

Finding Free or Low-Cost Legal Help

There are many free and low-cost services in the Chicago area. Here are some good places to start to look for legal help.

Free Help

CARPLS Legal Aid Hotline 312-738-9200

CARPLS attorneys give legal advice and other help, and if a pro bono or legal aid attorney might be able to take your case, CARPLS attorneys will tell you where to call.

- CARPLS helps low- and middle-income people.
- The CARPLS Hotline is very busy, but wait times will not exceed 20 minutes. Follow the instructions, and if you are asked to leave a message, someone will call you back.
- For \$25, you can avoid waiting and set a time for an attorney to call you. You need a credit card and access to the internet. Visit www.carpls.org to make the appointment.

HOURS: 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, Tues, Thurs, Fri; 9:00 am to 7:30 pm, Mon, Wed

Illinois Legal Aid Website illinoislegalaid.org

Illinois Legal Aid is a free website that gives you information about your legal problems, rights, and responsibilities.

- You may be able to apply for more legal help online.
- Find instructions for representing yourself and use form preparation programs to complete and print your court forms.
- The website is accessible to everybody, 24/7, no matter how much money you make.
- For example, fee waivers, simple divorce petitions, name change petitions, child support modification, and many more

Cook County Legal Help Tool Kit illinoislegalaid.org/cook

More information and help you can find here:

- Learn more about the kinds of legal help that might be available.
- Videos and guides for going to court on your own.
- A mediator might be able to help you and the other party think about ways to end your conflict.

Low-Cost Help

If you need to hire a lawyer, you should know that there are good lawyers who charge reasonable fees. They may be able to handle just part of your case or coach you on handling your case to make it more affordable.

The Justice Entrepreneurs Project

- Lawyers in the Justice Entrepreneurs Project (JEP) provide lower cost, quality legal services that often include fixed fees and flexible representation options (like unbundled, a la carte services).
- Many JEP lawyers have fee estimates on their websites, so you can find out what it might cost to hire a lawyer.
- Find more information or contact an attorney at jepchicago.org or 312-546-3282.

The Chicago Legal Clinic

- The Chicago Legal Clinic charges clients fees depending on their income. Visit www.clclaw.org or call 773-731-1762.

The Chicago Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service

- The Lawyer Referral Services connects people to experienced attorneys who charge fees for their time and services.
- Some kinds of cases allow lawyers to earn fees, but clients don't pay for those services up-front. Some examples are personal injury and consumer fraud cases.
- Find more information or connect with the service at www.chicagobar.org or 312-554-2001.