



Disaster Legal Services Program

What is the Disaster Legal Services Program?

In the aftermath of a disaster, survivors face a wide variety of legal problems and barriers to recovery. Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) represents individual clients primarily in the areas of housing, consumer protection, domestic violence, family law, and public benefits. A disaster event makes existing legal issues worse and may create new ones for individuals and families. MLSA provides free access to information and legal advice that can aid recovery from the lingering effects of disasters and increase resiliency to future events. This program is available independent of federal or state emergency declarations.

What services are provided?

MLSA pro bono attorneys can help clients with insurance claims, landlord – tenant issues, public benefits applications and redirection, revising parenting plans, reviewing repair contracts, domestic violence, and filing for bankruptcy. If a client is unsure if they or their issue qualifies, that individual should contact MLSA directly.

How can I activate the program?

MLSA provides civil legal services throughout the state of Montana all the time, during disaster and blue skies. The disaster program is a process which connects volunteer attorneys with specific skills to disaster related cases. To activate the program, refer individuals to the Helpline or the MLSA website. There are no thresholds needed to activate assistance and a disaster does not need to be a community wide event for services to be available. Should a community stand up a Multi-Agency Resource Center, MLSA can provide in person support.

What is MLSA?

Montana Legal Services Association is a non-profit civil legal aid organization that provides free legal information, advice, and representation to thousands of low income Montanans facing non-criminal legal problems each year. These services help address a wide range of civil legal issues, including housing, family law, domestic violence, consumer debt, bankruptcy, and public benefits. These issues can have devastating consequences if not addressed. As the only statewide provider of civil legal aid in Montana, MLSA works to ensure that all Montanans have access to justice, regardless of how much money they make or where in the state they live.

How do clients get in touch with MLSA?

Individuals can apply online at www.mtlsa.org or by calling the Helpline at 1-800-666-6899. For legal forms and free legal information, clients can go to www.MontanaLawHelp.org. To find out more about the Disaster Legal Services Program, please contact Disaster Program Coordinator Megan Helton at mhelton@mtlsa.org, 406-442-9830 ext 131.