
Lawyers' Committee For Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area

LEGAL SERVICES FOR ENTREPRENEURS

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FACT SHEET FOR INDIVIDUALS

Purpose:

Legal Services for Entrepreneurs ("LSE") is an economic justice project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. * LSE provides free legal assistance to:

- low-income individuals, including women and people of color, who want to start or develop for-profit businesses; and
- for-profit businesses committed to investing in economically distressed neighborhoods.

LSE matches individuals who generally would not have access to specialized legal services with experienced business attorneys from a variety of law firms at no cost.

Legal Services Available:

LSE provides free legal assistance to entrepreneurs covering the entire range of legal services necessary to begin a new business or expand an existing one. These services may include incorporation/entity formation, tax counseling, trade name protection, equity capital formation, lease negotiation, employment counseling, and franchising. Requests for assistance should be for specific business legal services. LSE does not provide assistance with problems involving disputes, claims, or lawsuits by or against a business.

While the volunteer attorney will not charge any fee for his or her time, there may be costs charged by state and federal agencies, such as filing fees for incorporation. These costs are the responsibility of you, the client.

How Do I Get An Attorney with LSE?

The entire placement process can take up to one month. However, LSE may be able to provide more immediate legal services for clients with urgent deadlines. Generally, the placement process involves the following steps:

1. Complete the attached intake form and return it to LSE by mail or fax.
2. After LSE receives your completed intake form, we will promptly arrange an intake meeting with you or explain to you why we cannot offer legal services to your business.
3. At the intake meeting, an LSE attorney will discuss your business plans with you and the legal services you may need. The LSE attorney may request additional information about your business, if necessary.
4. LSE's Screening Committee will meet within one week after your intake meeting to determine whether your business meets LSE's guidelines to qualify for free legal services. LSE's primary considerations when evaluating your request will be your income level and the potential benefit, if any, your business may offer to the community.
5. Following the Screening Committee's meeting, you will be notified whether your request has been accepted or rejected.
6. If accepted, LSE will attempt to place your matter with one of its participating law firms. This may take two weeks or longer.
7. If your matter is placed with a law firm, an attorney from the law firm will contact you to arrange a meeting with you. At this meeting, you and the attorney together will decide what legal services your business requires.

Who Can Use LSE?

LSE does not have set income restrictions for clients. Rather, LSE's two primary considerations when determining who is eligible for free legal services are: **(i)** whether you, the entrepreneur, can afford a lawyer, and **(ii)** the potential benefit, if any, your business may offer to the community. Since a law firm ultimately will be the one providing the free legal services, these firms reserve the right to refuse cases accepted by LSE, depending upon their own internal guidelines. LSE makes its services available to for-profit businesses. If you seek assistance in forming or developing a non-profit organization, please contact the Legal Services Clinic of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights at (415) 543-9444.

If you have any questions regarding LSE, please contact Helen Smolinski at (415) 543-9444 ext. 217.

** The Lawyers' Committee is a civil rights and legal services organization devoted to advancing the rights of people of color, poor people, and immigrants and refugees, while maintaining its historical commitment to provide legal advocacy for African-Americans.*

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of the San Francisco Bay Area**

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PLEASE COMPLETE THIS INTAKE FORM AND MAIL OR FAX IT TO THE ADDRESS/FAX NUMBER ABOVE.

Date: _____

The following information *must be provided for each owner of your business*:

First Name(s): _____

Last Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Personal E-Mail: _____

Phone numbers where you can be reached:

Home: (_____) _____ Work: (_____) _____

Cell: (_____) _____

The name and phone number of one alternative contact, in case you become unreachable at the address or phone numbers you listed above:

Name: _____

Relationship (sister, friend etc.): _____

Phone number: (_____) _____

1. Have you ever applied to Legal Services for Entrepreneurs ("LSE") before?

- Yes (please specify when): _____
 No

If your name has changed since the last time you applied, please write your former name here:

12. Where will your business be located or what is its present address?

Your Business's Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Your Business's e-mail, if applicable: _____

13. What community will you, or do you presently, serve with your business and what benefits will the community receive, if any? (for example, will your business hire employees from the community?)

14. How much was your business revenue, if any?

Last Year:

- Less than \$25,000
- Between \$25,000 and \$50,000
- Over \$50,000 (Please specify): _____

This Year to Date:

- Less than \$25,000
- Between \$25,000 and \$50,000
- Over \$50,000 (Please specify): _____

15. What was your household income? (If your business has more than one owner, please also list each additional owner's household income.)

Last Year:

- | You | Other Owner(s) | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than \$25,000 (Please specify): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Between \$25,000 and \$50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over \$50,000 (Please specify): _____ |

This Year to Date:

- | You | Other Owner(s) | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than \$25,000 (Please specify): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Between \$25,000 and \$50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over \$50,000 (Please specify): _____ |

16. What is the total value of each owner's assets (car, home, savings, etc.)?

Consent for Disclosure of Case Information:

By signing below, you understand that all information you provide LSE on this intake form and otherwise, including information developed from it by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights ("LCCR"), is on a non-confidential basis. While LSE/LCCR intends to use and disclose your information only to the extent appropriate, you understand that we will disclose your information to persons unrelated to LSE/LCCR on a non-confidential basis, including to, among others, law firms and attorneys that act as volunteers for LSE/LCCR. Additionally, you agree that any law firm that agrees to represent you as a result of our referral has your consent to provide to LSE/LCCR information about you, your legal matters handled by the law firm, and its representation of you. Please note that LSE/LCCR usually only requests this information from participating law firms for the purpose of improving our program and meeting various ongoing funding requirements.

Name

Date

Please attach:

1. A copy of the front page of each owner's federal income tax return from last year and,
2. A copy of the most recent draft of your Business Plan, if you have one.

If you have any questions concerning the information required on this form, please call Helen Smolinski at (415) 543-9444 ext.217. Thank you for providing this information to LSE.

FOR LSE OFFICE USE ONLY. PLEASE DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE.

Names of Pro Bono Attorneys/Law Firms Interested, in order of response:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Adverse Parties:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Approved for Services?

yes

no, because: _____