CIVIL LEGAL ASSISTANCE REFERENCE GUIDE

Louisiana State Bar Association Access to Justíce

PREPARED BY

CIVIL LEGAL ASSISTANCE REFERENCE GUIDE

This Reference Guide was put together by the Louisiana State Bar Association's Access to Justice Department.

The purpose of this guide is to help court staff, community leaders, library staff, clerks, and social service providers direct patrons to available civil legal resources. This guide also gives directions on how to access and use those resources.

> Louisiana State Bar Association Access to Justice 601 St. Charles Avenue New Orleans, Louisiana 70130 (504) 566-1600 • (800) 421-LSBA Fax (504) 566-0930

For more information, visit www.lsba.org/ATJ



FIND LEGAL HELP FLYER

CIVIL LEGAL AID OFFICES IN LOUISIANA



03

LEGAL INFORMATION VS. ADVICE Including Examples



ACCESSING THE FIND LEGAL HELP PORTAL www.LSBA.org/Public/FindLegalHelp



LOUISIANA CIVIL LEGAL NAVIGATOR www.LouisianaLegalNavigator.org



LEGAL AID & PRO BONO ORGANIZATIONS www.LSBA.org/Public/FindLegalHelp/ProBonoOrganizations.aspx



MODEST MEANS DIRECTORY www.LSBA.org/Public/FindLegalHelp/ModestMeans.aspx



SELF-HELP SERVICES & LEGAL FORMS www.LSBA.org/Public/FindLegalHelp/SelfRepresentation.aspx



FREE LEGAL ANSWERS LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org



LOUISIANA LAW HELP & OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

www.LSBA.org/Public/FindLegalHelp/LegalInformation.aspx





The Louisiana State Bar Association's "Find Legal Help" Portal is designed to help you identify your legal options, find an attorney and/or legal aid organization in your area, and access other services and resources that may be of assistance in resolving your legal issue. To access the information listed below, go online to:

www.LSBA.org/goto/FindLegalHelp



Find an Attorney

It is always in your best interest to speak with a licensed attorney about your legal issue. Use the "Find an Attorney" button to search a directory of Louisiana attorneys by name or location. Some cities have a "referral program" through local bar associations.



Civil Legal Navigator

The Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator is a free online resource that helps diagnose your legal issue and provides customized legal information, local court forms, referrals to legal aid, and more for a limited number of civil legal topics.



Legal Aid & Pro Bono Organizations

If you cannot afford to hire an attorney, you may be able to get free legal help from a "legal aid" or "pro bono" organization in your area. To view services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.



Modest Means Directory

The Modest Means Directory provides a list of attorneys who charge reduced fees to people who meet certain income eligibility requirements. Use the directory to locate an attorney near you who handles your specific type of legal issue.







Self-Help Services & Legal Forms

If you cannot afford an attorney and legal aid services are unavailable, you may be able to represent yourself in court. To view forms and any self-help centers or services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.

LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org

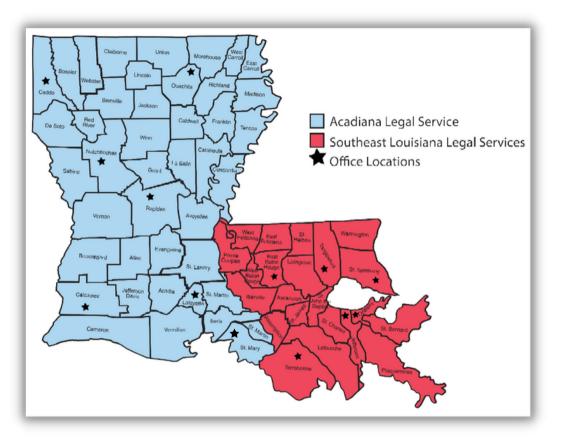
LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org is a free online program that allows you to ask civil legal questions through the website, which are answered by volunteer attorneys. Please note that you must meet certain income requirements to be eligible.

Law Help & Other Online Resources

This section of the portal provides links to LouisianaLawHelp.org, and other online resources, including local and statewide services, that can help you learn more about your legal issue and options.

