



VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL SERVICE (VOLS) MICROENTERPRISE PROJECT

Free Legal Services for Small Business Owners with Limited Resources

Who We Are

The VOLS Microenterprise Project (MEP) provides free legal services to low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs and small business owners in New York City. Our goal is to help business owners navigate legal challenges so they can build financially stable, thriving businesses that support their communities.

What We Offer

We proudly serve microentrepreneurs, small business owners, and startup nonprofits, offering guidance on business formation, corporate governance, contracts, tax exemption applications for nonprofits, intellectual property, employment law, and regulatory compliance. Please note, we do not handle litigation, including commercial evictions business disputes.

Eligibility

To qualify for pro bono legal assistance a business owner or entrepreneur must:

- Reside in or operate a business in New York City; **AND**
- Meet financial eligibility:
 - Income below 500% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines \(FPG\)](#)
 - Less than \$100K in assets (excluding primary residence and retirement accounts)

For Nonprofits: Organizations with or seeking 501(c) status must have gross revenue below \$200K and actively promote economic development in an NYC community.

How It Works

1. Apply – You can begin your application in one of two ways:
 - **By Phone:** Call our helpline at **(347) 521-5729** to complete the intake process over the phone. Any necessary forms can be signed afterward.
 - **By Email:** If you prefer, you can complete the intake form and send it to **microenterprise@volspobono.org** along with the signed Pro Bono Services Application.
2. Screening – If you are eligible, one of our advocates will reach out to learn more about your legal needs.
3. Case Review & Placement – We will assess your case to determine if:
 - VOLS can represent you, or
 - We connect you with a pro bono attorney from our network of volunteer law firms and corporate legal departments, who will represent you.

Applicant Statement

I am applying to Volunteers of Legal Service (VOLS) for help finding pro bono (volunteer) legal assistance. I understand that VOLS may not provide me with legal representation or advice and that VOLS is collecting information from me and may discuss my case with me for the purposes of (1) determining the eligibility of myself and my legal matter(s) for pro bono legal assistance and (2) attempting to find pro bono legal assistance for me.

I also understand that:

- VOLS might not be able to find pro bono legal assistance for me, and there can be no guarantee that VOLS or the law firms that participate in VOLS's Microenterprise Project will be able to advise or to represent me.
- VOLS cannot respond to crises, as we are unable to guarantee the length of time it may take to find a volunteer attorney, or to determine that pro bono legal assistance is not available, or that the legal matter(s) presented are not appropriate for pro bono legal assistance.
- VOLS may share the information I provide in this application, including information I provide in my discussions with VOLS' staff and in any other documents or records I provide to VOLS, with law firm staff and/or with volunteer attorneys. VOLS will share this information solely for the purpose of enabling law firm staff and/or volunteer attorneys to consider whether to represent me pro bono.
- While legal assistance provided to me by VOLS and VOLS's volunteers and partner organizations is free, I am responsible for other expenses related to this matter, which may include, but are not limited to, fees associated with government or regulatory filings, costs related to government publication requirements, and charges for services provided by third-party service providers.
- Submitting this application and the Intake Form does not create an attorney-client relationship between myself and VOLS or any of its attorneys on staff, partner law firms, or other volunteer attorneys.

I am providing an Intake Form to support my application. I understand that VOLS, volunteer attorneys, and law firms and legal departments participating in VOLS's Microenterprise Project rely on the accuracy of the Intake Form and the information I provide. I affirm that all information I am providing in the Intake Form is true and correct.

Print Name

Name of Business

Signature

Date

VOLS MICROENTERPRISE PROJECT INTAKE FORM



PART 1: CLIENT PERSONAL INFORMATION

FIRST NAME: _____ LAST NAME: _____ DOB: __|__|__

STREET ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: (____) ____ - _____ EMAIL: _____

GENDER: _____ PREFERRED PRONOUNS: _____ RACE: _____

SERVED IN MILITARY, SELF OR FAMILY: Yes / No DO YOU IDENTIFY AS AN IMMIGRANT?: Yes / No

PREFERRED LANGUAGE: _____ REFERRAL SOURCE: _____

PART 2: CURRENT INCOME AND HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD: _____ MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (e.g. employment, public benefits, etc): \$ _____ VALUE OF PERSONAL ASSETS (e.g. Savings, Checking, Business Accounts, Investment accounts, Grants, and Secondary properties for all household members): \$ _____

PART 3: BUSINESS INFORMATION

BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: _____ STATE OF FORMATION: _____

LEGAL STRUCTURE (Circle One): LLC Corporation Partnership Sole-Proprietor Not-For-Profit

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION ANNUAL REVENUE: _____

PART 4: LEGAL NEED

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS AND LEGAL NEED/QUESTION: