

How to Find a Lawyer

If you can afford a lawyer, there are several ways to find one:

- Get a recommendation – Ask a trusted family member or friend for the name of a lawyer.
- Search on TexasBar.com - If you have a computer, search for lawyers in your city on www.TexasBar.com. Search the online attorney directory using your location and the type of case you have.
- Use a lawyer referral service –
 - County or local lawyer referral services – Some counties have a lawyer referral service, where you call and describe the kind of case you have and get names of lawyers who handle that kind of case. They may charge a small fee for this service.
 - State Bar Lawyer Referral Information Service (LRIS) – The State Bar of Texas also has a lawyer referral service for areas of the State that do not have a county or local service. The LRIS can be reached at 1-800-252-9690, www.texasbar.com . For more information, please click on the link to the Lawyer Referral Information Service in the Resources section of this website.
- Use the telephone book - Look under the Attorneys heading.

If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may be able to get help anyway:

- **Legal aid** – Legal aid organizations provide free legal help in civil cases for persons and families with low income. There are dozens of legal aid organizations that serve Texas. Which one you go to depends on where you live and what type of problem you have. The names and contact information for the 3 largest, full-service legal aid organizations are on the How Do I Find a Lawyer page and the Resources page of this website. To get help from these organizations, you must go through an application process. Each organization has a web page that tells where their offices are and how to apply for assistance.
- **Legal clinics** – A legal clinic is another way for low-income people with civil legal problems to get free legal advice and help. Clinics usually meet once or twice each month. Local lawyers volunteer their time to be present and provide “pro bono” or free legal help. Many organizations in Texas offer this kind of service. Most of them require their clients to be low-income, so you may have to go through an application process to be able to use a clinic. There is a list of clinics and other organizations that provide free legal services on the Resources part of this website.

- **Limited scope representation** – Another way to get a lawyer’s help is to find one who is willing to handle only part of your case. This is a way to get legal help that would cost less than if the lawyer did your whole case. Sometimes this is called “limited scope representation” or “unbundling,” and sometimes lawyers are willing to do it, but they don’t put a label on it.
 - With limited scope representation, you and the lawyer agree that the lawyer will take part of your case instead of the whole thing.
 - Make sure to get this agreement in writing.
 - If you do get a lawyer to represent you this way, remember that your relationship with the lawyer ends once the lawyer finishes the task that he or she has agreed to do. The lawyer will not be your lawyer for another part of your case, unless the two of you make another agreement.
 - An example of limited scope representation is that a lawyer could charge you a small fee for 1 or 2 hours of legal advice before you file papers for a divorce and go to your final hearing, but you would handle everything else.
 - To find a lawyer who provides this kind of representation, use the State Bar or local lawyer referral services that we described earlier and ask the lawyers you contact if they are willing to handle only part of your case.