

Family Law: Resources for Legal Help

Important: Courthouse access may be limited due to COVID-19. You can find the latest information at cookcountycourt.org. You can find out when your next court date is by calling the Circuit Clerk's Office at (312) 603-6300 or emailing DRCourtDate@cookcountycourt.com.



Get Help at Home

- Hotline: CARPLS Legal Aid**
Get free legal help by phone from a lawyer and pro bono referrals (when available)
 - 🕒 9:00 am – 7:30 pm; Mon & Wed
 - 9:00 am – 4:30 pm; Tue, Thur & Fri
 - ☎ (312) 738-9200 🌐 carpls.org
- Hotline: Domestic Violence Help**
DV advocates can offer counseling and support services and make legal referrals
 - ☎ (708) 689-3422
- Hotline: Child Abuse and Neglect**
Free, confidential, 24/7 multilingual hotline
 - ☎ (800) 25-ABUSE (252-2873)
- Website: Illinois Legal Aid Online**
Get self-help information, court forms, and apply online for free (pro bono) legal help
 - 🌐 illinoislegalaid.org (in English)
 - 🌐 illinoislegalaid.org/es (en Español)
 - 🌐 illinoislegalaid.org/pl (po Polsku)
- Website: Cook County Clerk of Court**
Find case information and court forms
 - 🌐 cookcountyclerkofcourt.org
- Website: Cook County Circuit Court**
Read court rules and frequently asked questions and find information about court operations
 - 🌐 bit.ly/CookFamilyLaw



Contact a Help Desk

Due to COVID-19, help desk services are now available by phone.

- Help Desk: Divorce & Family Law**
Free legal advice and help with forms
 - 🕒 9:00 am – 7:30 pm; Mon & Wed
 - 9:00 am – 4:30 pm; Tue, Thur & Fri
 - ☎ (312) 738-9200 (*mention the Help Desk*)
- Help Desk: Child Support & Parentage**
Free legal advice and help with forms
 - 🕒 9:00 am – 5:00 pm; Mon – Fri
 - ☎ (312) 726-2938 (*mention the Help Desk*)

Court Volunteers: Volunteer attorneys are available through the court to answer your questions about court procedures. Please note, these volunteers cannot give legal advice or help with completing or filing forms. Visit bit.ly/CookFamilyLaw to find the schedule for the volunteer attorneys and the phone number to reach them.



Reach an Agreement

- Mediation: Property & Debt**
Get help settling money issues (like debt, property, and child support) before, during, or after your court case.
 - ☎ (312) 922-6464 🌐 ccrchicago.org
 - 👉 **No referral necessary**
- Mediation: Child Custody & Visitation**
Get help settling child custody and visitation issues during your case.
 - ☎ (312) 603-1544
 - 👉 **Ask your judge for a referral**

Apply for a Free Lawyer

- ✓ You can apply for free help from a legal aid or pro bono lawyer.
- ✓ Most free programs will turn people away when they are full.
- ✓ You may have to meet income or other eligibility criteria to apply.

- Legal Aid Chicago (formerly LAF)**
Free legal help with family law cases involving domestic violence, child endangerment, retirement benefits, real estate, and more
☎ (312) 341-1070
💻 legalaidchicago.org
- Catholic Charities Legal Assistance**
Free legal help with family law cases including divorce, child support, custody, and visitation
☎ (312) 948-6821
💻 catholiccharities.net
- Legal Aid Society**
Free legal help with family law cases including divorce and domestic violence
☎ (312) 986-4200
💻 metrofamily.org/legal-aid-society
- Ascend Justice**
Free legal help for domestic violence survivors and families impacted by the child welfare system.
☎ (312) 971-5932
💻 ascendjustice.org
Remote help with Orders of Protection starts at 8:30am on weekdays at 555 West Harrison (Domestic Violence Courthouse)

Hire a Lawyer (\$)

- ✓ You can pay a lawyer to help you with all or part of your case.
- ✓ You can find a lawyer by calling a lawyer referral service or looking in a lawyer directory.
- ✓ **For more information about free and paid legal options go to illinoislegalaid.org/cook.**

- Chicago Legal Clinic**
Apply for affordable legal help from lawyers who charge sliding scales fees based on ability to pay
☎ (773) 731-1762
💻 clclaw.org
\$ Fees vary depending on income and case type
- JEP Lawyer Network**
Connect with lawyers who charge set fees for flexible and customizable legal help
☎ (312) 546-3282
💻 jepchicago.org
\$ Consultation and other fees vary
- Chicago Bar Lawyer Referral Service**
Connect with lawyers in Chicago and Cook County who charge hourly fees
☎ (312) 554-2001
💻 lrs.chicagobar.org
\$ \$30 consultation (additional costs after)

Consider A Limited Scope Lawyer

Limited scope lawyers offer affordable and flexible arrangements where you share the work and responsibility with your lawyer. You can learn more at: chicagobarfoundation.org/limitedscope

Electronic filing (e-filing) is now required in Illinois. You can download forms and e-file paperwork online at cookcountyclerkofcourt.org. If you need assistance with e-filing, you can contact the Circuit Clerk's office by calling **(312) 603-6300** or emailing DRCourtDate@cookcountycourt.com.

You may be exempted from e-filing if you have a disability, are filing in a domestic violence case, cannot read or write in English, or cannot easily access a computer with internet. Visit bit.ly/efileIL to learn more and to download the exemption form. Contact the Circuit Clerk's office by calling **(312) 603-6300** or emailing DRCourtDate@cookcountycourt.com to ask about your filing options.

Notes: _____



Last Updated June 2020