CIVIL LEGAL AID OFFICES

This is a contact list of nonprofit civil legal aid offices that provide free legal representation in non-criminal matters to individuals who are income eligible. To qualify for free legal services, prospective clients will be screened for income eligibility.



Alexandria Office

1808 Jackson Street Alexandria, LA 71301 Ph: 318-443-7281 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: 318-443-9516

Baton Rouge Office

715 St. Ferdinand Street Baton Rouge, LA 70802 Phone: (225) 448-0080 Toll free: (855) 512-3980 Fax: (225) 383-1197

Franklin Office

1407 Barrow St., Suite H-1 Franklin, Louisiana 70538 Ph: 337-346-5702 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: 337-346-4636

Covington Office

423 N. Florida Street Covington, LA 70433 Phone: (985) 893-0076 Toll free: (800) 891-0076 Fax: (985) 893-6774

Gretna Office

401 Whitney Ave., Suite 520 Gretna, LA 70056 Phone: (504) 374-0977 Toll free: (800) 624-4771 Fax: (504) 374-0991

Hammond Office

200 Guidry Drive Hammond, LA 70403 Phone: (985)-345-2130 Toll free: (800) 349-0886 Fax: (985)-345-2686

Houma Office

1340 W. Tunnel Blvd., Suite 101 Houma, LA 70360 Phone: (985) 851-5687 Toll free: (800) 256-1660 Fax: (985)851-5695

Lafayette Office

1020 Surrey Street Lafayette, LA 70501 Phone: (337) 237-4320 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: (337) 237-8839

Lake Charles Office

2911 Ryan Street Lake Charles, LA 70601 Phone: (337) 439-0377 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: (337) 439-0636

Monroe Office

3016 Cameron Street Monroe, LA 71201 Phone: (318) 699-0889 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: (318) 699-0191

Natchitoches Office

134 St. Denis Street Natchitoches, LA 71457 Phone: (318) 352-7220 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: (318) 352-7015

New Orleans Office

1340 Poydras St., Suite 600 New Orleans, LA 70112 Phone: (504) 529-1000 Toll free: (877) 521-6242 Fax: (504) 596-2241

Shreveport Office

720 Travis Street Shreveport, LA 71101 Phone: 318-222-7186 Toll Free: 866-275-2572 Fax: (318) 221-1901

REFERENCE GUIDE

<u>Legal</u> Information





Legal information is factual, generic & does not address any specific cause of action. Giving legal information can include:

- Explaining how the court system works & giving general information about court rules and procedures.
- Telling someone what a law is, where to find it, or to consult an attorney.
- Giving court approved forms & other related materials.
- Providing a phone number or website for a lawyer referral service, a law library, & self-help center.

Giving legal information does not create an attorney-client relationship.

Examples of Giving Legal Information:

My spouse & I have been separated for months. How do I file for divorce?

• If you are going to represent yourself, I can help you get you the packet of forms you need. You can find them at <u>www.LouisianaLegalNavigator.org</u>. You can also get more information about divorce from online resources on the Find Legal Help Portal, located at

www.LSBA.org/public/findlegalhelp.

I am about to be released from prison. How do I obtain a driver's license?

• Go to the Find Legal Help Portal and use the "Louisiana Law Help & Other Online Resources" to find more information. There you'll find How to Get a Driver's License After Prison Video and Pamphlet.

I can't afford an attorney. Is there someplace I can contact?

• Yes, I can give you a list of legal aid organizations in this area that you can call for free or low-cost legal help if you qualify. You can also find these organizations listed on the Find Legal Help Portal. **Legal advice** is telling someone how the law actually applies to or impacts a given situation. Advice also includes giving an opinion of what would happen in one's case or telling someone what to say in a court form or in court proceedings.

Legal advice can only be given by a licensed attorney and does create an attorney-client relationship. Nonlawyers are not allowed to give legal advice, as this is referred to as the unauthorized practice of law.

Examples of Ways to Avoid Civing Legal Advice

Should I get a lawyer?

• It is always in your best interest to speak with a licensed attorney about your legal issue. I cannot advise you whether you should hire a lawyer; only you can make that decision. But here is a list of organizations that you can call for free or low-cost legal help if you qualify.

