in whole or in part. The report of the  
493 disciplinary review committee shall be final unless overruled by the board.

494

495 **(c) Board Action on Recommendations of the Disciplinary Review Committee.**

496 On review of a report and recommendation of the disciplinary review committee, the  
497 board of governors may confirm, reject, or amend the recommendation in whole or in  
498 part.

499  
500 **(d) Notice of Board Action.** Bar counsel shall give notice of board action to the  
501 respondent, complainant, and district paralegal committee.

502  
503 **(e) Filing Service on Board of Governors.** All matters to be filed with or served  
504 upon the board shall be addressed to the board of governors and filed with the executive  
505 director. The executive director shall be the custodian of the official records of The  
506 Florida Bar.

507  
508 **RULE 20-8.8 FILES**

509  
510 **(a) Files Are Property of Bar.** All matters, including files, preliminary  
511 investigation reports, interoffice memoranda, records of investigations, and the records of  
512 other proceedings under these rules are property of The Florida Bar

513  
514 **(b) Investigatory Record.** The investigatory record shall consist of the record  
515 before a district paralegal committee and any reports, correspondence, papers, and  
516 recordings and transcripts of hearings and transcribed testimony furnished to, served on,  
517 or received from the respondent or the complainant or a witness before the district

518 paralegal committee. The record before the district paralegal committee shall consist of  
519 all reports, correspondence, papers, and recordings furnished to or received from the  
520 respondent and the transcript of district paralegal committee meetings or transcribed  
521 testimony, if the proceedings were attended by a court reporter; provided, however, that  
522 the committee may retire into private session to debate the issues involved and to reach a  
523 decision as to the action to be taken.

524

525 **(c) Limitations on Disclosure.** Any material provided to or promulgated by The  
526 Florida Bar that is confidential under applicable law shall remain confidential and shall  
527 not be disclosed except as authorized by the applicable law. If this type of material is  
528 made a part of the investigatory record, that portion of the investigatory record may be  
529 sealed by the district paralegal committee chair.

530

531 **(d) Disclosure of Information.** Unless otherwise ordered by a court, nothing in  
532 these rules shall prohibit the complainant, respondent, or any witness from disclosing the  
533 existence of proceedings under these rules or from disclosing any documents or  
534 correspondence served on or provided to those persons.

535

536 **(e) Response to Inquiry.** Representatives of The Florida Bar, authorized by the  
537 board, shall reply to inquiries regarding a pending or closed investigation. The Florida  
538 Bar may charge a reasonable fee for copying documents consistent with applicable law.

539

540 **(f) Production of Investigatory Records Pursuant to Subpoena.** The Florida Bar,  
541 pursuant to a valid subpoena issued by a regulatory agency, may provide any documents  
542 that are a portion of the investigatory record even if otherwise deemed confidential under  
543 these rules. The Florida Bar may charge a reasonable fee for copying the documents  
544 consistent with applicable law.

545

546 **(g) Response to False or Misleading Statements.** If public statements that are  
547 false and misleading are made about any investigation brought pursuant to this chapter,  
548 The Florida Bar may make any disclosure consistent with applicable law necessary to  
549 correct such false or misleading statements.

550

551 **(h) Providing Material to Other Agencies.** Nothing contained herein shall  
552 prohibit The Florida Bar from providing material to any state or federal law enforcement  
553 or regulatory agency, United States Attorney, state attorney, the National Association of  
554 Legal Assistants or the National Federation of Paralegal Associations and equivalent  
555 organizations, the Florida Board of Bar Examiners and equivalent entities in other  
556 jurisdictions, paralegal grievance committees and equivalent entities in other  
557 jurisdictions, and unlicensed practice of law committees and equivalent entities in other  
558 jurisdictions.

559

560

## 20-9. IMMUNITY

561

562

### **RULE 20-9.1. GENERALLY**

563

564       The members of the district paralegal committees, the board, bar staff and counsel  
565 assisting the committees, shall have absolute immunity from civil liability for all acts in  
566 the course of their official duties.

567

568

#### 20.10 AMENDMENTS

569

#### **RULE 20-10.1. GENERALLY**

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571       Rules governing the Florida Registered Paralegal Program may be amended in  
572 accordance with the procedures set forth elsewhere in these rules.

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