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## ***A Guide to Legal Resources in Richmond, VA***

This resource guide is to assist patrons in searching for free and low-cost legal services and resources in the greater Richmond area. The resource guide is for informational purposes only and is not meant to offer legal advice or legal representation.

Charles H. Schmidt, Jr., a licensed attorney and Law Librarian for the City of Richmond, is responsible for the content of this resource guide. Special thanks to Nigel Hawkins for his help with this guide.

Please contact the Richmond Public Law Library with questions.

If any resources or information needs to be added or corrected, please contact:

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# Access to Justice/Self Help/Legal Aid

## **Richmond Public Law Library**

<https://rvalibrary.org/services/law-library/> (804) 646-6500

The Law Library can assist patrons with legal questions and legal research. The Law Librarian is also available for one-on-one appointments to discuss your legal needs. Can provide information on a variety of legal topics, print examples of legal documents and forms, and assist with referrals to many of the free and low-cost legal services in and around Richmond.

## **Richmond Bar Association**

<https://www.richmondbar.org/pro-bono-resources/>

List of pro bono resources and published guides to civil court.

## **Virginia State Bar**

[www.vsb.org](http://www.vsb.org)

1. Virginia Lawyer Referral Service  
<https://vlrs.community.lawyer/>  
(804) 775-0808 (metro Richmond), (800) 552-7977 (statewide and nationwide toll-free)  
The VLRS is \$35 for up to 30 minutes with a qualified lawyer.
2. Free Legal Answers  
<https://virginia.freelegalanswers.org/>  
Virginia Free Legal Answers is a virtual legal advice clinic in which qualifying users post civil legal questions at no cost to be answered by pro bono attorneys in the areas of Family, Divorce, Custody, Housing, Eviction, Homelessness, Consumer Rights, Financial, Work, Employment, Unemployment, Health and Disability, Civil Rights, Income Maintenance, Juvenile and Education Law.
3. Access to Justice brochure  
<http://bit.ly/VSBAccess>  
A guide for helping low- and modest-income Virginians obtain legal services.

## **Virginia Judicial System Self-Help Website**

<https://selfhelp.vacourts.gov>

Provides neutral legal information and resources for self-represented litigants in Virginia Courts. Also produces a Virginia Legal Information Resources Guide which can help with legal research.

## **Virginia Legal Aid**

<https://www.valegalaid.org>

1-866-LEGLAID (1-866-534-5243)

Find information and answers to commonly asked civil legal questions. Also contains information on legal aid and pro bono programs in Virginia where you may receive free legal assistance.

### **Legal Aid Justice Center**

<https://www.justice4all.org/>

The Legal Aid Justice Center partners with communities and clients to fight for racial, social, and economic justice by dismantling systems that create and perpetuate poverty. Help with Housing, Healthcare, Immigration, Consumer and Medical Debt, Workplace and Education.

### **Central Virginia Legal Aid Society**

<http://cvlas.org/our-services/>

(800) 868-1012

CVLAS provides legal advice in most areas of civil law and provides legal representation in many areas of civil law to low-income people living in Central Virginia focusing on Consumer Law, Housing, Public Benefits, Employment and Health Law.

### **Virginia Poverty Law Center**

<http://www.vplc.org>

(804) 782-9430

Provides training to local Legal Aid program staff, private bar attorneys, and low-income clients, relating exclusively to the legal rights of Virginia's poor in areas of consumer law, domestic and sexual violence law, elder law, family law, health law, housing law and public benefits law.

### **VA Law Help 2 Go**

<http://www.valawhelp2go.org>

A mobile-friendly platform that provides the public with access to brief informational videos about common civil legal issues in Virginia. A link at the end of each video directs the viewer to the Virginia statewide website for more information and to connect them with the appropriate legal aid provider in their area.

## **Civil Rights**

### **Virginia State Conference NAACP**

<https://naacpva.org/>

VSC NAACP website has a complaint form to notify them about potential civil rights abuses.

### **ACLU of Virginia**

<https://www.acluva.org/en>

Civil Rights law firm focused on Criminal Legal Reform, First Amendment Rights, LGBTQ+ Rights, Reproductive Rights, and Voting Rights.

### **Institute for Justice**

<https://ij.org/>

IJ is a nonprofit, public interest law firm focused on property rights, civil asset forfeiture, government immunity, and 1st Amendment issues.

### **National Women's Law Center**

<https://nwlc.org/legal-help/>

The National Women's Law Center provides legal help for sex discrimination, harassment, and abortion access.

### **Repro Legal Defense Fund**

<https://reprolegaldefensefund.org/>

The Repro Legal Defense Fund provides financial support for people investigated or fighting charges related to their pregnancy or abortion.

### **U.S. Commission on Civil Rights**

<https://www.usccr.gov/contact/complaints>

USCCR does not enforce civil rights but can assist you in the complaint process by helping to place you in contact with the appropriate federal office for obtaining information.

### **The Rutherford Institute**

<https://www.rutherford.org/>

Civil Liberties law firm focused on the 1st Amendment, employment, search and seizure and inmates' rights. Based in Charlottesville.

### **Office of Civil Rights - Virginia Attorney General**

<https://www.oag.state.va.us/citizen-resources/civil-rights>

(804) 786-2071

(804) 225-2292

Report discrimination, police abuse, elder abuse, consumer protections

## **Criminal Justice/Re-entry**

### **Virginia Indigent Defense Commission**

<http://www.vadefenders.org>

(804) 662-7249

The VIDC oversees the 25 state public defender offices and four capital defender offices across Virginia. You can find a list of all 25 state Public Defender Offices and contact information.

- *NOTE - Public Defenders are appointed only by judges in criminal cases before Virginia courts.*

## **UVA Law School's Pro Bono Criminal Assistance Project**

580 Massey Road, Charlottesville, VA 22903

(434) 924-3883

Legal services provided: Post-conviction assistance; habeas corpus; prison conditions; direct referrals. *Written requests only.*

## **OAR – Offender Aid and Restoration**

1400 N. Uhle Street Suite 704 Arlington, VA 22201

[www.oaronline.org](http://www.oaronline.org)

(703) 228-7030

OAR provides reentry services, including transition assistance and employment counseling to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals who are committed to avoiding re-incarceration.

## **Virginia Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE)**

<https://www.vacure.org/>

(703) 272-3624

Resources for families and formerly incarcerated individuals

## **Virginia CARES, Inc.**

108 Henry Street NW, 3rd Floor Roanoke, VA 24016

[www.Vacares.org](http://www.Vacares.org)

(540) 342-9344

Virginia CARES (Community Action ReEntry System) is a statewide network of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) formed to address the successful reentry and de-institutionalization of felons in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **Assisting Families of Inmates, Inc.**

<https://afoi.org/>

(804) 643-2401

Help with visitation, family support groups, and emergency assistance.

## **Drive to Work**

<http://www.drivetowork.org>

(804) 358-6727

Toll-Free: (877) 358-6727

Assists qualifying low-income and previously incarcerated persons to restore driving privileges so they can drive to work and hold a job. Legal and other services are provided by attorneys. Clients pay an administrative fee starting at \$250 (higher in complex cases) to cover part of the cost.

## Innocence Project locations

Generally only accept written requests for assistance. Websites contain client request forms:

- University of Richmond Law School Institute for Actual Innocence  
<https://law.richmond.edu/academics/clinics-skills/in-house/innocence/contact.html>
- The Innocence Project at UVA Law  
<https://innocenceprojectuva.org/>
- Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project  
<https://exonerate.org/ask-for-help/>  
(202) 888-1766
- William & Mary Law School Innocence Project  
[innocence@wm.edu](mailto:innocence@wm.edu)  
(757) 221-7446
- The Innocence Project (National)  
<https://innocenceproject.org/>

## Disability Law

### disAbility Law Center of Virginia

<http://www.dlcv.org>

(800) 552-3962

(804) 225-2042

The disAbility Law Center of Virginia is the state's premier protection and advocacy system serving persons with disabilities.

### ADA Hotline

<https://www.ada.gov/>

1-800-514-0301 (voice)

1-800-514-0383 (TDD)

Accessibility specialists are available to answer questions from individuals, businesses, and state/local governments. All calls are confidential.

### Virginia Navigator

<https://virgininavigator.org/>

Resource for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and their caregivers and families

## Domestic Violence/Victims Services

### Virginia Victims Assistance Network

<https://vanetwork.org/>

VVAN provides related services to eligible crime victims including information regarding your legal rights, over-the-phone legal counsel with our Victim Services Attorney, referrals for community services, assistance connecting with no-cost or low-cost attorneys, and limited in-court representation in the greater Richmond area.

## **Richmond Domestic Violence Project**

(804) 200-6038

Represents victims of domestic violence in obtaining permanent protective orders in the City of Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court.

## **MRWBA Domestic Relations Pamphlet**

<https://www.mrwba.org/page-18114>

<http://mrwba.org/>

Booklet published by the Metropolitan Regional Women's Bar Association to help the public understand the general legal circumstances they may face in resolving domestic relations problems under Virginia law.

