

Frequently Asked Questions About LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell® Peer Review Ratings

Peer Review Ratings attest to a lawyer's ability and professional ethics, and reflect the confidential opinions of members of the Bar and Judiciary. The following are some frequently asked questions about the rating process.

How does a lawyer obtain a Peer Review Rating?

Most rating reviews are initiated by Martindale-Hubbell after a lawyer is admitted to the Bar for ten years. A lawyer, marketing director or colleague can request a rating review for a practicing lawyer prior to the ten-year period.

How are law firms rated?

Generally, a law firm is given the rating of its highest principal. On martindale.com, Martindale-Hubbell compiles an aggregate number of the total rated lawyers in each firm. Lawyers who suppress their rating will not be included in the total.

How are Practice and Industry Groups Rated?

On martindale.com, Martindale-Hubbell compiles an aggregate number of the total number of lawyers in each Group. Lawyers who suppress their rating will not be included in the total.

Does an individual have to have a paid listing in the Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory to be rated?

The goal of the rating system is to develop accurate ratings for as many lawyers as possible, whether or not they have a paid listing. Those lawyers who are also Martindale-Hubbell subscribers benefit from increased exposure of their rating throughout martindale.com.

What is a good rating?

All ratings are positive indicators of a lawyer's ethics and professional stature.

The CV is a good first rating for lawyers and a definitive statement of their above-average ability and unquestionable ethics. This is the maximum rating a lawyer can receive who has been admitted to the bar for 3-4 years. The BV is an excellent rating for a lawyer with more experience. This is the maximum rating a lawyer can receive who has been admitted to the bar from 5-9 years. An AV rating is a significant accomplishment — a testament to the fact that a lawyer's peers rank him or her at the highest level of professional excellence. A lawyer must be admitted to the bar for 10 or more years to receive an AV rating.

How can a lawyer obtain an AV rating?

The knowledge and skill derived from extensive experience in the practice of law are usually the attributes considered when endorsing a lawyer for an AV rating. The standard of excellence is determined by the lawyer's own peers. A lawyer cannot receive this rating unless he or she has been admitted to the bar at least 10 years.

Are ratings transferable between states?

Ratings are generally transferable within state boundaries. If a lawyer moves to a different state, his or her rating will appear in Martindale-Hubbell with the state abbreviation indicating that it was established in another state or province.

For more information, please contact your Account Executive or visit www.martindale.com/advantage/pdc.

What is the role of the Martindale-Hubbell Ratings Specialist in the rating process?

Peer Review Ratings Specialists work closely with Martindale-Hubbell's larger law firm clients to engage and assist their lawyers in the Peer Review Process.

What is the role of the Martindale-Hubbell Field Representative in the rating process?

Field Representatives play an important role in making initial, confidential inquiries during their visits with lawyers. However, no rating is established, advanced or lowered without further written investigation.

If lawyers practice in a large metropolitan area where there are thousands of lawyers, how do you identify those who know them well enough to gauge their professionalism?

Rating surveys in larger cities are often directed to lawyers with the same practice area focus, or, for in-house counsel, others in the same industry as the individual under review. This makes it easier to gather the data necessary to determine a rating.

Lawyers are often asked to provide names of lawyers and judges who can evaluate them. How does this fit into the rating process?

These additional rating sources are requested when there is insufficient response to our initial surveys. However, no rating is ever established solely on the basis of references supplied by an individual under review.

What does it mean if a lawyer is not rated?

Some lawyers request not to have any rating published, while others may not be rated due to the length of time in practice, the size of the Bar, or other reasons, unrelated to their competence or ethical standards. The rating of a lawyer or firm that is not a Martindale-Hubbell subscriber also will not be displayed on martindale.com, although it will continue to appear in the printed version of the Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory. Thus, the absence of a rating should not be construed as unfavorable.

Can a lawyer or law firm promote their rating in general press releases or marketing materials?

Ratings are the result of a peer-review system, created by lawyers for lawyers. There are a number of ways lawyers and law firms can highlight this mark of excellence. For the current permitted and nonpermitted uses, and to learn more about opportunities for promoting ratings, please refer to our website: www.martindale.com/ratings.

Questions about the LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell Ratings system can be sent by email to:

ratings@martindale.com

or by mail to:

Peer Review Rating Services
LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell
121 Chanlon Road
New Providence, NJ 07974

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