

10 Questions to Ask Before Selecting a Personal Injury Lawyer

The settlement with the insurance company is the one and only chance injury victims have to secure compensation for medical and treatment costs, loss of income and earnings capacity, and for their pain and suffering.

Here are ten questions to ask a personal injury lawyer:

1 - How many years experience do you have handling cases with similar injuries?

By their nature, serious and catastrophic injury claims are complex and often involve substantial medical evidence and differing expert reports on prognosis, rehabilitation and long-term care requirements. Be sure to ask your lawyer about their level of experience handling these issues.

2 - How is a personal injury claim quantified?

An experienced personal injury lawyer should provide you with an explanation of the issues that will be relevant in quantifying the claim and the process and time-frame for conducting the assessment and progressing the claim. Making a claim before the long-term treatment and care needs are understood is an easy mistake to make.

3 - Are there any weaknesses with my claim?

When talking with a potential lawyer, ask them about any potential problems with your claim that may prevent you from getting a satisfactory award. Your personal injury lawyer should be up-front at all times about the strengths and weaknesses of your case so that you can enter the claims settlement process with realistic expectations. You need to trust your lawyer and their response will let you know if they are being up-front or simply telling you what you want to hear in order to win your business.

4 - What are the options open to me for taking my claim forward?

When meeting a personal injury lawyer about your claim, ask them to explain the steps involved in progressing your claim with the insurance company. Your lawyer should present alternative routes for resolving the claim and help you find the option that you are most comfortable with.

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5 - Do you have trial experience if we can't settle with the insurance company?

Many lawyers do not have any trial experience so it is important to find out how often your lawyer has taken a personal injury claim to court. If you cannot reach an agreement with the insurance company, you want to be sure your lawyer is fully prepared and capable of pleading your case in front of a judge and jury.

6 - Do you have time available to dedicate to my file?

Make sure your lawyer has time available and is dedicated to moving your claim forward efficiently. Personal injury claims can take a long time to settle in the best of circumstances. Don't let your lawyer's workload add to the delay.

7 - How else can you help?

A life changing injury can be overwhelming. Be sure to ask how else your lawyer can assist with the recovery process beyond the legal steps needed to settle the claim.

8 - Who will be doing the actual legal work on my file?

Ask about which lawyer will be working on your file and who will be your main point of contact until the claim is settled. Sometimes the lawyer you meet with is not the person who will be doing the legal work on your claim. At some firms one lawyer manages the file from start to finish while other firms have different lawyers working on the file at different stages. It is important you know going in how the work will be managed so you can find the firm with the approach you are comfortable with.

9 - What fees do you charge?

Different lawyers charge different fees and have different contingency arrangements. Compare a few before you select a lawyer. You want the insurance company to treat you fairly and your lawyer should do the same. There can also be many costs involved with settling an injury claim beyond legal fees. Remember to ask about these costs and how they are paid, especially if the award is lower than anticipated.

10 - Do you have a track-record of good settlements for injury victims?

Many lawyers like to quote big dollar figures as proof of their success. But without knowing the details of the case it is impossible to know if the result was a good one. After all, a settlement for \$1M may sound great, but not if the claim was actually worth \$2M. So instead of asking for examples of dollar figure settlements, ask them for examples of similar cases and the steps they took to properly assess the claim and what they did to reach an acceptable settlement with the insurance company.

Duncan Craig LLP helps Albertans who have suffered serious and life changing injuries secure the compensation and future they deserve.

**Call us today for a free consultation.
780-428-6036**

Let our team's extensive experience, focus and personal attention help you get the award you need to recover from your injuries.

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