I'm behind on mortgage payments & can't pay bills. Should I file for bankruptcy?

• You need to decide that for yourself. You may want to talk to a lawyer to help make that decision. Go to the Find Legal Help Portal to access the Bankruptcy Self-Help Resource Center & other resources in your area.

What do I put where it says "relief requested" on this form?

• I can't tell you what words to use, but you should write in your own words what you want the court to do. If you have specific questions, you should ask an attorney.

What should I say to the judge when he calls my case?

• I can't tell you what arguments to make in court. There are resources on effective ways to present your case in court available under Self-Help Services on the Find Legal Help Portal.

REFERENCE GUIDE

FIND LEGAL HELP PORTAL

HOW TO ACCESS:

• Go to <u>www.LSBA.org</u>.

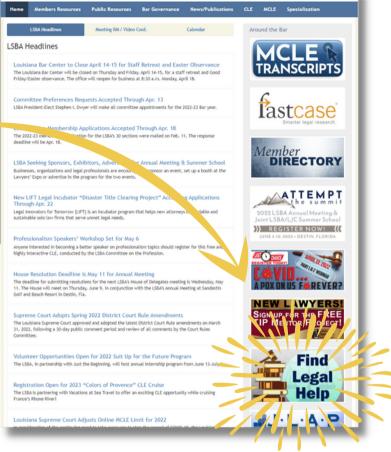
LEGAL

ouisiana aw Help

Other

- Click on the "Find Legal Help" button.
- From there, users can select from a spectrum of legal services and resources using the specific buttons via the Find Legal Help Portal, as shown below.

Find Lega



It is always in your best interest to speak with a licensed attorney about your legal issue.

Use the "**Find an Attorney**" button to search a directory of Louisiana attorneys by name or location. Some cities have a "referral program" through local bar associations.

NOTE: Each section of the Find Legal Help Portal also contains brief instructional videos explaining how to use the site.

LOUISIANA CIVIL LEGAL NAVIGATOR

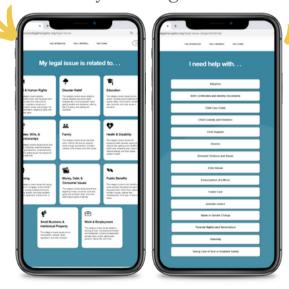
The Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator is a free online resource that helps diagnose your legal issue and provides customized legal information, local court forms, referrals to legal aid, & more for a limited number of civil legal topics.

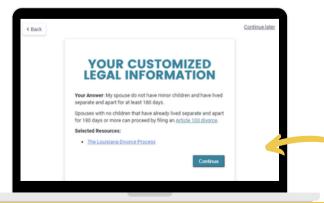
HOW TO USE IN 10 STEPS:

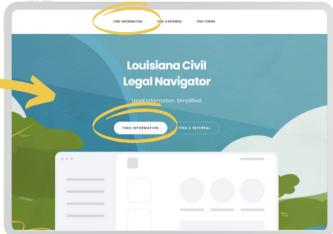
Step 1: In the Find Legal Help Portal, select "Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator."

Step 2: Look for your issue.

- Select "Find Information."
- Review the categories listed & select one your legal issue falls under.
- Then select the button that best describes your legal issue.







*If you just want referral information, skip to **Step 7**.

Step 3: Read the directions carefull and answer the questions.



Step 4: Review Answers.

- When completed, users will be able to view their Customized Legal Information.
 - Note: Each issue raised during the questionnaire will be answered separately. Click on the links to review more information at LouisianaLawHelp.org.

LOUISIANA CIVIL LEGAL NAVIGATOR

Step 5: Referrals & Forms.

LOUISIANA CIVIL LEGAL

NAVIGATOR

- Click "Continue" to view potential referral information.
- Click "Continue" to view any existing court forms.
 - If a court form does <u>not</u> exist for a specific legal issue, this window will not appear.
- If a form exists, refer to the Self-

Help Services & Legal Forms

section for more information on

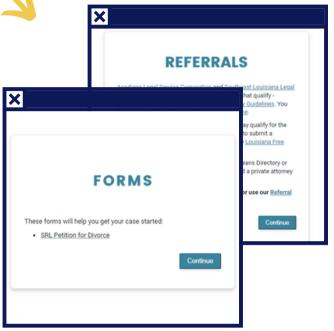
how to use.

