

The Arizona Military Legal Assistance Project

Information for Volunteer Attorneys

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to describe the Arizona Military Legal Assistance Project goals, policies, and procedures. If you have any questions, please contact:

For general questions about the Modest Means Project, please contact:

Chris Groninger
Arizona Bar Foundation
Chris.Groninger@azflse.org

Cathleen Cole
Arizona Bar Foundation
Cathleen.Cole@azflse.org

For questions about the Modest Means attorney registration process, please contact:

Carol Rose
State Bar of Arizona
Carol.Rose@staff.azbar.org

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State Bar of Arizona
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On behalf of the citizens of Arizona who will be assisted by this Project – thank you for your time, expertise, and assistance.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MILITARY LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

The Purpose of the Military Legal Assistance Project is to provide low-cost legal assistance to active military and veterans who cannot afford the expertise of an attorney at standard rates, but who cannot qualify for free legal services due to income qualifications or case type restrictions. The Project serves those whose income is less than or equal to 150% of the federal poverty guidelines. Attorneys participating in the Military Legal Assistance Project are required to provide a free, one hour consultation to eligible applicants referred for service. If an attorney chooses to further the representation, the attorney agrees to do so on a pro bono basis.

III. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Project operates as a partnership between the Arizona Bar Foundation and the State Bar of Arizona. For input, questions, or information on Military Legal Assistance Project operations, please contact Arizona Bar Foundation staff member Chris.Groninger@azflse.org.

IV. MILITARY LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT ATTORNEY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Becoming a Military Legal Assistance Project Attorney

Attorneys wanting to participate in the Military Legal Assistance Project are required to complete an application for participation online. Qualifications for attorneys to participate in the Military Legal Assistance Project include:

- must be members in good standing with the State Bar of Arizona and understand that the Foundation will inquire with the State Bar of Arizona about the applicant's good standing and discipline history,
- must attend the Foundations of Ethics/Modest Means CLE seminar,
- must maintain malpractice insurance on their own, as part of a firm/organization policy, or with an approved application through the Arizona Bar Foundation, and,
- must maintain proper records and documentation of Military Legal Assistance Project services provided.

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B. Client Eligibility

The Arizona Bar Foundation maintains the online and telephone processes which provide Military Legal Assistance Project Referral Lists to eligible applicants. All applicants deemed “eligible” by the automated online and telephone system are determined using an honor system. The information entered into the system is not verified during the application process and no formal paperwork or documentation is required to be an eligible client. If an attorney discovers that the Military Legal Assistance Project client exceeds the eligibility criteria of at or below 150% of Federal Poverty Guidelines, the attorney may inform the client of their ineligibility and terminate the relationship with the client.

2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines

ANNUAL Household Income					MONTHLY Household Income				
Household/ Family Size	100%	150%	200%	250%	Household/ Family Size	100%	150%	200%	250%
1	\$14,580	21,870	29,160	36,450	1	\$1,215	1,823	2,430	3,038
2	\$19,720	29,580	39,440	49,300	2	\$1,643	2,465	3,287	4,108
3	\$24,860	37,290	49,720	62,150	3	\$2,072	3,108	4,143	5,179
4	\$30,000	45,000	60,000	75,000	4	\$2,500	3,750	5,000	6,250
5	\$35,140	52,710	70,280	87,850	5	\$2,928	4,393	5,857	7,321
6	\$40,280	60,420	80,560	100,700	6	\$3,357	5,035	6,713	8,392
7	\$45,420	68,130	90,840	113,550	7	\$3,785	5,678	7,570	9,463
8	\$50,560	75,840	101,120	126,400	8	\$4,213	6,320	8,427	10,533

* For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,140 for each additional person

The [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) are updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The above guidelines are to provide you with an example of a participant’s income who is at 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

C. Services Provided through the Military Legal Assistance Project

Military Legal Assistance Project attorneys will provide eligible clients:

- Legal advice on how to best handle a legal matter on their own (pro se)
- Limited Scope Representation

Military Legal Assistance Project attorneys may provide eligible clients:

- Full representation, if the attorney maintains no charge for the client and communicates to the client the services are beyond the standard scope of the Military Legal Assistance Project.

D. Military Legal Assistance Service Delivery

Each Military Legal Assistance Project eligible client will receive information and contact information for Military Legal Assistance Project attorneys. It is the responsibility of the client to contact the Military Legal Assistance Project attorney to schedule an appointment.

