

What can USLS do for me?

What is USLS?

The University Student Legal Service (USLS) is a **prepaid group legal plan** available to students at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus. Established in 1976, its two primary purposes are:

- to help students deal with legal problems by giving advice and providing representation;
- to educate students about their legal rights and responsibilities in an increasingly complex world.

The USLS legal staff members are experienced professionals who are particularly sensitive to the needs of student clients. The staff includes a director and an associate director (both of whom are attorneys), four staff attorneys, two legal assistants, law clerks, and administrative and clerical support staff.

Eligibility

Students who are currently enrolled in classes and paying the student services fee at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, are eligible to use USLS. Under limited circumstances, some students may be eligible for services between semesters.

All persons have equal access to USLS services, programs, and facilities without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Any individual needing special accommodations should call us at 612-624-1001.

Costs

Because USLS is supported by a portion of the student services fee, many USLS benefits and services are available to eligible students free of charge. We presently charge nominal fees for some services. Note that such fees must be paid before service is given. In addition to USLS fees, clients are responsible for paying fines, penalties and court costs such as filing fees.

USLS services

USLS provides the following services:

LANDLORD-TENANT	security deposits, evictions, lease interpretation, repairs
CONSUMER	automobile purchases and repairs, credit problems, warranty questions, contracts, student loans
COLLECTION	collection of judgments through garnishment
WILLS AND TRUSTS	preparation of simple wills and trusts, living wills
FAMILY LAW	divorce, paternity, domestic abuse, custody, support, visitation, adoption
IMMIGRATION	change of status, asylum
MISDEMEANOR CRIMINAL	defense for misdemeanor criminal, misdemeanor and aggravated traffic matters, expungements
MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS	name change, notary public, document verification, power of attorney

Before providing representation, USLS staff must first review and approve any case involving the following

- appeals for Conciliation Court to District Court;
- appeals to the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court;
- administrative hearings and arbitration proceedings
- employment grievances; and
- lawsuits that do not fall within the jurisdiction of Conciliation Court.

Please call to determine if USLS will be able to assist you with your particular situation. We may schedule an appointment to obtain more information before determining eligibility.

Limitations

USLS may provide only limited services in certain matters. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- petty misdemeanors (advice only);
- Conciliation Court matters (no courtroom representation);
- initiation of litigation or prolonged legal matters unlikely to be resolved while a student is still eligible (advice only);
- matters that may unduly monopolize program resources to the disadvantage of other eligible students (services generally limited to referrals);
- representation of student organizations (services generally limited to programs); and
- court representation in counties other than Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington (advice only).

Exclusions

USLS coverage excludes the following matters:

- actions against the University of Minnesota, its Regents, employees, or agents if the claim arises out of the performance of duties as officers or employees at the University of Minnesota;
- matters that are prohibited by the ethical standards and codes governing attorneys;
- lawsuits customarily handled as contingent fee cases;
- lawsuits to collect attorneys' fees;
- lawsuits where other insurance coverage is available;
- business, commercial, or income-generating matters;
- preexisting legal matters;
- matters in which another attorney has begun representation; and
- legal matters over which Minnesota courts do not have or would not have jurisdiction.

Confidentiality

Client information is strictly confidential. Each member of the USLS staff is obligated to protect confidences and secrets of clients according to the ethical standards for attorneys.

How to use USLS

Make an appointment for advice/representation

Call our office at 612-624-1001 to make an appointment for advice or representation (*see services listing inside brochure*). After determining that you are eligible, our receptionist will make an appointment with an attorney or legal assistant at the earliest possible time. Legal advice cannot be given over the phone. At the time of your first appointment, you must be paying the student services fee.

If we are unable to handle a particular legal matter, we may be able to refer you to another service or agency that can assist you.

Check out our legal education programs

USLS strives to educate students about their rights and responsibilities in an increasingly complex legal world. To this end, the staff conducts lectures, workshops, and other presentations each year. Also, a variety of publications are available to assist in understanding the law.

Groups or individuals who would like to have USLS conduct or assist with law-related education or programs should call and ask to speak with the director or associate director.

Participate in our mentor program

USLS arranges opportunities for students to meet and observe people in law and law-related professions through visits to places such as District Courts, the Minnesota Supreme Court and the FBI headquarters. If you are interested, just call USLS (612-624-1001) and ask to receive notice of mentor activities. We will notify you of events and you may attend if the event is of interest to you.

Take advantage of our walk-in notary service

USLS staff will notarize signatures and certify documents as true and correct copies of originals at no charge. No appointment is necessary unless the request is for services that will take extensive time.

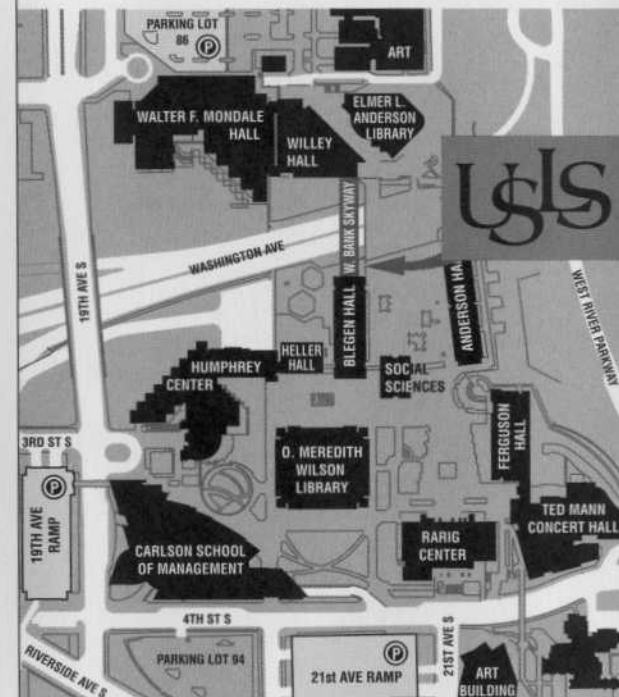
USLS Board of Directors

USLS has a student-run Board of Directors which determines USLS policy and ensures responsiveness to student needs.

Changes in Policy Guidelines

The USLS Board of Directors reserves the right to amend USLS policies and services guidelines to reflect changing program resources and student needs.

USLS is located in the West Bank Skyway, between Blegen Hall and Willey Hall.



Office hours: 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday.

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This publication can be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities. Direct requests to Amanda Keith, USLS, 160 West Bank Skyway, Minneapolis, MN 55455, 612-624-1001.

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