## **Project for the Empowerment of Survivors (PES)**

<http://www.vsdvalliance.org/#/resources-helpayuda/legal-help>

1-800-838-8238

A new initiative offered through the Statewide Hotline of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance. Provides trauma-informed legal services and legal advocacy to callers of the hotline from Virginia who are experiencing sexual or intimate partner violence, dating violence, human trafficking, and hate crimes. Survivors and advocates can access the PES services by calling the Statewide Hotline to speak directly with a trained Legal Advocate and to be linked to Legal Services, or by logging on to [www.vadata.org/chat](http://www.vadata.org/chat) to enter into a confidential chat with an advocate.

# Education Law

## **Legal Aid Justice Center**

<https://www.justice4all.org/what-we-do/youth-family-schools/>

Special education, discipline issues, and enrollment. Also assists with education issues impacting incarcerated youth.

# Employment Law

## **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**

<https://www.eeoc.gov/>

(800) 669-4000

Enforces federal employment law.

- *NOTE - in order to pursue certain discrimination claims, you must notify the EEOC within 6 months of the discrimination. See website for details.*



### **Virginia Department of Labor**

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/>

(804) 371-2327

Provides oversight and enforcement for state labor laws and practices. Report unpaid wages through form on website.

### **NELA**

<https://www.nela.org/>

NELA is a national professional organization of attorneys who represent employees in employment law cases. You can use the Find-ALawyer feature to search for employment attorneys in your state.

### **Unemployment Insurance Pro Bono Project**

(804) 643-1086

Matches volunteer attorneys with low-income clients from the Metro area who are seeking unemployment benefits.

### **Legal Aid Justice Center**

<https://www.justice4all.org/get-help/#AreasWeServe>

Unpaid wages or unemployment insurance; not workers' compensation or wrongful termination.

### **Central Virginia Legal Aid Society**

<https://cvlas.org/our-services/>

Unemployment Compensation and Wrongful Discharge.

## **Family Law/Children**

### **Hunton Andrews Kurth - Churchill Office**

<https://www.huntonak.com/en/about/pro-bono/neighborhood-office.html>

804-775-2248

Provides pro bono services to financially limited persons in the areas of family law, housing and real estate, uncontested divorce, and guardianships.

### **University of Richmond Law**

Children's Defense Clinic

<https://law.richmond.edu/academics/clinics-skills/in-house/childrens-defense/index.html>

(804) 289 – 8921

## **Metro Richmond Women’s Bar Association**

<http://mrwba.org/>

Domestic Relations Pamphlet

<http://mrwba.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/English-Pamphlet.pdf>

Booklet published by the Metropolitan Regional Women’s Bar Association to help the public understand the general legal circumstances they may face in resolving domestic relations problems under Virginia law.

## **Central Virginia Legal Aid Society**

<http://cvlas.org/our-services/>

- Avoiding or Reversing Administrative Finding of Child Abuse/Neglect
- Domestic Violence and Family Abuse: Obtaining Protection
- Uncontested No-Fault Divorce: Filing for Divorce on No-Fault Grounds

# Housing Law

## **Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia**

<http://homeofva.org/>

(804) 354-0641

Investigates housing discrimination claims and helps with eviction and foreclosure

- HOME helps coordinates the Richmond eviction diversion program

<https://homeofva.org/get-help/eviction-diversion/>

Call 1-877-315-1200 or you can fill out the application online. Richmond residents only.

## **Central Virginia Legal Aid Society**

<http://cvlas.org/our-services/>

(800) 868-1012

Help with Actions to Stop Evictions after Judgments, Eviction Defense, Foreclosure Prevention, Housing Voucher Problems, Lockouts / Utility Cutoffs / Self-Help Evictions, Repair and Maintenance Problems, Security Deposit Recovery

## **Virginia Fair Housing Office**

<http://www.dpor.virginia.gov/fairhousing/>

(804) 367-8530

888-551-3247

The Fair Housing Board administers and enforces the Fair Housing Law. You can file a complaint for housing discrimination on the linked website.

- *NOTE - Complaints must be filed in writing within one year after the alleged discriminatory housing practice occurred or terminated.*

## **Real Estate Board**

<https://www.dpor.virginia.gov/Boards/Real-Estate/>

Real Estate Board is responsible for fair housing cases involving real estate licensees or their

employees. File a complaint if a real estate agent has discriminated against you.

### **Legal Aid Justice Center**

<https://www.justice4all.org/what-we-do/housing/>

Provides pro bono legal help with housing issues ranging from eviction notices to unlawful detainers.

### **Virginia Poverty Law Center**

833-NOEVICT (833-663-8428)

Help renters know what they can do and what their rights are; Help to address problems or to avoid potential problems before eviction starts

## **Immigration Law**

### **Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC)**

[www.justice4all.org](http://www.justice4all.org)

(703) 778-3450

LAJC has an Immigration Law Clinic that serves low-income clients who have legal problems related to immigration and legal status issues.

### **Commonwealth Catholic Charities**

<https://www.cccofva.org/>

Refugee and Immigration Services - 804-355-4559

(804) 285-5900

### **LA VIDA**

Legal Assistance to Victim-Immigrants of Domestic Abuse is a free immigration program available ONLY to low-income domestic or sexual violence victims who are undocumented immigrants or whose temporary visas are about to expire. [LAVIDA@VPLC.ORG](mailto:LAVIDA@VPLC.ORG)

### **CAIR Coalition**

1612 K Street NW, Suite 204

Washington, DC 20006

<http://www.caircoalition.org/>

(202) 331-3320

CAIR Coalition helps immigrant children & adults who are detained and facing deportation.

### **Tahirih Justice Center (TJC)**

6402 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 300

Falls Church, VA 22042

<http://www.tahirih.org/>

Provides free immigration, family, and civil legal services, as well as a connection to vital social services, so clients can rebuild their lives in safety.

### **William & Mary Law School Immigration Clinic**

[https://law.wm.edu/academics/programs/jd/electives/clinics/clinics\\_list/immigration-clinic/contact/](https://law.wm.edu/academics/programs/jd/electives/clinics/clinics_list/immigration-clinic/contact/)

(757) 221-7440

Website also has additional resources for non-citizens.

### **Washington & Lee Law School Immigrant Rights Clinic**

<https://law.wlu.edu/clinics/immigrant-rights-clinic>

(540) 458-8334

The IRC currently collaborates with the Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition [see above] in its outreach efforts at the Farmville Detention Center in Farmville, VA. The IRC also takes referrals through CAIR, and IRC student attorneys provide pro bono legal services to persons detained in Farmville and in removal proceedings.

### **Ayuda (Immigrants' Issues & Rights)**

<https://ayuda.com/>

(703) 444-7009

Ayuda provides legal, social, and language services to help vulnerable immigrants access justice. Ayuda serves low-income immigrants throughout Washington DC, Maryland, and Virginia.

## **LGBTQ+**

### **Equality Virginia**

<https://www.equalityvirginia.org/>

Tel: (804) 643-4816

EV maintains a list of attorneys interested in representing LGBTQ clients that is available on the organization's website.

### **ACLU of Virginia**

<https://www.acluva.org/en>

Civil Rights law firm focused on Criminal Legal Reform, First Amendment Rights, LGBTQ+ Rights, Reproductive Rights, and Voting Rights.

### **Lambda Legal**

<https://lambdalegal.org/helpdesk/>

Lambda Legal's Help desk provides general legal information and resources relating to discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and HIV status.

### **Whitman-Walker Health Legal Services Program**

<https://www.whitman-walker.org/legal/legal-services>

(202) 939-7627

Provides legal services to people living with HIV and members of the LGBTQ community and offers regular pro bono legal clinics.

## Medical/Mental Health

### **Legal Information Network for Cancer (LINC)**

<http://www.cancerlinc.org>

(804) 562-0371

Provides legal, financial, and community resources to individuals confronted with issues arising from the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

### **NAMI Virginia**

<https://namivirginia.org/resources/family-member-arrested/>

(804) 285-8264

Resources to help families with incarcerated family members who may need mental health services.

### **Medical-Legal Partnership**

Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU

<https://www.chrichmond.org/patient-and-family-resources/support-services/medical-legal-partnership>

Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) Richmond offers free legal advice and representation for eligible patients and families in Richmond and surrounding counties in the areas of health and public benefits, housing, family law, and other areas.

### **Central Virginia Legal Aid Society**

<http://cvlas.org/our-services/>

Medicaid, Medicare, Nursing Home Care and Discharges, Access to the Affordable Care Act.

## Nonprofits/Business Services

### **Greater Richmond Bar Foundation Pro Bono Clearinghouse**

<https://grbf.org/clearinghouse/>

Provides free legal services to Virginia 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. Does not assist nonprofits with litigation, libel, or other contentious matters.

### **Center for Nonprofit Excellence**

<https://www.thecne.org/>

CNE provides expertise and referrals to nonprofits on a wide range of support services

## **Richmond Public Law Library**

<https://rvalibrary.org/services/law-library/> 804-646-6500

The Law Library can assist nonprofits with legal questions and legal research. The Law Librarian is also available for one-on-one appointments to discuss nonprofit governance, policy and provide sample legal documents.

## **University of Richmond Law**

Intellectual Property and Transactional Law Clinic

<https://law.richmond.edu/academics/clinics-skills/in-house/ip-clinic/index.html>

IPT Clinic provides business transaction and intellectual property legal services to start-ups, small businesses, non-profit organizations, individual makers and creators.

# Public Benefits

## **Legal Aid Justice Center**

<https://www.justice4all.org/get-help/>

LAJC helps with Public Benefits including Medicaid, Medicare, SSI, SNAP, WIC, LIHEAP.

*Does not help with initial applications*, but may be able to assist with denials, overpayments, or other disputes you may have.

## **Central Virginia Legal Aid Society**

<http://cvlas.org/our-services/>

Help with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits (formerly Food Stamps) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

# Seniors

## **Statewide Senior Legal Hotline**

(844) 802-5910

<https://selfhelp.vacourts.gov/node/33/statewide-senior-legal-helpline>

Toll-free hotline offering legal assistance and advice for Virginians aged 60 or over.

## **Virginia Office for Aging Services**

<https://www.vda.virginia.gov/>

Phone: 804-662-9333

Toll Free: 800-552-3402

Helps older Virginians, their families and loved ones find services and information they need.

## **Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

<https://www.elderrights.virginia.gov/>

Toll Free: (800) 552-5019

Local: (804) 565-1600

Ombudsmen advocate for older persons receiving long term care services, whether the care is provided in a nursing home or assisted living facility, or through community-based services to assist persons still living at home.

## **Senior Navigator**

<https://seniornavigator.org/>

(804) 525-7728 (phone)

(866) 393-0957 (toll free)

Provides information and referrals to find legal advice for seniors. Also provides information and articles on will, medical directives, and other estate planning.

## **Senior Connections**

<https://seniorconnections-va.org/>

804-343-3000

Provides information and assistance for making referrals to other partner Senior Connections programs or community resources.

# Taxes

## **Community Tax Law Project**

<http://www.ctlp.org>

(804) 358-5855.

Provides free legal help to Virginia's low-wage families and individuals experiencing economic harm because of a tax problem.

# Veterans

## **Virginia Military and Veteran Legal Resource Guide**

[https://www.oag.state.va.us/files/Veterans\\_Legal\\_Resource\\_Guide\\_Final\\_PlusHeaders.pdf](https://www.oag.state.va.us/files/Veterans_Legal_Resource_Guide_Final_PlusHeaders.pdf)

Provides help to Virginia service members, military families, and veterans in understanding the unique legal protections, rights, and resources available to them under the law.

## **Veterans Benefits Clinic at William & Mary Law School**

[https://law.wm.edu/academics/programs/jd/electives/clinics/clinics\\_list/veterans/](https://law.wm.edu/academics/programs/jd/electives/clinics/clinics_list/veterans/)

757-221-7443

Under attorney supervision, clinic students assist veterans with filing claims for disability compensation with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

### **ABA Veterans Legal Services Initiative**

[https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal\\_services/milvets/aba\\_home\\_front/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/milvets/aba_home_front/)

Legal Services website resource provided by the American Bar Association regarding military legal assistance offices, legal aid and pro bono organizations, lawyer referral and information services, and military-specific programs.

### **Virginia Bar Association Veterans Issues Task Force**

[http://www.vba.org/?page=vba\\_veterans\\_initiat](http://www.vba.org/?page=vba_veterans_initiat)

(804) 644-0041

Provides military veterans and service members with greater access to legal assistance.

### **Virginia Navigator**

<https://virginiannavigator.org/>

Resource for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and their caregivers and families

## **Voting/Restoration of Rights**

### **Revive My Vote**

<https://revivemyvote.wm.edu>

(844) 932-8683

Revive My Vote is a nonpartisan project that provides free and confidential assistance to anyone interested in restoring their right to vote.

### **Virginia Voter Information**

<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>

Online portal to register to vote, check registration status, find your polling place, and apply to vote absentee.

### **Secretary of the Commonwealth**

<https://www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/>

(804) 786-2441

The Secretary of the Commonwealth processes restoration of voting rights.

### **ACLU of Virginia**

<https://www.acluva.org/en>

Civil Rights law firm focused on Criminal Legal Reform, First Amendment Rights, LGBTQ+ Rights, Reproductive Rights, and Voting Rights.

#### ACLU Election Protection Hotline

- English: 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)
- Spanish: 888-VE-Y-VOTA (888-839-8682)
- Asian/Pacific Islander Language: 888-API-VOTE (888-274-8683)
- Arabic: 844-YALLA-US (844-925-5287)