

D Magazine – “Best Lawyers in Dallas”

To compile our list of the best lawyers in Dallas, we asked lawyers with a valid Texas bar number to nominate two lawyers outside their firm and one within their firm across all voting categories, keeping the following question in mind: which Dallas lawyers, of those whose work you have witnessed firsthand, would you rank among the current best? Answers may include co-counsel, lawyers you have observed in court, and opposing counsel. After we tallied the votes, a panel of eminent lawyers met with our editors to evaluate the Best Lawyers in Dallas 2018 list. Self-nominations were not counted. The panel’s anonymity was assured to allow the lawyers to speak freely about issues regarding their peers that would be known only to the legal community. Voting was conducted exclusively at dmagazine.com. After this list was completed, we turned a copy over to our sales staff. The sales department cannot add or subtract from the list. They in turn offer full-profile advertisements to the winners. The editors have no idea who purchases these ads, which are found in a special advertising section somewhere else in the magazine. If lawyers decline to buy an ad, they are still listed. No one can buy an ad in the special section unless he or she is included in this list.

How does D Magazine determine which lawyers make the list?

Best Lawyers is a peer-review voting process. We rely on the lawyers’ expertise to determine who deserves to be on the list. For 2018, we mailed this letter to 8,926 local lawyers from our online directory, inviting them to vote using an online ballot on our website. They can vote in their practice specialty for up to three lawyers. They can nominate one lawyer within their firm and up to two outside their firm. Same-firm votes carry less weight than outside-firm votes. We vet each voter’s State Bar of Texas number and practice area. Our research editor tallies the votes. We present the tallied votes to an anonymous panel of esteemed lawyers. The panel and D staff review the tallied results and decide on the finalists based on the number of votes in each category. Once the list is finalized, D confirms each lawyer’s Texas Bar status and investigates disciplinary history.

How do you pick the categories?

We include categories that would be helpful to a business client as well as a personal client. We presented the categories to the panel of lawyers to make certain we did not leave out a worthy category.

Do lawyers have to pay to be on the list?

No, a lawyer cannot pay to be on the list. After the editorial staff finalizes the list, it is given to our sales department, which invites lawyers to buy profiles. Those profiles appear elsewhere in the magazine, labeled as paid advertising. But whether the lawyers advertise has no bearing on this list. The editorial department does not know who purchased a profile in the magazine until the magazine is in the final stages of production.

How does the panel process work?

A panel of esteemed local lawyers reviews the list. The panel is anonymous to encourage open discussion. If the panel says that a lawyer with a lot of votes is nonetheless not worthy of this recognition due to poor performance or any other reason, D staff investigates the lawyer’s disciplinary action further. If a lawyer who is a leader in his field did not receive enough votes, the panel can recommend that the lawyer be added to the list. Final decisions are deferred to the editorial staff of D Magazine.

Does D Magazine check the lawyers on the list?

Yes, each lawyer is checked against the State Bar of Texas' database for disciplinary action and license status. The State Bar of Texas reports disciplinary action sanctions within the past 10 years. If a lawyer has an inactive license, we remove him from the list. If a lawyer has disciplinary action, we investigate further and determine whether he stays on the list on a case-by-case basis. A D Magazine fact checker calls each lawyer to verify specialty and correct spelling of name. Lawyers are removed from the list if we learn they have moved out of Dallas or have retired.

How do you prevent cheating?

Our online ballot records each voter's IP address. If we notice a suspicious pattern—a block of votes from the same IP address, for instance, or a high number of votes cast in a short time—we investigate.