

The Modest Means Project

Information for Volunteer Attorneys

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to describe the Modest Means Project's goals, policies and procedures. If you have any questions please contact:

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On behalf of the citizens of Arizona who will be assisted by this Project we thank you for your time and assistance.

II. PURPOSE

The Purpose of the Modest Means Project is to provide low-cost legal assistance to people who cannot afford the expertise of attorneys' at the standard rates, but who cannot qualify for free legal services due to income qualifications or restrictions. The Project serves those whose income is less than or equal to 250% of the federal poverty guidelines. The income guidelines are found in the attachments to this booklet. The first priority of the project is to build an awareness of the options available for utilizing an attorney's expertise. The clients will be made aware that reduced fees are available for a one hour consultation or unbundled legal services. Attorneys are expected to offer brief advice or unbundled services. The price structure agreed upon for this Project does not anticipate full representation for the clients. A lawyer may offer full representation but it is not the expectation of the Modest Means Project. A lawyer who does offer full representation must maintain the Modest Means rate of \$75 per hour.

III. PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP

This Project operates in partnership with the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education (Arizona Bar Foundation) and the State Bar of Arizona.

IV. LOCATION AND HOURS

The Modest Means Project takes inquiry calls Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and again from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and through the Arizona Access to Justice Online Intake system, which operates 24 hours a day seven days a week. Each qualified client will receive an attorney list in their requested area of law. This list will contain attorney information, including availability that has been approved by the attorney. After the client receives the information regarding participating attorneys, the client will contact the attorney and set up an appointment at a mutually agreed upon time.

V. REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTORNEY PARTICIPATION

Attorneys who participate in the Modest Means Project must be members in good standing with the State Bar of Arizona and must attend the Foundations of Ethics/Modest Means CLE seminar. Attorneys also must carry malpractice insurance which will cover their Modest Means Project clients. If an attorney does not have their own malpractice insurance or is part of a firm or organization which will not cover the clients from this project the attorney may be able to obtain free malpractice insurance through the Arizona Bar Foundation

VI. TYPES OF CASES

The Modest Means Project offers services in the following areas: bankruptcy, consumer law, criminal misdemeanors, employment law, family law, guardianship, foreclosure, landlord/tenant, immigration and wills. The area of appeals in family law and consumer law are also offered by the Modest Means Project however, they are only offered to clients with a case in Maricopa County. The primary aim of the Modest Means Project is to provide brief assistance to people with legal problems in the above substantive areas. The Modest Means attorneys will offer clients assistance and education on how to best handle the legal issues on their own (pro se), as well as limited unbundled services. The attorneys are permitted to provide representation to the clients; however, doing so is outside the expectation of the Modest Means Project. If the attorney decides to represent a client, the project requires the attorneys to do the following:

Maintain the \$75 per hour fee with the client; and

Assure that the client understands they are being offered services beyond the standard scope of the Modest Means Project.

VII. HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

A. Becoming a Modest Means Attorney

Attorneys may participate in the Modest Means Project once the following requirements are met:

- Malpractice insurance
- Good Standing with the State Bar of Arizona
- Foundation of Ethics CLE

B. Client Contact

Arizona Bar Foundation staff and volunteers receive client calls, provide information for available attorneys, and are responsible for demographics record-keeping. Please note that all Modest Means clients are determined using an honor system and no formal paperwork or documentation is required to become a client. Attorneys who discover that their Modest Means client exceeds the modest means standard of 250% may inform the client that they do not in fact meet the requirements and may terminate the relationship.

C. Client Meetings-Arranged by Modest Means Attorneys

After the client receives the information regarding participating attorneys, the client will contact the attorney and set up an appointment at a mutually agreed upon time. Each client will be scheduled for minimum one-hour appointment (fee allowed is \$75 for an hour). It is within the Modest Means attorney's discretion whether to continue representation after the initial one-hour appointment. The other parties involved should have been determined and a conflict check should be conducted prior to this appointment. If while conducting this brief interview or after the attorney determines that the client is not in fact of modest means (makes over 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines) the attorney may inform the client of such and terminate the relationship. During this appointment, the attorney will first interview the client and screen the case for merit. If a potential client has a problem that does not merit legal assistance or falls outside of Project guidelines, the attorney should inform the client of this fact. Attorneys for the Modest Means Project have discretion whether to appear on behalf of clients in litigation of any kind.

VIII. COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Modest Means Project is a rebirth of the 1995 Project operating in Maricopa, (1998) Pima, and (1998) Yuma Counties through the efforts of the State Bar of Arizona Young Lawyers Division. The current Project pays tribute to those who inspired and led the way for the continuation of services to those who currently have no voice in our legal system. If you have any suggestions or comments regarding this program please contact Lara Slifko at Lara.Slifko@azflse.org.

Thank you for volunteering your time!

Federal Poverty Guidelines

2016 Federal Poverty Guidelines Monthly			
Family Size	125%	150%	250%
1	\$1,238	\$1,485	\$2,475
2	\$1,669	\$2,003	\$3,338
3	\$2,100	\$2,520	\$4,200
4	\$2,531	\$3,038	\$5,063
5	\$2,963	\$3,555	\$5,925
6	\$3,394	\$4,073	\$6,788
7	\$3,826	\$4,591	\$7,652
8	\$4,259	\$5,111	\$8,519

2016 Federal Poverty Guidelines Annually			
Family Size	125%	150%	250%
1	\$14,850	\$17,820	\$29,700
2	\$20,025	\$23,030	\$40,050
3	\$25,200	\$30,240	\$50,400
4	\$30,375	\$36,450	\$60,750
5	\$35,550	\$42,660	\$71,100
6	\$40,725	\$48,870	\$81,450
7	\$45,913	\$55,095	\$91,825
8	\$51,113	\$61,335	\$102,225

The Federal Poverty Guidelines are updated yearly. The above guidelines are to provide you with an example of a participant's income who is at 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Please be aware that this information may no longer be up to date and is just an example.