



## Hello! Here is your Winter Edition of Montana Legal Services Association's Client Newsletter!

This letter was created with you in mind.

Every few months MLSA will send information that may be relevant to you and your families via email. You are receiving this newsletter because you asked to be added to MLSA's newsletter list. You can unsubscribe at anytime.

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### Education Supports for Unhoused Youth

Federal education laws have been passed to help youth who are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Some of the supports include:

- Fee waivers for the SAT/ACT;
- An initial deposit for tuition or dorm;
- Housing during school breaks; and
- Help with basic needs like clothing, food, and supplies for school.

All Montana high schools and the majority of university and college campuses have built-in supports. Learn more in our article [Accessing Higher Education without Parental Support](#).

If you know someone who has graduated high school within the last two years and is experiencing homelessness, encourage them to check out [Dawson Promise](#) at Dawson Community College in Glendive, MT. Dawson Promise will help students obtain a two-year degree without debt. They help their students transition to college by supporting them with housing, life skills, and community involvement.

### Planning Ahead Resources

Our website has an entire section filled with resources to help you get started on estate planning, including writing a will, Power of Attorney, and more.

## DID YOU KNOW...

we have forms to help you plan for the future?



In our article titled [Life Planning Documents](#), you can learn about how to plan for your needs in case you become unable to take care of yourself or your property.

Our article [Acting As Someone's Agent](#) has information about Power of Attorney documents. You can learn about situations in which you may want to make someone else your agent for financial matters or communicating with medical providers.

Check out all the [Planning Ahead](#) resources on MontanaLawHelp.org. If you need more help, MLSA assists senior Montanans (60 years +) with civil legal issues.

## Need Free Tax Help?

Here are two organizations that may be able to help:

1. Tax Help Montana (THM) offers free preparation and filing services for low to moderate income taxpayers and seniors (age 60+). Find THM sites across the state by visiting the [Rural Dynamics website](#) and clicking the purple "Our 2024 Tax Sites" button.

2. [MyFreeTaxes](#) is an online tax filing program that helps people file their federal and state taxes for free. The United Way provides MyFreeTaxes in partnership with the IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program to help filers prepare their tax returns on their own or have their return prepared for them.

Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) provides legal tips to help Montanans better understand their rights and find free resources. Follow us for more helpful information!

## Eviction Assistance Updates

Due to limited funding for our Montana Eviction Intervention Program (MEIP), past rent and future rent payments are not guaranteed for all who apply.

If you have received a written notice for lease termination or a past due rent notice, and you would like to talk with an attorney to understand their rights, you can apply to MLSA for legal advice. While we do occasionally help with rent, we cannot guarantee rent payments. A limited number of payments are available only for clients with certain legal issues.

## Please share your opinion with us!

Have you used a form from [MontanaLawHelp.org](http://MontanaLawHelp.org) or [courts.mt.gov](http://courts.mt.gov) or stopped by a Self-Help Law Center?

If so, please take a few minutes to tell us about your experience by [taking this survey](#). Your answers will be anonymous and your feedback will help us improve those resources so that all Montanans have access to legal resources regardless of their ability to pay.

## Want helpful info more often? Follow us on social media!



You can find us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). We regularly post up to date information about what we are up to and important news for our community!

## How to Apply to MLSA

MLSA provides legal information, advice, and legal representation free of charge to low income Montanans with civil legal needs. Some examples of what we help with include:

- Housing Rights;
- Money Problems;
- Domestic Violence; and more.

The best way to find out if we can help is to apply. Visit [MontanaLawHelp.org](http://MontanaLawHelp.org) for the different ways you can apply for legal help.

**If you have a deadline, please make sure note it in your application.**

## What to Do While You Wait

We do our best to process applications as quickly as possible, but we have been experiencing a very high application volume recently. While you wait for MLSA to process your application, there are things you can do to help yourself:

- Visit [MontanaLawHelp.org](http://MontanaLawHelp.org) for free legal forms and information.
- Go to [AskKarla.org](http://AskKarla.org) to ask a volunteer attorney a civil legal question by email. The typical response rate is 10 days.

- Contact your [nearest Self Help Law Center](#) for free help with legal forms and information. You can call ahead to find out how the centers can help over the phone.
- To check the status of an application, call our Helpline at 1-800-666-6899, Tuesday through Thursday, 9am to 1pm.

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