

# Find a Lawyer

## Who is a Lawyer?

A lawyer, also called an attorney, is someone who is licensed to practice law. Only a lawyer licensed to practice law in Virginia can provide you legal advice about a legal issue in Virginia.

## How do I find a lawyer?

The Virginia State Bar, the organization that licenses attorneys, offers [information for the public](#), as well as a [Lawyer Referral Service](#), through which you may consult an attorney for a limited time at a reduced fee. The toll-free telephone number is **1-800-552-7977**.

Some county bar associations also offer lawyer referral services that can be found through an internet search, [your local court](#) or [your local law library](#).

## How do I find a free lawyer?

Low-income persons may be eligible for legal assistance in civil matters through their local legal aid office. Visit <https://www.valegalaid.org/find-legal-help> for more information or you can call **1-866-LEGLAID (1-866-534-5243)** to reach your local legal aid office.

The disAbility Law Center of Virginia helps people with disabilities obtain services and treatment for disability-related problems like abuse, neglect, and discrimination. Individuals with problems covered by the Center's Program Goals, may receive advocacy services and/or legal representation. Visit <https://www.dlcv.org/get-help> or call **804-225-2042** or **800-552-3962** for more information.

In November 2016, the Virginia State Bar Special Committee on Access to Legal Services sponsored a free public information webinar titled "[What to Do When](#)

**You Can't Afford an Attorney**" (there is no charge to access the recording; however, you must register before you can view it).

The Virginia State Bar's Access Committee also offers a guide to **Free and Low Cost Legal Resources in Virginia**.

In criminal cases, persons charged with criminal offenses that carry jail time may be eligible for a public defender or court appointed lawyer, if they cannot afford a lawyer.

## **Who else can help me?**

Other people may give you information, but ONLY a lawyer licensed in Virginia can give you legal advice, file documents for you, or represent you in court.

### **Court Staff**

Your local court must be neutral and impartial. Court staff cannot give you advice, but they can give you legal information, such as instructions about procedure, and forms. [Learn more about what courts can and cannot do.](#)

### **Mediators**

People often find a mediator to be very helpful in resolving their matter, but a mediator is a neutral person, often a non-lawyer, and cannot give you legal advice. Only a lawyer licensed to practice law in Virginia can give you legal advice. It is entirely appropriate to get some legal advice from an attorney while working with a mediator. Visit our [Find a Mediator](#) page to learn more.

### **Notarios**

Notarios are not lawyers, cannot give you legal advice, and cannot represent you in court. [See the Virginia State Bar for more information about notarios and immigration fraud.](#)

### **Friends**

Friends who are not lawyers cannot give you legal advice. Friends cannot represent you in court. Friends can give you moral support and may be a good source of professional referrals, but they are not allowed to help you in the courtroom.

REMEMBER: Only a lawyer can represent you in court.

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[lawyer legal aid mediator](#)

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