

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Listed below are answers to questions about us and our web site. If you have a question not answered below, please [Contact Us](#).

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## Detailed Questions and Answers:

### **What is Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc.?**

Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. is a private, non-profit law firm committed to provide quality civil legal services to Idaho's low income community.

### **What do "Pro Bono" and "Pro Se" mean?**

*Pro bono* means that an attorney is representing an individual at no cost to the individual. *Pro se* means that an individual is representing themselves in a legal proceeding.

# **What is the difference between civil and criminal legal services?**

Civil legal services are provided by attorneys who represent clients only in civil cases, such as domestic relations cases, landlord and tenant issues, consumer law issues, etc. Pro se paperwork is also available through Court Assistance Offices to assist people representing themselves in civil matters. Criminal legal services are provided by attorneys who practice in the area of criminal law and represent people who have been charged with criminal activity.

## **What kind of cases can Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. handle?**

Idaho Legal Aid Services may provide services to low-income residents with legal issues in the following areas of law. ***Not all areas of law are available for representation in each service area. Income and eligibility criteria must be determined before representation is undertaken by Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc.***

- Domestic violence victims: Domestic Violence Legal Advice Line, possible representation on divorce, child custody, child support, visitation, and protection orders.
- Elder Law and Senior Legal Hotline
- Guardianships
- Housing: landlord and tenant issues, public housing, evictions, foreclosure, housing discrimination, fair lending/fair housing legal hotline, manufactured housing issues.
- Migrant
- Native-American
- Guardianships
- Public Entitlements: Medicaid, Food Stamps, AABD
- Social Security/SSI Disability
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# **What is the difference between Legal Aid Services, Inc. and the Public Defender?**

Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. provides free legal services in civil cases only. The Public Defender's Office provides free defense counsel in criminal matters.

## **What are the eligibility requirements for Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc.?**

Generally, service is limited to individuals whose income is at or below 125% of the federal poverty level, or to groups whose members meet that income guideline. Eligibility requirements also include a consideration of assets, case type, and priorities. Eligibility may be extended beyond the standard limits when alternative grant funding is received that allows expansion of those guidelines. Not all who qualify on the basis of income will receive services due to these other considerations as well as availability of resources and staff to handle a case.

## **How can I find out if I need a lawyer?**

You can call or write the [Legal Aid Services, Inc. office](#) in your area. Staff answering the telephone will **not** be able to tell you whether or not you need a lawyer, but they will be able to tell you if your legal issue is an area of law that Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc's attorneys practice. The [Idaho Volunteer Lawyer Program](#) may also be able to provide you with free legal counsel on a limited number of issues. The Lawyer Referral Program can provide you with the name of an attorney in the area of law you need help with who will provide you a 30-minute consultation for no more than \$35.

## **How do I find a lawyer?**

If you discover that you need a lawyer, you may contact one of the above organizations to find out if you qualify for their services. You will also find attorneys listed in the telephone book and on the [Idaho State Bar website](#).

## **What if Idaho Legal Aid Services cannot help me?**

If you do not qualify for help from Idaho Legal Aid Services or they are unable to represent you, they may be able to refer you to another legal services program such as the [Idaho Volunteer Lawyer Program](#) or a private attorney. You may also call the Lawyer Referral Service on your own or contact one of the attorneys listed in the phone book or on the internet through the [Idaho State Bar website](#).

## **How do I make a complaint about the services I have received?**

A person who has not been accepted as a client due to financial ineligibility, or whose case has been rejected on the basis that ILAS is prohibited from handling, or whose case has been rejected on the basis that it is not a priority, or for whom assistance has been terminated, may lodge a verbal or written complaint with the local managing attorney and/or the Executive Director of ILAS. If you choose to make a written complaint, a form is available for your use [here](#).

## **When should I seek legal advice?**

Whenever you are unsure about your legal standing on an issue. Especially any time you have been served with a summons, complaint or court order of any kind, you should consult an attorney immediately. If you have questions about your legal rights or status, **only an attorney** can provide legal advice. Consulting an attorney may be necessary to protect or enforce your rights.

## **Why can't I ask legal questions through this website?**

All legal services provided by Idaho Legal Aid, representation in legal matters as well as simple counsel and advice as provided by our three legal hotlines requires screening to determine eligibility. At this time, we do not have the capability for clients to submit applications for legal services via our web site.

## **How do I find out more about Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. and other legal services providers?**

In addition to the large amount of information on this web site, you may also call or write the [Legal Aid Services, Inc. office](#) in your area. You may also stop by the office in any one of our [seven service offices](#) and ask for information. **Please note that all walk-ins are currently prohibited in all offices due to the coronavirus pandemic.** This website, as well as each service office, has brochures and/or informational materials on a variety of legal issues. Our website provides links to other legal services providers and information.

## How do I send suggestions for adding items to this web site?

Contact the [Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. office](#) in your area or send a message to Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. by contacting the webmaster through our "Feedback" feature on this website.

Last updated on July 15, 2020.

How helpful do you find the information on this page?

- Not helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Very helpful

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Please tell us why this page wasn't helpful

- N/A
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- Not enough information
- Unclear information

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Court Rules that Same Sex Parent can Move Forward with Discrimination Suit Against the State of Idaho

In an important step in securing equal rights for same-sex couples, a federal court ruled yesterday that an unmarried, lesbian mother can continue her fight to be recognized as the parent daughter.

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LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

