

TARBOX LAW, P.C.

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CONTRACT FOR CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY SERVICES

1. Type of Bankruptcy.

Debtor retains attorney to file a Chapter 7 bankruptcy case. If the Debtor determines at a later date that the Debtor desires to file a Chapter 13 bankruptcy case, the parties shall execute a new fee contract setting forth the terms of such representation.

2. Base Attorney Fees.

The base attorney fee for filing the Chapter 7 bankruptcy case is \$2,500.00.

3. Refund of Percentage of Base Fee.

In the event the legal services provided for herein are terminated by either party prior to the filing of a Chapter 7 bankruptcy case, then the Debtor may be entitled to a refund of some of the base fee. The refund shall be determined by the number of hours devoted by Attorney to the case prior to the time of termination computed at the rate of \$325.00 per hour; by the time devoted to the case by the Legal Assistants of Attorney computed at the rate of \$125.00 per hour; by adding all expenses incurred (such as copies, postage, securing records and documents, tax transcripts, credit reports, etc); and then by deducting the total amount of all charges from the Base Fee. If the event the total of all such fees and charges exceed the Base Fee, the Debtor's liability shall be limited to the amount of the Base Fee. In any event, such retained fee will be no less than \$500.00.

4. Debtor's Obligations to Pay Designated Costs.

The Debtor shall be obligated to pay the following costs related to the filing of a Chapter 7 bankruptcy case. The costs are as follows:

- (a) The fee of \$335.00 charged by the Bankruptcy Court to file a Chapter 7 bankruptcy case.
- (b) The cost of pre-filing consumer credit counseling, which is a prerequisite to filing for bankruptcy relief, which is approximately \$35.00.
- (c) The cost of a post-filing instructional course concerning personal financial management, which is a prerequisite to obtaining the Discharge of debts in a Chapter 7 case. The amount of this fee is not known at this time but should be consistent with the pre-filing credit counseling fees.

- (d) The cost of obtaining any consumer credit reports.
- (e) The cost of obtaining tax returns or tax transcripts directly from the taxing authorities or from any third-party provider.
- (f) The cost of obtaining copies of judgments, deeds, deeds of trust, title certificates, court papers, county tax records, and other similar documents.
- (g) The cost of securing any prior court records from the PACER system for federal cases.
- (h) The cost of securing any other records or statements not otherwise produced by or available to the Debtor.

5. Services provided Under the Attorney's Base Fee.

The services of the attorney included in the base fee are those normally contemplated for a Chapter 7 case. They include the services listed below:

- (a) All services reasonably necessary to fully inform the Debtor of the Debtor's rights and responsibilities under the Bankruptcy Laws.
- (b) All services reasonably necessary to enable the Debtor to make an informed decision about the filing of a Chapter 7 bankruptcy case.
- (c) Advising the Debtor of all available exemptions under any applicable law and assisting the Debtor in claiming the exemptions that best serve the Debtor's needs and desires.
- (d) Assisting the Debtor in complying with all of the requirements imposed by the Bankruptcy Laws, the Bankruptcy Rules, or any Local Bankruptcy Rules.
- (e) Preparation and electronic filing of petition, schedules, supplemental local forms, and mailing matrix.
- (f) Drafting and mailing notice to creditors advising of filing of case.
- (g) Drafting and mailing to you a letter regarding your attendance at the Section 341 meeting of creditors and your other responsibilities.
- (h) Preparation for and attendance at Section 341 meeting.
- (i) Filing of any motions to avoid non-purchase money liens on exempt household goods and judgment liens that impair exempt property.
- (j) Assisting the Debtor in carrying out the Debtor's Statement of Intentions, provided that the Debtor pays the Non-Base Fee for any redemptions.

- (k) Assisting the Debtor in complying with all proper and timely requests for information and/or documents by the Bankruptcy Trustee, the Bankruptcy Administrator, the Court, or other parties involved in the case.
- (l) Communicating as necessary with the creditors and other parties involved in the case (including their attorneys) to facilitate the administration of the case and the application of the Automatic Stay.

6. Additional or Non-Base Legal Services.

In some Chapter 7 cases, the legal services which are beyond those contemplated in the base fee must nonetheless be provided by the Attorney. These legal services are listed below:

- (a) Representing the Debtor in any dischargeability proceeding, including student loan discharge proceedings.
- (b) Representing the Debtor in any contested motion to avoid any type of a lien or judgment.
- (c) Representing the Debtor in a motion to continue the Automatic Stay.
- (d) Representing the Debtor in any contested matters or adversary proceedings related to the enforcement of the Automatic Stay by a creditor.
- (e) Representing the Debtor in any action to enforce the Discharge injunction or enforce the Automatic Stay.
- (f) Representing the Debtor in any motions related to the enforcement of Sections 707(a) or 707(b) of the Bankruptcy Code. [Dismiss or Convert].
- (g) Representation the Debtor in any contested motions for relief from the Automatic Stay.
- (h) Representing the Debtor in any motions to redeem exempt personal property.
- (i) Representing the Debtor in any contested matter regarding the Debtor's claim of exempt property.
- (j) Filing any amendments to the Schedules, unless the amendment arises out of a mistake by the Attorney.
- (k) Filing a motion to continue the 341 meeting of creditors at the request of the Debtor.
- (l) Filing of motions to abandon property.
- (m) Representing Debtor in any complaint or lawsuit they file against another party or when a complaint or lawsuit is filed against Debtor. Filing fee for adversary is \$350.00. Other fees and expenses related to adversary proceedings are highly likely.

- (n) Representing the Debtor in any other matters not specifically designated as a Base Fee Service in this Agreement.

