



## Small Claims Court

You may not need a lawyer if you are trying to collect money or property from someone and the amount is less than \$3000. You can file a claim in Small Claims Court without an attorney. The filing fee is based on the amount of your claim. In order to file, you must have the name and address of the person from whom you are claiming the money or property. Please contact the clerk's office at your county courthouse to obtain the forms for filing suit.

This brochure is provided by the Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP). The Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program was created in 1990. Its purpose is to provide an "efficient organized vehicle through which attorneys may volunteer to advise and represent, without expectation of compensation, low-income Alabamians who cannot afford such legal services."

The lawyers of Alabama believe that everyone should have access to the legal system, regardless of financial status.

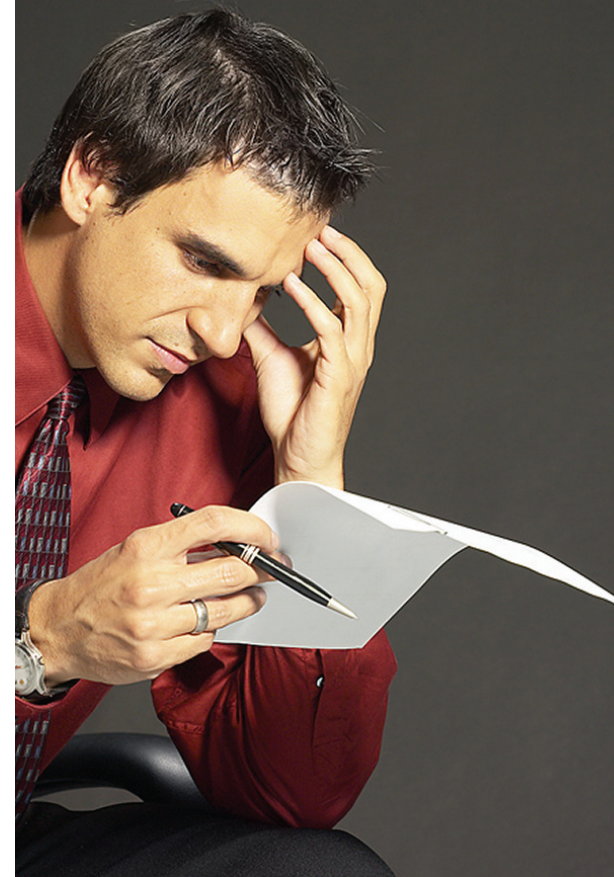
The VLP is only able to help persons who meet certain financial conditions, and assistance is provided only in certain kinds of civil (not criminal) matters. If you do not meet the requirements for VLP assistance, there are several other options that may be available to you. The VLP and some of these programs are described in this brochure.

If you need legal help and cannot afford it, there are options that may help you to get the aid you need. Please call the Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program at (888) 857-8571 to find out if we can help.

Alabama State Bar  
Volunteer Lawyers Program  
415 Dexter Avenue  
P. O. Box 671  
Montgomery, AL 36101  
(888) 857-8571  
[www.alabar.org](http://www.alabar.org)

The VLP is funded by

- Alabama State Bar
- The Alabama Law Foundation
- Legal Services of Alabama
- Alabama Civil Justice Foundation



# Need a Lawyer?



Legal Help for  
Low-Income Clients



## Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program

Volunteer attorneys donate their time to provide legal services in certain civil (not criminal) matters to clients who live in any county other than Madison, Mobile and Jefferson County. The Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP) also provides assistance to clients who live in or whose legal problem is in the Bessemer cut-off. This program is designed to help persons who cannot afford to hire a lawyer. To qualify, you must have income below a certain level and not own too much property. If you think you might qualify, please call to see if you meet these and certain other requirements. Conferences with a lawyer are by appointment only. Although the attorney's time is free, you will be responsible for any out-of-pocket costs such as filing fees.

### The kinds of cases normally accepted are:

- Adoption by relatives with the consent of natural parents
- Bankruptcy – Chapter 7
- Child Support Modification – client has major change in circumstances
- Collections – Small Claims with attorney on other side
- Contracts and warranties
- Custody – by agreement
- Divorce – uncontested and parties are separated or defendant's whereabouts are unknown.
- Education
- Guardianship of child – if needed to enter child in school
- Guardianship of adult – person not of sound mind or medical condition prevents person from caring for self
- Home Ownership – Deed preparation; pre-foreclosure negotiations; or land dispute
- Landlord/Tenant – private housing
- Legitimations – by consent
- Name Change – Adult and minor
- Power of Attorney



- Probate – Wills, living wills, and small estate administration
- Tax
- Tort Defense
- Visitation Change – by agreement

If you have a legal issue that is not listed, please call the VLP to find out if we can help you.

**Alabama State Bar**  
Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP)  
415 Dexter Avenue  
P. O. Box 671  
Montgomery, AL 36101  
**(888) 857-8571**  
[www.alabar.org](http://www.alabar.org)

## Legal Services Alabama

If you live in Alabama, you may qualify for help from Legal Services Alabama (LSA). LSA is a state-wide, non-profit law firm that provides free legal assistance in certain civil matters to people who have limited income, do not own too much property, and meet certain other requirements. Conferences with a lawyer are by appointment only.

### LSA may be able to help with the following kinds of matters:

- Protection From Abuse (PFA) order due to recent abuse
- Divorce with domestic violence or other issues
- Eviction defense
- Private foreclosure defense
- Garnishment defense
- Repossession defense
- Utility (electricity, gas, and water) termination
- Wrongful termination
- Unemployment compensation
- Bankruptcy (Chapter 7 and Chapter 13) as a way of solving



- problems with garnishments, multiple suits, and threatened loss of housing
- Public benefits (Family Assistance, Food Stamps, Medicaid appeals)
- Social Security and SSI cessation appeals
- Social Security and SSI overpayment appeals.

Please note, LSA can only provide limited assistance in some types of cases. Call LSA to find out if it can help you.

**Legal Services Alabama (LSA)**  
207 Montgomery Street, Suite 1200  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
**(866) 456-4995**  
[www.LegalServicesAlabama.org](http://www.LegalServicesAlabama.org)

For information about many legal topics and do-it-yourself forms, go to [www.alabamalegalhelp.org](http://www.alabamalegalhelp.org).

## Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral Service

If you don't meet the requirements for help from the Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP) or Legal Services Alabama (LSA), it can be hard to know where to find an attorney. The Lawyer Referral Service of the Alabama State Bar can give you the name of a lawyer who handles your kind of case. For a fee, you can talk to that lawyer about your problem. After that consultation, any other legal work (and the fees for that work) will be a matter for the attorney and you to agree upon.

**Alabama State Bar**  
\$50 fee for 30-minute  
Lawyer Referral Service consultation  
**(800) 392-5660**  
Email: [lrs@alabar.org](mailto:lrs@alabar.org)