



FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR ALABAMA DISASTER SURVIVORS

May 8, 2018. A toll-free legal aid hotline is now available to survivors of Alabama's recently declared disaster areas in **Calhoun, Cullman and Etowah counties**. The service, which allows callers to request the assistance of a lawyer to aid in disaster related matters, is a partnership between the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, the Alabama Young Lawyers Division, Alabama Legal Services Program and Alabama Volunteer Lawyers Program.

Survivors facing legal issues who are unable to afford a lawyer may call **1-800-354-6154** toll-free between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, to request assistance. When connected to the hotline voicemail, callers should identify that they are seeking disaster-related legal assistance, brief details of the assistance needed and in which county they are located. Individuals who qualify for assistance will be matched with Alabama lawyers who have volunteered to provide free legal assistance.

The type of legal assistance available include:

- Assistance with securing FEMA and other government benefits available to disaster survivors;
- Assistance with life, medical and property insurance claims;
- Help with home repair contracts and contractors;
- Replacement of wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster;
- Assistance in consumer protection matters, remedies and procedures;
- Counseling on mortgage-foreclosure problems; and
- Counseling on landlord-tenant problems.

Background

On April 26, 2018, a Major Disaster Declaration was issued for the state of Alabama, making federal funding available for to individuals and business owners in **Calhoun, Cullman and Etowah counties**.

To register with FEMA, and if eligible, apply for federal and state disaster assistance, register online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov, via smartphone, or Web-enabled device at m.fema.gov. Applicants may also call 800-621-3362 or 800-462-7585 (TTY) seven days a week from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time. Applicants should be prepared to provide basic information about themselves, insurance coverage, and any other information to help substantiate the loss. **The deadline to register with FEMA is June 25, 2018.**

Survivors should be aware that there are limitations on disaster legal services. For example, assistance is not available for cases that will produce a fee (i.e., those cases where attorneys are paid part of the settlement by a court). Such cases are referred to a local lawyer referral service.

Currently disaster relief services are available to survivors in the Alabama counties that have been declared major disaster areas. **For survivors seeking legal assistance outside of the declared counties, please contact Alabama Legal Services at 866-456-4995** or En Espanol 866-835-3505 or by applying [ONLINE](#).

Partner Members

The following organizations have joined forces to establish a toll-free phone line for Alabama disaster survivors to request free legal assistance and to provide volunteer attorneys to handle cases arising from the recent disaster in Calhoun, Cullman and Etowah counties.

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division

(http://www.americanbar.org/groups/young_lawyers.html) The ABA YLD, the largest national organization of young lawyers, provides leadership in serving the public and the profession, and promotes excellence and fulfillment in the practice of law. Its parent organization, the ABA, is the national voice of the legal profession and the largest voluntary professional membership group in the world.

State Bar of Alabama Young Lawyers Division (www.alabar.org) – The Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the State Bar of Alabama is a professional service organization comprised of all members of the Alabama Bar in good standing under 36 years of age, or those admitted to the Alabama Bar as their first bar within the past 5 years. The YLD coordinates various programs across the state designed to serve the public, advance the legal profession or both.

Alabama Legal Services Program (www.legalservicesalabama.org) – Legal Services Alabama (LSA) has seven offices and a centralized intake call center working together to fulfill its mission statement: To serve low-income people by providing civil legal aid and by promoting collaboration to find solutions to problems of poverty. These offices are located in Birmingham, Dothan, Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery, Selma and Tuscaloosa. LSA offices handle civil cases only. Each office has lawyers licensed to practice in Alabama and other staff who know how to help low-income people resolve their legal problems.

The Alabama Volunteer Lawyers Program (www.alabar.org/programs-departments/volunteer-lawyer-program/) – The Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP) was created in 1990 by the Alabama State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners to provide an organized vehicle through which attorneys can volunteer their services on a pro bono basis in civil matters to indigent citizens in their

community. The VLP began its operation in 1991 and has delivered free legal services to low income residents of Alabama for more than 25 years. The VLP helps low-income citizens whom other programs often cannot serve.

The VLP receives generous support from the Alabama State Bar, Alabama Law Foundation and Legal Services Alabama, as well as private contributions.

National Disaster Legal Aid Online (www.disasterlegalaid.org) – NDLA is a collaborative effort of Lone Star Legal Aid, the American Bar Association, the Legal Services Corporation, the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, and Pro Bono Net.

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