



Young Lawyers Division



Alabama  
State Bar



LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION



LEGAL SERVICES  
ALABAMA

**FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE  
FOR ALABAMA DISASTER VICTIMS**

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**April 27, 2021.** A toll-free legal aid hotline is now available to victims of Alabama's recently declared disaster areas in **Bibb, Calhoun, Clay, Hale, Jefferson, Perry, Randolph, and Shelby 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 State Bar Young Lawyers Division, Alabama Legal Services Program and the Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program.

Victims facing legal issues who are unable to afford a lawyer may call 334-517-2252, locally, or 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 types of legal assistance available include:

- Assistance with securing FEMA and other government benefits available to disaster victims;
- 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**

When the President declares a major disaster, FEMA, in cooperation with the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, establishes a toll-free number for disaster victims to request legal assistance. Funding for the toll-free line comes from FEMA under the authority of Section 415 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 100-707). The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division in turn collaborates with state bar associations and other legal organizations to recruit volunteers in affected areas to handle victims' cases.

Victims 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 victims in the Alabama counties that have been declared major disaster areas. **For victims seeking legal assistance outside of the declared counties, please contact Alabama Legal Services at 866-498-9469 or 866-456-4995.**

### **Partner Organizations**

The following organizations have joined forces to establish a toll-free phone line for Alabama disaster victims to request free legal assistance and to provide volunteer attorneys to handle cases arising from the recent disaster in Lee County.

#### ***American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division***

([http://www.americanbar.org/groups/young\\_lawyers.html](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.

***Alabama State Bar Young Lawyers Division*** ([www.alabar.org](http://www.alabar.org)) – The Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the Alabama State Bar 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 State

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](http://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/](http://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.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency** – FEMA coordinates the federal government’s role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror. Through an agreement with the American Bar Association, FEMA underwrites the cost of operating toll free legal assistance lines for survivors in areas designated as federal disaster sites.

**National Disaster Legal Aid Online** ([www.disasterlegalaid.org](http://www.disasterlegalaid.org)) – The National Disaster Legal Aid Resource Center, or DisasterLegalAid.org (DLA), is a nationwide project that hosts self-help tools and legal information for people and communities impacted by natural disasters. DLA also serves as a central hub for collaboration, communication, and networking among legal advocates serving disaster-affected individuals. It is a collaborative effort of Lone Star Legal Aid, Pro Bono Net, the American Bar Association, the Legal Services Corporation, and the National Legal Aid & Defender Association.

**United Policyholders** – United Policyholders (UP)([www.uphelp.org](http://www.uphelp.org)) is a national nonprofit 501(c)(3) consumer advocacy group that specializes in helping disaster survivors with insurance claim issues. UP also trains case managers and legal aid lawyers to assist clients with insurance and disaster recovery matters