NOTE: If you are looking for a specific self-help form or forms for legal aid clients, please click "Find Forms" on the top right of the Navigator home page.

×□	
	Would you like to email this information to yourself? *
	✓ Yes
	O N0
	What's you 🗙 🗖 🗕
	Download your customized legal information. Do you have feedback on this app? <u>Take our survey!</u>

Step 7: Referral Navigator.

- If you are just looking for referral information, use the Referral Navigator.
- Select "Find A Referral" on the home page of the Civil Legal Navigator.



Step 6: Email & Download.

- Users can have results emailed to them.
- Users can also download results.





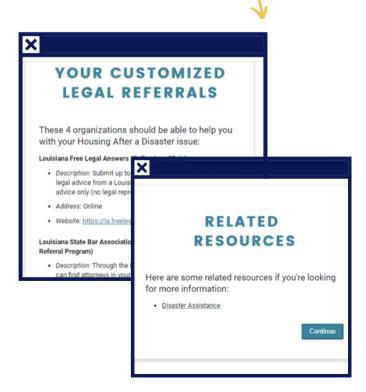
<u>LOUISIANA CIVIL LEGAL</u> <u>NAVIGATOR</u>

Step 8: Answer a few questions.

- Choose a category for your legal issue.
- Select a Parish.
- Provide Household and Income information.

Step 9: Review Referrals & Resources.

- When completed, users will be able to view their Customized Legal Referrals.
- Click "Continue" to view any Related Resources.



Wha	at type of legal issue do you need help with?
What	category does your legal issue fall into? *
0	Accidents and Torts
0	Civil and Human Rights
0	Crime and Prisons
0	Disaster Relief
0	Education
0	Estates, Wills, and Guardianships
0	Family
0	Health and Disability
0	Housing
0	Immigration
0	Money, Debt, and Consumer Issues
0	Public Benefits
0	Small Business and Intellectual Property
0	Traffic and Cars
0	Work and Employment Law

Step 10: Email & Download.

- Users can have results emailed to them.
- Users can also download results.

NOTE: If you are looking for a specific selfhelp form or forms for legal aid clients, please click "Find Forms" on the top right of the Navigator home page.

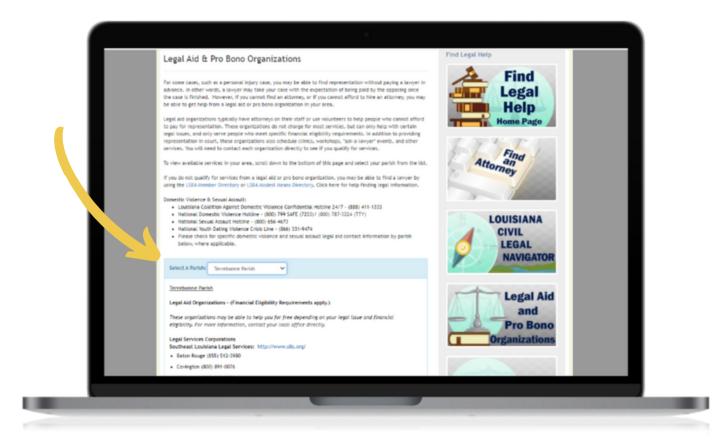


If you cannot afford to hire an attorney, you may be able to get free legal help from a "legal aid" or "pro bono" organization in your area. To view services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.

HOW TO ACCESS:

Go To: "Legal Aid & Pro Bono Organizations" in the Find Legal Help Portal.

• Select a Parish to view available legal aid and pro bono services by parish.





MODEST MEANS DIRECTORY

The "Modest Means Directory" provides a list of attorneys who charge reduced fees to people who meet certain income eligibility requirements.

HOW TO ACCESS IN 5 STEPS:

Step 1: In the Find Legal Help Portal, select the "Modest Means Directory."

Step 2: Read the Directions and Terms of Use carefully.



