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Three Qualities Your Jones Act Lawyer Must Have

Before you hire a Jones Act attorney, it is important for you to understand the qualities that make up a good Jones Act lawyer. The Jones Act is a very specific federal statute and while many lawyers may be capable of handling general car accident type cases, there are several specific qualities that you should look for when hiring a maritime Act lawyer.

First and foremost, you should hire an attorney who has vast experience handling Jones Act cases. The Jones Act is a complicated federal statute and it takes years of handling these types of cases before an attorney can become truly accomplished in handling them. If you had a specialized medical problem such as a heart problem, you would not go to your family physician and allow him to provide such specialized treatment to you. Instead, you would find a good cardiologist or heart surgeon who focused his practice on the type of injury that you had suffered. In a similar way, you should find an attorney who focuses on Jones Act cases.

Also, you should select a Jones Act attorney who has a strong litigation background. Most Jones Act claims are fully and aggressively defended by the company. Most companies will fight every issue of your claim under the Jones Act. Very often it is necessary to file motions in court and argue before the judge in order to obtain basic documents from your employer during your case. Also, a large number of Jones Act cases are ultimately presented to a judge or a jury for a verdict. If your company is unwilling to offer a fair settlement, it will be necessary for you to actually go to trial in regard to your case and it is important for your attorney to have significant trial experience.

Finally, Jones Act cases can be expensive to properly develop and prove. Very often it will be necessary for your attorney to pay for medical expenses and testing in order to prove your injury. Your attorney may also have to hire experts who can prove negligence under the Jones Act. Many accidents involve specialized procedures and equipment and it is only through expert testimony that the fault of your company can be proven. Finally, in some states your attorney may be allowed to advance you necessary living expenses while your case is moving forward. This can be required if your company refuses to pay your proper living expenses during your claim. All of these items require that your Jones Act attorney have significant financial resources so that he can properly prepare and present your case, and you can take the time needed to do so.

An injury under the Jones Act can sometimes mean an end to your career. It is very important that you chose the proper attorney to handle your Jones Act case. While many local attorneys are extremely nice individuals and have a general knowledge of lots of legal subjects, including perhaps the Jones Act, this does not mean that they may be the best attorney to handle your Jones Act case. You should consider the above qualities when hiring a Jones Act attorney rather than simply the location of the attorney or your past relationship with the attorney.

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