

## The Law - Divorce Resources

### *Finding a Lawyer*

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You may wish to speak with a lawyer before you start the divorce process. A lawyer who knows New York's divorce laws can give you legal advice that can help you to better understand your rights and responsibilities. You can find a lawyer through your [local bar association](#), or if you are eligible, through free legal service programs. Before you sign a retainer agreement with a lawyer, you should review the [Statement of Client's Rights and Responsibilities](#). It is a form that deals with the attorney-client relationship.

If you do not have a lawyer, and you think your [spouse](#) will agree to the divorce, you may want to use the Court's free [Uncontested Divorce Forms Packet](#) and [Instructions](#).

If you have parenting or economic issues to work out with your spouse and you want to stay out of court, you may want to consider forms of [alternative dispute resolution \(ADR\)](#) such as [Collaborative Family Law](#) or [Divorce Mediation](#). These processes can improve communication and reduce the cost, stress, and trauma of divorce.

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The following links may help you find legal representation and advice:

- [Collaborative Family Law Center](#) (court-sponsored)
  - Links qualifying couples in New York City's five boroughs to collaborative divorce professionals.
  - Links to private [collaborative divorce professional organizations](#) throughout New York State.
  - Both spouses must agree to participate.
  - **Note:** Inappropriate for cases involving [domestic violence](#), child abuse, or where [one spouse cannot locate the other](#).
- [CourtHelp's Lawyer Locator](#)
  - Links to [local bar associations](#) that can provide referrals to private lawyers.
  - Links to [free legal services](#).
  - Links to [legal subjects](#) and free [law libraries](#).
- [LawHelp.org](#)

Links to free legal assistance in New York, information about legal rights, and more.
- **Volunteer Attorney Program (court-sponsored)**

Volunteer attorneys provide free, brief legal advice in some of the court's Help Centers. For more information, send an email to: [volunteerattorneys@nycourts.gov](mailto:volunteerattorneys@nycourts.gov).

**Note:** Court-sponsored volunteer attorney programs are not available in all locations.

