

LEGAL RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Navigating the COVID-19 Crisis



Empire State
Development

NEW YORK STATE

Start Small Think Big. Small business owners and nonprofit organizations can learn more about various financial assistance programs in New York State, and can get connected with lawyers or business advisors through Start Small Think Big. The website also provides free informational webinars about the COVID-19 crisis and how businesses can navigate the challenges brought by the pandemic. Please visit <https://www.startsmallthinkbig.org/covid19>.

Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. VLA provides pro bono legal services to low-income at-risk artists and all nonprofit arts organizations in every artistic discipline. VLA offers remote services and has implemented an expedited intake process for arts-related issues affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The organization assists with issues specifically connected to New York, New Jersey or Connecticut. For more information, please visit VLA's website at <https://vlany.org/>.

American Bar Association's Free Legal Answers. ABA hosts a virtual legal advice clinic allowing qualifying users to post their civil legal questions to their state's website. Attorney volunteers will provide legal information and advice to users nationwide via email. For more information or to see if you qualify, please visit <https://ny.freelegalanswers.org/>.

LawHelpNY.org. While LawHelpNY does not specifically focus on business-related legal issues, LawHelpNY provides free legal information on a variety of issues for New Yorkers who cannot afford an attorney, including helpful resources for employees related to COVID-19 and applying for New York State Unemployment Insurance benefits. The website also includes a legal directory and LiveHelp chatting service through which individuals can find free legal services programs in New York based on their specific legal issue. To see the full list of available resources, visit <https://www.lawhelpny.org/>.

Volunteers of Legal Service. The Volunteers of Legal Service have created a number of informational guides to help organizations throughout New York State identify and apply for financial assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. If small business owners are interested in receiving free legal advice, they can contact the Volunteers of Legal Services through the information listed on the website. To access these resources or find contact information, visit <https://volspobono.org/resourcesduringcovid19/>.

For more information, please visit esd.ny.gov

NEW YORK CITY SPECIFIC

New York City Bar Justice Center & Lawyers for Good Government’s COVID-19 Small Business Remote Legal Clinic. Through a nationwide collaboration of law firms and nonprofit organizations, this clinic seeks to provide guidance related to available federal, state and local programs offering grants and/or loans and telephone pro bono consultations to help small business owners dealing with legal issues resulting from diminished revenues or closures due to COVID-19. Clinics are being launched on a city-by-city basis across the country and, within New York State, currently limited to the New York City region. The NYC-specific component of the Lawyers for Good Government (L4GG) small business assistance plan is hosted by the City Bar Justice Center. For more information or to fill out an intake form, please visit <https://www.lawyersforgoodgovernment.org/covid-smallbusiness>.

Lawyers Alliance for New York. Lawyers Alliance provides legal assistance and information to assist nonprofits in New York City. Nonprofits may contact Lawyers Alliance for assistance through telephone consultations, emergency trainings and other outreach to help keep pace with the variety of legal issues caused by the COVID-19 crisis. This organization also continues to provide a number of resources for nonprofits related to COVID-19, including resources regarding insurance coverage considerations, board governance issues, and more. For contact information or to access these resources, please visit <https://lawyersalliance.org/coronavirus-information>.

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest—or NYPLI—offers a variety of services to help nonprofits navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. NYPLI’s Pro Bono Clearinghouse connects nonprofit organizations to free legal services and resources around New York City, including advice regarding the Paycheck Protection Program. Nonprofits can also access valuable information related to COVID-19 on the NYPLI’s website, covering a wide-range of topics such as effective remote work practices, grant opportunities, and the impact of recent federal legislation. To learn more, visit <https://nylpi.org/our-work/pro-bono-clearinghouse/coronavirus>.