



LEX Scholarship Essay Prompt – 2022

The legal profession has debated how to adequately provide legal services to a large segment of the US population who cannot afford to pay standard legal fees. One solution has been for the profession to provide legal services for free (pro bono) to underserved populations. Another solution has been for the government to support the provision of free legal services via Legal Aid Agencies. Over the last three decades, a third option has been considered in several states, limited licensing of paralegals to practice law. Washington State was an early adopter of paralegal licensing (Limited Licensed Legal Technician), and Utah (Licensed Paralegal Practitioners) became the second state to license paralegals to practice law in limited areas (Family, Landlord-Tenant, and Debt Collection) and Oregon has an active proposal for paralegal licensing (Licensed Paralegal). The Oregon proposal asserts that licensed paralegals would support the provision of needed legal services in the areas of family law and landlord tenant the way Nurse Practitioners are licensed to provide basic medical services to the public. Other states like California and Illinois are studying whether to license paralegals to practice law in a limited way.

The question your paper needs to address is Should Paralegals be Licensed to Practice Law under Limited Circumstances? You may argue for or against the question. Your essay will not be evaluated on which side you take but rather on the strength of the argument you make.