

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - ATTORNEY RENEWALS

Why is the renewal fee \$20?

In accordance with this Court's Plan for Bar Admissions Fees, amended by the Board of Judges on February 22, 2006, renewal fees were increased to \$20. This amount covers a two-year period, payable every even-numbered year (beginning in 2006).

When is my renewal fee due? Is there a "grace period" for submission?

July 15, 2008, is the official due date; however, members of the Bar of this Court will not be considered delinquent and subject to removal from the membership of the Court's Bar until the last business day in August. The Court will accept a renewal form postmarked September 1, 2008, through September 30, 2008, **ONLY** if the form is accompanied by the required \$20 renewal fee plus an additional \$50 late fee. Anything postmarked October 1, 2008, or later will be returned to the attorney and that attorney will be required to reapply, pay the current admittance fee, and attend an admissions ceremony before he/she can practice before this Court.

When does the Court consider that I am no longer an active member of the MDFL Bar?

Any member who has failed to renew his/her membership and has not paid any required fees/late charges by September 30 of the even-numbered year will no longer be considered an active member of this Court's Bar and must make application as a new member, pay the current admittance fee, and attend an admissions ceremony before he/she can practice before this Court. Any forms and/or fees postmarked October 1 or later of the even-numbered year will be returned to the attorney.

Can a renewal check be submitted on behalf of multiple attorneys?

Yes. One check may be submitted for multiple attorneys as long as each attorney's Bar ID number is clearly referenced on the check to ensure that everyone's records are credited properly. If necessary, attach a separate sheet/ledger detailing whose renewals are being paid by that check. Any late fees that may be paid by that same check must also be clearly designated as such.

Can one renewal form be submitted on behalf of multiple attorneys?

No. Each attorney must submit a separate renewal form.

I mailed my renewal form without attaching a check, I sent my renewal form without signing it, I mailed my check without attaching my renewal form, or I sent my form and check but forgot to enclose the required additional late fee. What happens now?

Renewal forms not accompanied by checks, loose checks unattached to renewal forms, unsigned renewal forms, and renewal forms and \$20 checks submitted between September 1 and September 30 without the accompanying \$50 late fee will be returned to the attorney. If not resubmitted properly before the established due date, the attorney will be considered delinquent and subject to removal from the MDFL Bar.

I think I am a member of the Middle District of Florida's Bar, but I don't recall when I was admitted to practice before the Court. How can I verify my membership?

You may search the **MDFL Attorney Roster** located on this Web site (link to "Search the MDFL Roster"). This link may also be found on the Attorney Resources page. In addition, you may

contact the **Attorney Admissions Clerk** in the division where you think you might have been admitted. He or she can verify your status and date of admission to the MDFL Bar (link to “Attorney Admission Clerk Contact Information”).

The information preprinted on the Attorney Renewal Form is incorrect, how can I update my contact information?

All attorneys registered with CM/ECF can access their CM/ECF accounts at any time to view their record and update their E-mail address, phone and fax number that is on file (link to “Log Into CM/ECF”). If an attorney’s address is incorrect on the form, you can either submit changes through the “Submit a Change of Address” link (link to “Submit a Change of Address”) or submit the changes in writing to the Clerk’s Office where you file most frequently. DO NOT send your renewal form to the Clerk’s Office - it will only be returned to you.

I’m running late. Can I bring my renewal form and check for dues to the Clerk’s Office for payment? Can I FedEx my form and fee to the Court?

No. Renewal forms and payments will not be accepted at any of the five divisional offices of the Court. Please mail your signed renewal form and payment to the designated P.O. Box, in accordance with the instructions provided on your renewal form. Renewal forms sent by FedEx will not be accepted. All forms must be sent by U.S. mail to the P.O. Box.

I am a non-resident attorney specially admitted under Local Rule 2.02. Should I fill out a renewal form and pay the fee?

No. Non-resident attorneys should neither fill out a renewal form, if one is mistakenly mailed to them by the Court, nor should they pay the renewal fee.

I was just admitted/readmitted to the MDFL Bar earlier this calendar year. Should I fill out a renewal form and pay the fee?

No. Newly admitted or newly readmitted attorneys should neither fill out a renewal form, if one was mistakenly mailed to them by the Court, nor should they pay the renewal fee. Their dues were included in their admission fee. They will be required to renew their membership on the next two-year cycle.

In years past, I was considered “exempt” and did not have to submit a renewal fee. Am I still exempt?

No. All attorneys who are members of the Bar of this Court must pay a renewal fee and submit a renewal form, including attorneys who may have previously been exempt (attorneys who were employed full time by either the United States or an agency of the United States, who were required to “practice” before the Court in an official capacity).

I did not receive a form in the mail and when I called the Court to verify my status, I was informed that I am no longer a member of the MDFL Bar. I believe that an error has been made and would like to address my situation with the Court. What should I do?

Attorneys who dispute the finding that they are no longer a member of the MDFL Bar, should send a detailed letter explaining the dispute to the Attorney Admissions Clerk in the Division where they file most frequently. Any documentation to support your position should be attached to the letter. The Attorney Admissions Clerk will forward your letter through the proper channels

and, after the Court has had an opportunity to investigate the matter further, you will be contacted in writing with a decision.

I must be readmitted but cannot wait for the next ceremony. Can I have my admission expedited?

In certain emergency circumstances, some judges are willing to swear in an attorney before the next admission ceremony is scheduled. You should speak with the Attorney Admissions Clerk in the division closest to you about your emergency situation (link to “Attorney Admission Clerk Contact Information”).

I must be readmitted. Do I keep my initial admission date?

Your record will reflect your original admission date as well as your readmittance date.

If I do not pay my renewal fee, does this adversely effect my record with the Middle District of Florida or the Florida Bar?

While there are no penalties per se for letting your renewal lapse, once you are no longer a member of the Bar of this Court, you must be readmitted before you may practice before the Court. Please also note that attorneys who are no longer members of this Court’s Bar are subject to removal from the CJA Attorney and Mediator Panels. There is no effect on your Florida Bar membership, if you do not pay your renewal fee to the MDFL Bar.