

LEGAL SERVICES

A. Retaining an Attorney Abroad

The following guidelines may be helpful to you in retaining the services of an attorney abroad to protect your interest.

Selecting an Attorney

It is wise to contact several attorneys, briefly describing the nature of the services you desire. Before deciding which attorney to employ, ask for a written schedule of fees generally charged for the services you need. Be sure to ask whether the attorney is fluent in English. Do not turn over documents or funds until you are certain that the attorney fully understands your legal needs and is willing to handle your case.

An *avocat* must be a lawyer or attorney. *Avocats* may render legal advice on all matters, draft agreements and contracts, handle commercial disputes and collection cases, and plead and defend civil and criminal cases before the French courts to which they are admitted.

Barristers and Solicitors

In some foreign cities, districts, or provinces it may be necessary to retain the services of both a solicitor and a barrister. In such jurisdictions, barristers are allowed to appear in court, including trial courts and higher courts of appeal or other courts. Solicitors are allowed to advise clients and sometimes represent them in the lower courts. They may also prepare cases for barristers to try in the higher courts.

Notaries Public, "Notaires", "Huissiers"

In some foreign countries, notaries public, "notaries" and "huissiers" can perform many of the functions performed by attorneys in the United States.

Foreign notaries frequently draft instruments, wills and conveyances. A French *notaire* is a public official appointed by the Ministry of Justice, and not the equivalent of a notary public in the United States. The number of *notaires* in each jurisdiction is limited, and their fees fixed by law. Their functions include the preparation and recording of notarial acts (wills, deeds, acts of incorporation, marriage contracts, etc), the administration and settlements of estates (excluding litigation in court) and serving as the repository of wills. They are not lawyers, but very specialized members of the legal profession. They may not plead in court.

The "huissiers" serve documents. They are not lawyers but are very specialized members of the legal profession. They may not plead cases in court.

Assistance of the US Embassy or Consulate

Should your communication with a foreign attorney prove unsatisfactory, a US consular may, if appropriate, communicate with the attorney on your behalf. In addition, complaints against foreign attorneys whose names appear on the list can result in the removal of their names from the list.

Coordination with Counsel in the United States

American attorneys may not be in a position to represent your interests abroad, particularly because they will not be permitted to participate in foreign court proceedings under the laws of the foreign country. American attorneys experienced in international procedure may be helpful in explaining the complex international issues involved in your case and some may have associates or partners abroad to whom they can refer you.

Legal Aid Association

There may be facilities in the foreign country for low cost or free legal services. If the information about such assistance is not included in the list of attorneys, ask the local bar association or the Ministry of Justice about the availability of legal aid.

- How to deal with your foreign attorney
- Find out the attorney's qualifications and experience
- Find out how the attorney plans to represent you. Ask specific questions and expect the attorney to explain the legal process in the country concerned, as well as the legal activities planned on your behalf, in language that you can understand. Have your attorney analyze your case, giving you the positive and negative aspects and probable outcome. Be honest with your attorney. Tell the attorney every relevant fact in order to get the best representation of your interests. Do not fail to ask how much time the attorney anticipates the case may take to complete.
- Find out what fees the attorney, "notaire" or "huissier" charge and what fees are expected. Notaires and huissiers are usually government officials who must charge fees established by their governments. Some attorneys expect payment in advance ; some demand payment after each action taken refusing to proceed until they are paid. Others may take the case on a percentage basis collecting a pre-arranged percentage of the monies awarded by a foreign court.
- Ask that your attorney keep you advised of the progress of your case according to a pre-established schedule. Remember your responsibility : keep your attorney informed of any new developments in your case. Request copies of all letters and documents prepared on your behalf.
- Do not expect your attorney to give a simple answer to a complex legal problem.
- Be sure you understand the technical language contained in any contract or other legal document prepared by your attorney.

NOTE : In some countries the court recess for a period of several months during the summer. In addition, even if the case is resolved, currency control laws are often complex and may delay the transfer of funds awarded to you from the foreign country for an indefinite time.

Assistance of the Department of State

If you have additional questions, contact the appropriate division of the Office of Citizen Services :

Room 4817, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| - Europe and Canada Division | (202) 647-3445 |
| - Inter - American Division | (202) 647-3712 |
| - East Asia and Pacific Division | (202) 647-3675 |
| - Africa Division | (202) 647-4994 |
| - Near East and South Asia Division | (202) 647-3926 |

Complaints Against Foreign Attorneys

If the service of your foreign attorney proves unsatisfactory, in addition to notifying the Department of State and the US Embassy or Consulate abroad, you may address your complaints to the local foreign bar association.

Miscellaneous

Credit Reports. Credit reports can be obtained through Dunn and Bradstreet, 17, avenue de Choisy, 75013 Paris, or through major banks represented in Paris. These include the Bank of America, Chase Manhattan, First National City Bank of New York (Citibank) and Morgan Guaranty Trust.

Collection Agencies. Not all attorneys accept collection cases. A list of collection agencies is available from the Embassy's Commercial Affairs Section.

Service of Legal Process and Taking of Evidence. Information sheets on these judicial assistance matters are available from the Embassy's Office of American Services.

B. The List of Attorneys

The following individuals and firms have informed the Consulate that they are qualified to adjudicate law in the categories specified, and that they are sufficiently competent in the English language to provide services to English-speaking clients. The Consulate assumes no responsibility for the professional ability or integrity of the individuals or firms listed herein. The Consulate has neither the authority nor the facilities to act as a bar association grievance committee. If you encounter unsatisfactory services by parties listed, however, set forth the circumstances in writing and the complaint will be noted in our files.

THIS LIST IS RELEASED ON THE CONDITION THAT IT NOT BE PUBLISHED OR REPRODUCED. French law prohibits members of the legal profession in France from advertising their services. Publication of the names of attorneys with data on their professional qualifications would be a violation of this law.

English Speaking Attorneys in Lille

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including litigation, probate, real estate development, real property. Lille bar
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Amiens

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d'HELLENCOURT, Philippe, 76 rue Laurendeau, 80000 Amiens
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Douai :

S.C.P. Reisenhel Avocats, 208 place du Barlet, 59500 Douai
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BAR LISTINGS FOR THE DISTRICT

02 - AISNE

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3 place Aubry
20000 LAON
Tel : 03.23.20.27.01

Batonnier 2004 : Maître Jean-Luc DOYEZ

Ordre des Avocats au Barreau de Soissons
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Batonnier 2004 : Maître Gilles LAURENT

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59 - NORD

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www.avocats-lille.com

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Fax : 03.44.48.55.35

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62 – PAS DE CALAIS

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Fax : 03.21.01.36.31

Batonnier 2004 : Maître Patrick ZEHNDER

Ordre des Avocats au Barreau de Boulogne sur Mer

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62200 BOULOGNE SUR MER

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Fax : 03.21.80.75.46

03.21.80.99.30

Ordre des Avocats au Barreau de Saint Omer

3 rue des Tribunaux
62500 SAINT OMER

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Batonnier 2004 : Maître Francis CORRET

80 - SOMME

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A list of [American attorneys in the Paris area](#) is available in The Guide for U.S. Citizens in France.