At the time of initial contact, the Military Legal Assistance Project attorney should gather the information necessary to check for conflict. Conflict checks must be concluded prior to the scheduled appointment. If a conflict is discovered, the client should be notified and told to contact another Military Legal Assistance eligible attorney on the list they were provided.

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At the time of initial contact, if the Military Legal Assistance attorney discovers that the client should not be eligible for Military Legal Assistance Project because the client's income or household size is greater than 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, the attorney may inform the client and not schedule an appointment.

Each appointment scheduled with a Military Legal Assistance Project attorney should be for one hour. The fee is restricted to \$75.00 for the one-hour appointment.

During the scheduled one-hour appointment, the Military Legal Assistance Project attorney may interview the client and screen the case for merit. If the Military Legal Assistance Project client has a problem that does not merit legal assistance or falls outside of Project guidelines, the attorney should inform the client of this fact.

If a Military Legal Assistance client requests an attorney appear on their behalf, it is the attorney's decision whether they appear.

V. OVERVIEW OF MILITARY LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT PROCESS

The Military Legal Assistance Project operates using different means of technology for online and telephone eligibility screening of potential Military Legal Assistance Project clients. The screening uses unique identifiers to determine the eligibility of Military Legal Assistance Project clients and generates a Military Legal Assistance Project attorney profile lists that is specific to the applicant.

Application for Military Legal Assistance Project Services

Arizonans can apply for the Military Legal Assistance Project online or via telephone to assess eligibility. Both the online application and telephone application are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The online application is located on the [AZLawHelp](#) website and includes a series of questions to determine an applicant meets the Military Legal Assistance Project eligibility criteria. If an applicant is eligible for the Military Legal Assistance Project, the applicant is directed to a form on the website which asks for their contact information and the area of law they are seeking help. An email is sent to the Military Legal Assistance Project eligible client which includes information about the Military Legal Assistance Project, a unique Project code specific to the application submitted, and a randomized list of attorneys participating in the Military Legal Assistance Project under the requested area(s) of law.

The telephone application may be accessed by calling (866) 637-5341. An automated system on the (866) number guides callers through a series of questions to determine if the applicant meets the Military Legal Assistance Project eligibility criteria. If a caller is eligible for the Military Legal Assistance Project, they are provided a Military Legal Assistance Project code and asked to enter the code into a form on the AZLawHelp website where they will be directed to the online form requesting their contact information and area of law they are seeking help. An email is sent to the Military Legal Assistance Project eligible client which includes information about the Military Legal Assistance Project, a unique Project code specific to the application submitted, and a randomized list of attorneys participating in the Military Legal Assistance Project under the requested area(s) of law. For Military Legal Assistance Project eligible callers without access to the internet or email, a voicemail box is provided for callers using the telephone system. Arizona Bar Foundation staff are responsible for monitoring the voicemail box and mailing a printed copy of the Military Legal Assistance Project list to the eligible caller.

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Military Legal Assistance Project Referral Lists

Once an attorney participating in the Military Legal Assistance Project has met all the requirements for participation, the attorneys name and contact information, including their name, telephone number, languages spoken, hours of operation, and accepted payment methods, will appear on the Military Legal Assistance Project Referral List provided to individuals deemed eligible for the Project. All information on the Referral List is approved and provided by the Military Legal Assistance Project attorney.

For the Military Legal Assistance Client

Once an eligible applicant receives a Military Legal Assistance Project referral list, it is the responsibility of the individual to review and follow the Project guidelines provided with the referral list. It is also the responsibility of the potential Military Legal Assistance Project client to provide the Military Legal Assistance Project Identification number to the Military Legal Assistance Project attorney providing services.

For the Military Legal Assistance Attorney

Attorneys participating in the Military Legal Assistance Project agree to assist eligible individuals with a one-hour meeting at no charge. In that meeting, Project attorneys are expected to offer only brief advice or limited scope representation. A Project attorney may offer full representation to the Military Legal Assistance client, but it is not the expectation of the Military Legal Assistance Project that full representation will be provided. If full representation is requested, the Military Legal Assistance Project attorney can agree to offer representation beyond the scope of the Project's one-hour consultation commitment but must provide the services free of charge.

VI. TYPES OF CASES

Currently, the Military Legal Assistance Project provides eligible clients referral to the following areas of law:

Statewide:

Veterans Benefits	Veterans Corporate Law	Veterans Elder Law	Veterans Family Law
Veterans Finance & Banking	Veterans Immigration	Veterans Real Estate	Veterans Wills & Estates
Veterans Paralegal Services			