× □ _
See if you qualify for reduced fees Some lawyers charge reduced rates depending on your income bracket. Your income bracket is based on your household size and monthly income.
Select Your Parish:
✓
Select Your Household/Family Size:
·
Enter Household Monthly Income:
I have read and agree to the terms of use.
Submit

Step 3: Fill out the online application form:

- Select a Parish
- Select the number of people in the household
- Input household monthly income
- Read terms
- Click submit

Those who are determined income eligible can view the directory.



<u>MODEST MEANS</u> <u>DIRECTORY</u>

HOW TO VIEW:

X D				Ste selo
View by Parish	View by Practice	C• Exit Directory		sel
Modest Means Members found in 64 Pa	ríshes		_	
Acadia Parish				
Allen Parish				
Ascension Par				
Assumption P. View b	y Parish View	by Practice	C+ Exit Directory	
	mbers found in 16 Practice Areas			_
Bankruptcy				
Business				
Civil Rights				
Consumer Pro	tection and Debt			
Criminal and T	Traffic			

Step 4: To view the Directory, select:

• View by Parish

or

• View by Practice

	Attorn Nam	
Co Infor Date	torney ontact mation & e of Bar nission	Practice Areas: • Business • Civil Rights • Criminal and Traffic • Employment • Expungement Affordable Legal Services Offered: • Sliding Scale based on Client Income • Discounted Hourly Rate • Limited Scope Representation • Flat Fee Rate

Step 5: The online listing includes:

- The attorney's name
- Date attorney was admitted to practice
- Contact information
- Areas of practice
- Types of affordable legal services offered

<u>SELF-HELP SERVICES</u> <u>& LEGAL FORMS</u>

If you cannot afford an attorney and legal aid services are unavailable, you may be able to represent yourself in court. To view forms and any self-help centers or services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.

HOW TO ACCESS SELF-HELP FORMS:

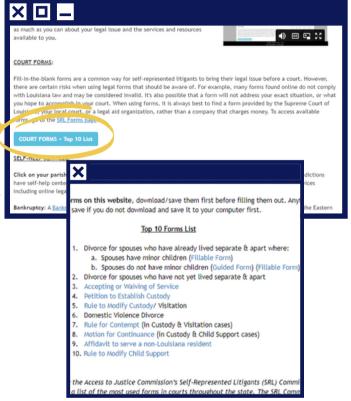
Step 1: In the Find Legal Help Portal, select "Self-Help Services & Legal Forms."

elf-Help

Step 2: To view available forms, click on "COURT FORMS + Top 10 List."

- **Guided Forms** walk you through the process by asking a series of questions and providing a form populated with your responses at the end.
- **Fillable forms** can be typed directly into the document. Make sure to download a copy first.





Step 3: Finalizing Forms.

• Print the forms and follow the instructions for signing and filing.



If you cannot afford an attorney and legal aid services are unavailable, you may be able to represent yourself in court. To view forms and any self-help centers or services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.

HOW TO ACCESS SELF-HELP SERVICES:

Step 1: In the Find Legal Help Portal, select "Self-Help Services & Legal Forms."

Step 2: Select a parish.



Select A Parish:	Rapides Parish	~	
Rapides Parish			
The 9th Judicial E legal information, attorney. These s http://www.9thJ 9th Judicial Distri 9th Judicial Distri	, forms, and referrals t ervices are generally fr	source Cente rray Street Ale	
			connects callers to informa can also access help throu
materials. <u>Alexandria</u> - 411 1 318-445-2411 <u>Westside</u> - 5416 P 318-442-2483 <u>Boyce</u> - 500 A., Ul 318-793-2182 <u>Gunter</u> - 5630 Hig 318-443-7259	Visit your local library Washington St., Alexanu rovine Place, Alexandri Ister Boyce, LA 71409 hway 28, East Pineville Way 121, Hineston, LA 7	dria, LA 71301 ia, LA 71303 e, LA 71360	ccessing online legal inform

Step 3: View self-help services in that parish, including:

- Self-Help Centers, both in-person & virtual
- Local Libraries
- Local Court Information



FREE LEGAL ANSWERS

LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org is a free online program that allows you to ask civil legal questions through the website, which may be answered by volunteer attorneys. Please note that you must meet certain income requirements to be eligible.