7. Expenses.

The Attorney shall be entitled to apply to the Court for approval of any expenses related to your case for base fee or non-base fee services. Such expenses include but are not limited to court fees, telephone fees, fax fees, copy fees, postage fees, PACER fees, electronic or other research fees. In the Court's discretion, the Attorney may request without any notice or documentation a blanket expense of \$1.00 for each item noticed to creditors as an expense for postage, copying and envelopes.

8. Payment of Base and Non-Base Fees.

- (a) The Base Fee shall be paid in full prior to the time the Attorney begins any actual work on the Chapter 7 Petition and Schedules.
- (b) All fixed Non-Base fees must be paid in Advance of the Service by the Debtor.
- (c) Fees for services based on time and expenses shall be paid within 30 days of the Debtor's receipt of the bill for such services; provided, however, that the Attorney may require the payment of a retainer fee for non-base services that are expected to require more than 2 hours of the Attorney's time.
- (d) The Debtor understands that if the Debtor does not pay the non-base fees as provided in this Agreement then the Attorney has no obligation to provide the non-base services and has the right to file a motion to withdraw as the attorney for the debtor in the Chapter 7 case, the contested case, or the adversary proceeding.

9. Means Test Services.

With respect to the "means test" provisions imposed by Section 707(b) of the Bankruptcy Code, the base fee charged in this case is based on one of the four assumptions set forth below. The assumption that applies is designated by the initials of the Debtor placed after the Assumption.

- (a) The Debtor's debts are not primarily consumer debts and therefore the "means test" does not apply. The parties assume that no issues concerning the "means test" will arise in this case.
- (b) The Debtor's current monthly income as defined by the Bankruptcy Code is below the median income. The parties assume that no issues concerning the "means test" will arise in this case.
- (c) The Debtor's current monthly income as defined by the Bankruptcy Code is above the median income but the Debtor's expenses, as calculated under Section 707(b)(2)(A) are sufficient to rebut the presumption that the filing of a Chapter 7 case would be an abuse of the Bankruptcy laws. The parties assume that no issues concerning the "means test" will arise in this case.
- (d) A presumption of Bankruptcy abuse does arise in this case, but the Debtor and the Attorney will attempt to rebut the presumption by demonstrating extraordinary circumstances pursuant to Section 707(b)(2)(B) of the Bankruptcy Code.

10. Debtor's Obligations.

The Debtor's obligations are as follows:

- (a) To promptly pay all Base and Non-Base Legal fees and charges.
- (b) To provide the Attorney with all requested documents, bills statements, payment advices, bank records, tax returns, tax bills, appraisals, retirement and savings account, and income information and to sign any and all necessary forms to allow the Attorney to secure such documentation.
- (c) To provide accurately and honestly all of the information necessary to prepare and file the Chapter 7 bankruptcy case, and other motions or proceedings arising during the course of the case.
- (d) To timely respond to all letters, emails and telephone calls from the Attorney or any member of his staff.
- (e) To keep the Attorney advised at all times of the Debtor's mailing and physical addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses.
- (f) To appear at the first meeting of creditors (the 341 meeting) and at any other court hearings or meetings as may be required by the Court or any other party.
- (g) To keep all scheduled office appointments with the Attorney and to notify the Attorney in advance of any problems with the timing and scheduling or rescheduling of such appointments.
- (h) To contact the attorney by telephone with the understanding that the Attorney is only able to return calls between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. If the Attorney is available when the call is actually received, then the call will be taken at that time. However, if you have to leave a message for the Attorney then you must provide a number that you can be reached at during the designated times. The Attorney or Legal Assistant will make every effort to return all such telephone calls within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays,
- (i) To provide any information requested of the Debtor by the Chapter 7 Trustee, the Bankruptcy Administrator, or any other party in the case, unless the Court rules that the Debtor is not required to provide such information.
- (j) To respond as soon as possible to any requests for the Debtor by the Attorney or his Legal Assistant.
- (k) To sign a tax authorization form to authorize the Attorney to get copies of income tax returns from the respective taxing agencies for a period of four (4) years prior to the filing of your bankruptcy case.
- (l) To provide current bank account information to include monthly statements as requested and online account balances as of the date of the signing of your bankruptcy petition packet.

11. Attorney Withdrawal from Chapter 7 case, Adversary Proceeding or Contested Matter.

Pursuant to the Local Rules of the Bankruptcy Court, the Attorney shall remain the responsible attorney of record for the Debtor in all matters in the case until the case is closed, dismissed or the discharge is entered or until the Attorney is relieved from such representation by order of the Court. The parties agree that just reasons for the Attorney to withdraw from the representation of the Debtor, include but are not limited to the following:

- (a) The failure of the Debtor to provide complete, truthful and accurate information to the Attorney.
- (b) The failure of the Debtor to comply with the Debtor's obligations as provided for in this Agreement and in the Local Rules.
- (c) The failure of the Debtor to comply with any of the obligations imposed on the Debtor by the Bankruptcy Code and the Bankruptcy Rules.
- (d) The failure or refusal of the Debtor to comply with the Debtor's obligations to provide any supplemental information to the Court or to the Chapter 7 Trustee or to correct any incorrect or incomplete information previously provided to the Court or the Trustee.
- (e) The failure of the Debtor to provide complete, truthful and accurate information to the Court, the Chapter 7 Trustee and the Bankruptcy Administrator.
- (f) The failure of the Debtor to pay for all Non-Based fee services.
- (g) If the Debtor are husband and wife, then any separation, serious domestic dispute, or divorce of the parties.
- (h) Any irreconcilable conflict between the Attorney and the Debtor with respect to the case.

Date: _____

By: _____
Max R. Tarbox
Attorney

Debtor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name:

Debtor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: