

Three Rivers Legal Services

- ~~They come every third Monday of the month.~~

Eligibility for Assistance

- Three Rivers Legal Services receives funding from several different sources. Some grants limit services to persons meeting financial guidelines. Other grants may have no financial guidelines but limit the type of legal assistance that can be provided.
- Eligibility is based on household income, size, assets and case type. Case types are limited by Three Rivers' Board of Directors based on funding and resources.
- In general if your total household income is below 200% for the federal poverty level and you have certain expenses associated with housing, employment, health or children that leave you with available household income at or below 125% of the federal poverty level, then you may be eligible for assistance from Three Rivers.
- Several grants allow services to persons with incomes above the 200% federal poverty level in special situations. These grants may be limited to certain counties and legal problems. Some examples are services for persons over 60, persons who are victims of domestic violence, and Low-income Tax Payers with tax controversies with the Internal Revenue Service.
- With a few exceptions, a person must be a citizen of the United States or a legal resident. Three Rivers Legal Services may help any person who is a victim of abuse or human trafficking regardless of citizenship.
- Services are provided free to eligible persons, however, in some cases, the client must pay certain costs, such as court costs, filing fees, sheriff's fees, publication or depositions. Three Rivers Legal Services assesses each situation and attempts to reduce these costs whenever possible.

Areas of Service

- Consumer Law- Consumer cases are those involving contract disputes, repossessions, small claims, predatory lending, unfair debt collection practices, and exemptions from judgment.
- Education- Education cases accepted are those that ensure children the right to free, quality education in safe and appropriate environments. Issues involving special education include access to necessary educational aids or inappropriate placement. In addition, we will consider cases where school disciplinary procedures are violated.

- Elder Law- involves a broad area of legal issues, including preparation of simple wills, powers of attorney and advanced health directives (living wills, health care surrogate designations and “Do Not Resuscitate” orders). Other areas of interest to those over 60 may include Public Benefits (issues relating to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid, and other public assistance) and Family Law issues. If elder abuse or neglect is a concern, call the abuse hotline at 1-800-962-2873.
- Employment Law- They handle unemployment compensation issues as well as fair wage claims. Florida is an “at will” employment state, which means that in most cases, employees may be fired “at will” by an employer. This is not true in cases where the employee has contractual or statutory rights, or where an employee is the victim of discrimination based on gender, age, race or religion.
- Family Law- Family law cases cover a wide variety of topics. Three Rivers works closely with shelters for victims of domestic abuse by helping victims get civil injunctions to prohibit further contact by the abuser. They also help those seeking a divorce.
- Public Benefits- Three Rivers offers assistance with public benefits including Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicare and Medicaid, food stamps and other types of state or federal aid.
- Housing- Housing cases accepted are those involving the acquisition, preservation or access to housing for homestead and shelter.
- Small claims clinic- Small claims actions are civil claims for less than \$5000. Although Three Rivers does not generally file small claims actions on behalf of clients, we do offer a clinic in our Gainesville office to teach clients how to prepare and file their own claims.
- Homeless Disability Project- The purpose of this project is to increase access of homeless people to SSI/SSDI benefits and to enhance recovery during and after the application process. It is funded in part by the United Way, CAPP and the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry.

- Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic- If you are a low-income taxpayer who cannot afford professional tax assistance, you may qualify for help from our Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic which provides free assistance in tax disputes