

# NCDD/NACDL LAS VEGAS 2016 MAKING YOUR OFFICE WORK



## Law Offices of Virginia L. Landry, Inc.

23046 Avenida De La Carlota, Suite 125

Laguna Hills, CA 92653

949-585-7400

[virginia@landrylaw.net](mailto:virginia@landrylaw.net)

[www.duiqueen.com](http://www.duiqueen.com)

# Bio Virginia L. Landry



Virginia Landry is well known in Orange County for effectively representing persons accused of DUI cases relating to alcohol and drugs, as well as the DMV's Administrative Per Se actions for license suspensions. Located in Laguna Hills, California, the firm has successfully represented thousands of DUI clients during her twenty eight years of private practice. Virginia Landry is Board Certified in DUI Defense by the ABA and the National College for DUI Defense, is a Regent, Sustaining Member and Chairperson for the Diversity and Listserve Committees. Virginia serves on the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Association DUI Committee. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the California DUI Lawyers Association as its Secretary. Virginia Landry is a current member of the Orange County Bar Association, previously serving on the Board of Directors and on two committees. Virginia Landry is qualified as an Instructor for Standardized Field Sobriety Testing, and owns two portable breath testing machines. Speaking engagements include the National College for DUI Defense, Mastering Scientific Evidence, California State Bar Association's annual meeting, the California DUI Lawyers Association, California Attorneys for Criminal Justice, the California Public Defenders Association, the West, Newport Harbor and South Harbor Orange County Bar Associations and the Bridging the Gap program for new attorneys. Ms. Landry has been a guest lecturer at Chapman University of Law, Western State University and Trinity College of Law. Virginia Landry has been featured in the Orange County Register, the OC Bulletin, the Irvine World News and appeared on news channels 4 and 13 and radio talk show "Ridin' Dirty".

# Professional Affiliations

## Virginia L. Landry



National College for DUI Defense

National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

California Attorneys for Criminal Justice

California DUI Lawyers Association

California Public Defenders Association

American Bar Association

Orange County Bar Association

Newport Harbor Bar Association

West Orange County Bar Association

South Orange County Bar Association

Northern Arizona University Alumni Association

Western State College of Law Alumni Association

# OVERVIEW

- Maximum productivity and efficiency for paralegals and other assistants in the office
- Dealing with difficult clients
- Fee collections
- Working out the kinks
- Women in the workplace

# ULTIMATE GOALS

- Save time and Save money
- Make \$\$\$ for the firm
- How do you make yourself invaluable for the firm?

# MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

- New client intakes – preparation for attorney
- Follow up with potential new clients after attorney meeting (assisting in closing the deal)
- Assisting with fee agreement documents

# MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

- Calendaring & tracking deadlines – two person system/cross-checking
- Techniques for organization
- Prioritizing work/balance (assignments from all attorneys in office)

# MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

- Time management
- Creating and maintaining tasks lists
- Juggling emails, phone calls, projects



# MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

- Willingness to learn – ask questions
- Take notes each time you meet with attorney to reinforce training/retention (attorney's time and knowledge is valuable)
- Willingness to teach and train (seasoned paralegals)

# DEALING WITH THE DIFFICULT CLIENT

- The angry client
- The emotional client
- The client with mental health disorder(s)

# HAS THIS HAPPENED AT YOUR OFFICE?



# THE ANGRY CLIENT

-Aggressive

-Loud/Screamer

-Threatening

# DEALING WITH THE ANGRY CLIENT

1. Remain calm and professional
2. Listen - they often just need to vent
3. Actively empathize and “kill them with kindness”
4. Identify the issue and find a solution

# POURING YOUR HEART OUT



# THE EMOTIONAL CLIENT

-“My life is over”

-Emotionally closed/don't listen

- Cryers

# DEALING WITH THE EMOTIONAL CLIENT

1. Same points as with angry clients
2. Communicate, educate, let them know what to expect and ask clear questions
3. Don't overwhelm them, take it one step at a time
4. Always have tissue on hand!



# THE CLIENT WITH MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER(S)

- Bipolar disorders

- Paranoid schizophrenia

- Post-traumatic stress disorders

# DEALING WITH THE CLIENT WHO HAS MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER(S)

1. Listen and try to understand what they are communicating
2. Be respectful
3. Gain their trust
4. Work with a family member to assist if necessary

# IMPORTANT FOR DIFFICULT CLIENTS

- Document for everyone's protection – attorneys and employees
- Physical aspect & malpractice clients
- Staff should recognize HM clients and prep attorney for it

# FEE COLLECTIONS

- In-house vs. outsourcing fee collections
- In-house: have a valid credit card on file and make it an office policy
- In-house: schedule reminders to charge card and track payments

# FEE COLLECTIONS

- Move quickly on collecting overdue accounts -there is a higher chance of getting money if overdue 60 days vs. overdue 6 months
- Stay friendly and professional but firm with overdue clients - they tend to come up with a lot of excuses

# CREDIT CARD PROCESSING SERVICES

- LawPay – credit card processing  
[Lawpay.com](http://Lawpay.com)
- Lex/Actum – payment solutions for law firms  
[Lexactum.com](http://Lexactum.com)
- PayPros Legal – payment processing solution  
[Payproslegal.com](http://Payproslegal.com)

# WORKING OUT THE KINKS

- Managing resources at the firm – open door policies and private conversations
- Communication is key
- Dealing with difficult personalities

# SOMETIMES STUFF HAPPENS





# WORKING OUT THE KINKS

- Employee handbook
- Documentation/counseling
- Terminations

# WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

- Dress/attire
- Attitude orientation
- Safety
- Harassment
- Collaboration/mentor

# MCLE

- Stay current on continuing legal education pursuant to your state statutes
- California: Business and Professions Code 6450

# Join Professional Associations

- Stay up to date and further your career
- Join your local legal professional association (e.g. Orange County Paralegal Association)
- National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA)

# Website Tools and Resources

- [Courts.ca.gov/forms](http://Courts.ca.gov/forms) (find your state's website for judicial council Forms)
- [Leginfo.ca.gov](http://Leginfo.ca.gov) (find your state's website for statutes)
- [Paralegaltoday.com](http://Paralegaltoday.com)
- [Myparalegalplace.com](http://Myparalegalplace.com)

# Website Tools and Resources

- [Legaltalknetwork.com](http://Legaltalknetwork.com)
- [Legalofficeguru.com](http://Legalofficeguru.com)
- Lexisadvance (office account)
- Other favorite recommendations?

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- *Angelica Calderon*
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THANK YOU!!



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TEXT: Legalstaff to: (949) 531-7060

and follow the prompts