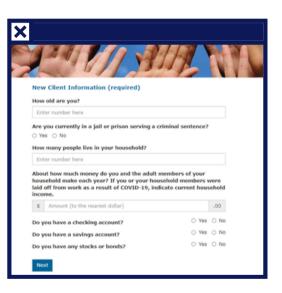
HOW TO ACCESS:



• **Step 1**: In the Find Legal Help Portal, select "LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org."

Step 2: Sign in. To create an account:

- Select "Get Started."
- Read the Directions and User Agreement carefully.
- Fill out the online application form.



× 🗆 🗕

Unfortunately, you are not eligible to receive free legal assistance at this time.

Based on one or more of your responses to our required questions, this site cannot help you at this time. Please find a list of organizations below that may be able to assist you with your legal question.

Click here to access the Louisiana State Bar Association's "Find Legal Help" page which details the the full spectrum of legal services available throughout the state.

For legal information, click on the following link for the Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator. Answer a few questions about yourself and your situation to get customized legal information, local court forms, referrals to legal aid, and more. Now available for Divorce, Child Custody, Employment Law, and private Landlord-Tenant Law.

Hurricane Laura Resource: If you would like to receive free legal information about housing, public assistance, contractor fraud, insurance, and more in the coming days and weeks subscribe to the touisiana Disaster Legal Tip Line to receive helpful texts on disaster legal issues. Text "subscribe" to 318-405-4185 to sign up for this service provided by the Lagniappe Law Lab. This line is established to assist storm survivors. Legal advice is not provided, and you will not be solicited. Normal texting charges apply.

Click here for information about COVID-19 and how it may impact you, including information about legal issues that may arise because of the virus.

If you are a 2016 flood victim and having issues with the title of your home, a program called "Floodproof; Legal Help for Homeowners with Title Problems" may be able to help.

Step 3: Income Eligibility.

• If *ineligible*, users will be directed to a page that notifies them of ineligibility and lists available resources.



Step 3: Income Eligibility (cont'd.)

- If <u>eligible</u>, users will be sent an email to verify their account.
- Click on the verification link in the email, which takes users to the LA-FLA homepage to sign in.

- Required	1	Question Tips
and of Problem		
Please Select a	Category	v
Vhat is your qu	estion about? (e.g., Subject) *	
40 characters re	maining.	
	inificant events or declared disasters that have affer se select any issue that may be related to your qui	
	heck here if your question is related to the COVID - Check here if your question is related to Hurrica	
xplain the pro	ns about this issue here. And tell the attorney lem. Include where you live and, if you have keep it to 500 words or less. *	
File + Edit +	Insert • View • Format • Table • Tools •	
5 0 X	B / H - H - M Parag	raph •
EEE	Π Π E & 2 Ω ο 33	
p		Words: 0
	te or legal deadline, if you have one	
•		
	ou have a disagreement with with a person or an organization?	
Person	with a person or an organization?	
	Business/Association/Government Agency)	
	's full name and/or organization name with v v the name, please type 'None' or 'N/A' into t	
0 words remain	ng.	
Attach phot	os or files	
	ures or other files that will help an attorney under em here. You cannot attach single files larger than	
	e total size allowed is 5MB. Acceptable files includ	
% Add att	chment	

Yer (Profile Profile Pr

Step 4: Ask a Question.

- Select "Ask A NEW Question".
- Fill out the Question form, including as many details as possible.
- Select "Submit your question" to submit for an attorney to review it.
 - Note: Eligible, users can ask up to 5 legal questions a year.
- Users can save their question and submit it at a later time.





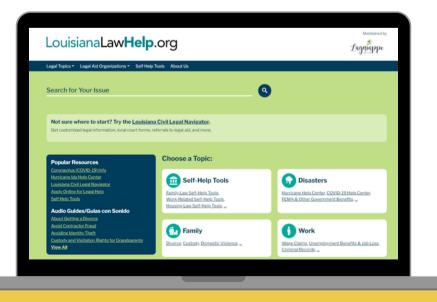
This section of the portal provides links to LouisianaLawHelp.org, and other online resources, including local and statewide services, that can help you learn more about your legal issue and options.

