Can’t Afford a Lawyer?

Select the state where you live

What is Free Legal Answers?

Free Legal Answers is a free legal help site, developed and managed by the American Bar Association (ABA) in collaboration with the American Bar Foundation (ABF) and the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. Free Legal Answers is designed to provide free legal help to low- and moderate-income individuals who cannot afford legal representation. The site offers a variety of resources, including free legal advice, legal documents, and a directory of pro bono legal services. To use the site, simply create an account and fill out your legal issue. A volunteer attorney will then review your case and provide a free legal opinion or advice. Free Legal Answers is a valuable resource for individuals who need legal help but cannot afford traditional legal services.
Who are the Users?
The Question
How Many Questions?
From Where are the Questions?
The Law

Family and Children: 41.96%

Housing and Homelessness: 13.17%

Consumer Financial Questions: 13.79%

Other: 10.61%

Health and Disability: 6.5%

Work, Employment and Unemployment: 4.34%

Individual Rights: 3.94%

Income Maintenance: 2.93%

Juvenile: 2.54%

Education: 1.22%
The Attorneys
The Question Queue

### Your personal queue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Deadline</th>
<th>Kind of Problem</th>
<th>Opposing Parties</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 11, 2017</td>
<td>Personal Injury</td>
<td>My neighbor</td>
<td>Broken arm</td>
<td>Feb 6, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Available questions queue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Deadline</th>
<th>Kind of Problem</th>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bankruptcy</td>
<td>Patrick Zanone vs None</td>
<td>Test question #17</td>
<td>Feb 7, 2017 (1 day old)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Debts &amp; Purchases</td>
<td>Patrick Zanone vs None</td>
<td>Test question #11</td>
<td>Jan 26, 2017 (13 days old)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delinquency</td>
<td>Nayeli Chavez vs test</td>
<td>What do I see when I submit a question?</td>
<td>Jan 25, 2017 (14 days old)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delinquency</td>
<td>John F Kennedy vs tesa</td>
<td>Blah Blah Blah</td>
<td>Feb 8, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Response

Resident Local Region: Anderson County

My landlord has not fixed the heat for 3 weeks, is this legal? What do I do if he will not answer his phone?

Jack Jones
Online Training for Volunteer Attorneys

Below are four training videos to get you started on volunteering:

- IL Free Legal Answers Overview for Attorneys (a 5 min video)
- How to Become a Volunteer Attorney on Free Legal Answers (a 6 minute video)
- Tips for Lawyers Answering Questions on IL Free Legal Answers (a 10 minute video)
- IllinoisLegalAid.org Website Overview for volunteer Attorneys (a 16 minute video)

Website Navigation & Features

Volunteer Attorney’s Navigation of the Site

After logging in, the site directs to the webpage with a list of all the questions that have been posted. Questions are coded by flags:

- Questions older than 10 days are indicated by a red-outlined flag.
- Questions 25 days and older are indicated by a solid red flag.
- Questions not answered within 30 days will be closed and the client user notified.

There are a few different ways to view questions in the queue:

1. A list of all of the questions is the default view;
2. A list of questions 25 days are older can be sorted by clicking on “Importance” under the “Sort” button;
3. A list of questions filtered by legal categories can be sorted by clicking on “Filter.”
4. A list of questions taken by yourself by clicking “Home” on the menu and looking at questions in your personal queue.

Selecting Questions to Answer

It is possible to read the first few lines of each posted question by clicking “Preview.” To see more details, click the subject to be taken to the question detail page. To select a question to answer, click “I want to answer this question” on the bottom of the question detail page. “Answer Now” or “Answer Later.” If the question is not responded to within 3 days, the question will be moved back into the queue. “I want to return this question” returns the question to the full queue.

Once selecting a question, reply to the client by providing an answer in the text box. The reply may include follow-up questions. The client will not know the volunteer’s identity unless the volunteer chooses to provide it. If and when a client responds, the volunteer attorney will receive an email notification prompting logging back into the website to read and possibly respond.

Filtering Questions

The available question queue can be too long and cumbersome. If an attorney only answers questions in a specific category, then you can “filter” the available questions queue. The filter is engaged until you uncheck the box.

Getting Emails when Questions Posted

An attorney may subscribe to a category so that they receive emails when a question is posted in that category. To subscribe to a category (for example, Immigration), click “Manage Subscriptions” at the top of the screen. Scroll down to the Category and click the red circle so that it changes to a check mark. It is possible to unsubscribe at any time.

Lawyer Manuals

These practice manuals are a starting point for researching answers to questions.
The Ideal Pro Bono Opportunity

✓ “Get Your Feet Wet” with Pro Bono, then take on a larger matter
✓ Quality Answers: Familiar Topics Only - Research - Confer - Draft - Submit
✓ Team Building amongst Attorneys, Corporate Clients, Law Schools
✓ Supports Legal Aid by Supplementing Limited Existing Services
Is Your Jurisdiction Participating?
George T. “Buck” Lewis  
Chair, ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service  
Baker Donelson  
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