

## Bankruptcy Court's Pro Bono Program in Contested Matters

If you are indigent and need legal representation to pursue or defend against a proceeding within a bankruptcy case, you may be eligible for free representation upon application to the Court. This program is available to both debtors and non-debtor parties. Contact the Clerk's Office at 202-354-3280 or visit the Court's website at [www.dcb.uscourts.gov](http://www.dcb.uscourts.gov) for the form used to request free representation.

*Examples of proceedings to which this program applies:*

- ◆ an adversary proceeding brought against the debtor to determine dischargeability of a particular debt
- ◆ an adversary proceeding to deny the debtor a discharge or to revoke a discharge
- ◆ an adversary proceeding to recover a judgment against an individual, such as a complaint for receiving property from the debtor for inadequate consideration or for receiving payment of a debt that gave the creditor preferential treatment in comparison to other creditors
- ◆ a motion by the debtor to avoid a lien that impairs the debtors' exemptions
- ◆ an objection to the debtor's objections
- ◆ a motion to hold a creditor in contempt for violating the automatic stay, co-debtor stay or discharge injunction
- ◆ an adversary proceeding to enjoin someone from undertaking certain acts in the future

*This program does not include pursuing or defending against a motion for relief from the automatic stay*

U.S. Bankruptcy Court  
for the District of Columbia

## Attorney Assistance in a Bankruptcy Case



**E. Barrett Prettyman Courthouse  
333 Constitution Avenue NW  
Room 1225  
Washington, DC 20001**

**(202) 354-3280**

**[www.dcb.uscourts.gov](http://www.dcb.uscourts.gov)**

Clerk's Office Hours

Monday-Friday: 9:00am - 4:00pm  
*(Except Federal Holidays)*

# DISCLAIMER

*Please Read Carefully*

*This pamphlet is strictly for assistance only. The Clerk's Office cannot advise or recommend who you should or should not employ and/or show preference to any particular institution, office, or law firm. You can review court files at the Clerk's Office in order to see how an attorney has handled other bankruptcy cases or the fees an attorney has charged in prior cases. Additionally, you're free to attend any public hearing that the court conducts in order to observe attorneys and/or court proceedings. The hearing schedule can be found online or at the Clerk's Office.*

## **\*LEGAL ADVICE\***

Only an attorney is authorized to give you legal advice regarding a bankruptcy case or proceeding. The Clerk's Office and the chambers staff of the court's judges cannot give you legal advice.

For example, they **cannot**...

- Help you complete forms
- Explain the meaning of a rule/statute
- Give interpretations of case law

## **\*DOCUMENT PREPARERS\***

"Bankruptcy Petition Preparers" or "Document Preparers" are not authorized to give debtors or other parties legal advice. A petition preparer's role is strictly limited to a typing service. For a minimal fee, a petition preparer will merely fill in the required forms using information a debtor provides without making suggestions about what papers are legally appropriate or what information is legally appropriate to include on the papers.

# The Bankruptcy Assistance Center (BAC)



The *Bankruptcy Assistance Center* (BAC) is a program that provides competent bankruptcy legal advice if you have no attorney. A volunteer panel of attorneys will be available to answer your questions, free of charge, on the first and third Friday of each month on a first come, first served basis from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM in Room 1207 of the E. Barrett Prettyman United States Courthouse. If it is determined that further legal aid is required, then additional resources for obtaining counsel will be provided.



## Finding An Attorney

Visit the D.C. Bar website at [www.dcbbar.org](http://www.dcbbar.org) for information on how to find and work with an attorney. You may also contact the *Lawyer Referral Service* at (202) 296-7845.

## Other Institutions Offering Free Assistance

**Law Help** - [www.lawhelp.org/DC](http://www.lawhelp.org/DC) - Provides general legal information about bankruptcy law in the District of Columbia. It also offers the most current list of legal aid organizations that provide free bankruptcy services to eligible D.C. residents.

**Advice & Referral Clinic, D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program** - On the second Saturday of every month from 10:00am until noon, lawyers will provide information and advice about bankruptcy law in the District of Columbia, and will refer eligible D.C. residents for representation in filing Chapter 7 petitions. The Clinics are located at Bread for the City, NW Center at 1525 7th Street, NW and at Bread for the City, SE Center, 1640 Good Hope Road, SE.

**American University - General Practice Clinic** - This clinic is available to a limited number of D.C. residents during the fall and spring semesters only and may offer free representation regarding bankruptcy.  
Phone: (202) 274-4144

**The Archdiocesan Legal Network of Catholic Charities** - This institution may place you with an attorney who will represent you for free regarding debt collection disputes or filing a bankruptcy petition. Family income should be at or below 200% of the federal poverty level in order to qualify for free assistance.  
Phone: (202) 350-4305 or (202) 772-4325 (*Español*)

**Columbus Community Legal Services - Catholic University General Practice Clinic** - This clinic is available during the fall and spring semesters only and may offer free representation regarding bankruptcy.  
Phone: (202) 319-6788

**Legal Counsel for the Elderly** - Free services are provided to District residents 60 years and older through a variety of mechanisms including hotline advice, staff attorneys, the Pro Bono Project (which refers cases to private and government attorneys), and Self-Help Offices at various outreach sites.  
Phone: (202) 434-2120

**Legal Information Helpline** - District of Columbia - This 24 hour automated helpline offers general legal information and referral information about legal aid organizations that provide free services to D.C. residents interested in filing bankruptcy.  
Phone: (202) 626-3499