HOW TO ACCESS:

Step 1: In the Find Legal Help Portal, select "Louisiana Law Help & Other Online Resources."



LouisianaLawHelp.org has many free useful tools and resources on a variety of legal topics!



REFERENCE GUIDE



The Louisiana State Bar Association's "Find Legal Help" Portal is designed to help you identify your legal options, find an attorney and/or legal aid organization in your area, and access other services and resources that may be of assistance in resolving your legal issue. To access the information listed below, go online to:

www.LSBA.org/goto/FindLegalHelp



Find an Attorney

It is always in your best interest to speak with a licensed attorney about your legal issue. Use the "Find an Attorney" button to search a directory of Louisiana attorneys by name or location. Some cities have a "referral program" through local bar associations.



Civil Legal Navigator

The Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator is a free online resource that helps diagnose your legal issue and provides customized legal information, local court forms, referrals to legal aid, and more for a limited number of civil legal topics.



Legal Aid & Pro Bono Organizations

If you cannot afford to hire an attorney, you may be able to get free legal help from a "legal aid" or "pro bono" organization in your area. To view services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.



Modest Means Directory

The Modest Means Directory provides a list of attorneys who charge reduced fees to people who meet certain income eligibility requirements. Use the directory to locate an attorney near you who handles your specific type of legal issue.







Self-Help Services & Legal Forms

If you cannot afford an attorney and legal aid services are unavailable, you may be able to represent yourself in court. To view forms and any self-help centers or services in your area, click this button in the portal and select your parish.

LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org

LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org is a free online program that allows you to ask civil legal questions through the website, which are answered by volunteer attorneys. Please note that you must meet certain income requirements to be eligible.

Law Help & Other Online Resources

This section of the portal provides links to LouisianaLawHelp.org, and other online resources, including local and statewide services, that can help you learn more about your legal issue and options.

Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator

Legal Information. Simplified.



Choose a Legal Topic



Answer a Few Questions



Get Customized Legal Info

Currently Available Navigators Include:



Divorce



Employment & Unemployment

Landlord Tenant

Legal Referrals

www.LouisianaLegalNavigator.org

THIS PROGRAM IS MADE POSSIBLE IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE LOUISIANA BAR FOUNDATION.

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC Find Affordable Legal Assistance



Modest Means Online Legal Directory may be able to help www.lsba.org/public/findlegalhelp/

The **Modest Means Online Legal Directory** is an online listing of attorneys who charge reduced rates. Those who qualify can view the list and directly contact an attorney.

To use the Directory, your income must fall at or below 400% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (see chart). Before using, you must agree to the terms and input your household income and family size.

Once determined eligible and the list appears, you can choose an attorney you would like to reach out to and contact him or her directly using the contact information provided. There is no cost to use the Directory.



Your annual income based on household size must be at or below this amount to view the Directory:

Household	Annual
Size	Income*
1	\$60,240
2	\$81,760
3	\$103,280
4	\$124,800
5	\$146,320
6	\$167,840
7	\$189,360
8	\$210,880

*The income information you provide will be verified by the attorney.

This is not a referral service. You must directly contact the attorneys listed. Legal representation is not guaranteed.





NEED A LAWYER, BUT CAN'T AFFORD TO HIRE ONE?

LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org may be able to help.

LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org is for those who need legal information but cannot afford to hire an attorney. Legal questions submitted to the site will be reviewed and answered by a Louisiana licensed attorney. There is no cost to post a question or to receive an answer on the site.

There are income eligibility requirements for those who want to use the site.

Users must meet the following requirements:

- Be 18 or older
- Not currently in jail or prison
- Have a household income within the federal poverty guidelines

This site ONLY allows civil legal questions – no criminal legal questions will be answered by volunteer attorneys.



Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.



Louisiana State Bar Association Access to Justice 601 St. Charles Avenue New Orleans, Louisiana 70130 (504) 566-1600 • (800) 421-LSBA Fax (504) 566-0930

For more information, visit www.lsba.org/ATJ