

The New York City Veteran's Legal Resource Guide



Veterans Assistance Project

**CITY BAR
JUSTICE
CENTER**

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The information and resources provided by this guide are solely for the convenience and assistance of its readers. This guide does not constitute legal advice. Readers seeking legal advice should consult an appropriately qualified attorney. The City Bar Justice Center does not endorse, and makes no representations or warranties regarding the information or services offered through or by the resources listed in this guide.

INTRODUCTION

The City Bar Justice Center's mission is to increase access to justice by leveraging the resources of the New York City legal community. Drawing upon our relationship with the New York City Bar, the Justice Center provides legal assistance to those in need; mobilizes lawyers, firms, corporate legal departments, and other legal institutions to provide pro bono legal services; educates the public on legal issues; fosters strategic relationships; and impacts public policy.

The City Bar Justice Center's projects are focused on three areas: Economic Justice, Immigrant Justice, and Access to Justice Innovations. The projects, complemented by a high-volume free legal hotline and a pro bono development clearinghouse, address the unmet need for legal services in New York City.

The Veterans Assistance Project is one of the Justice Center's newest initiatives. The Project launched in the fall of 2007 to provide free legal assistance to New York City veterans seeking service-connected disability benefits before the Department of Veterans Affairs. Since its inception, the Project has provided assistance to veterans of all ages and periods of war, including men and women returning home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, veterans of the First Gulf War who experience multi-symptom chronic illness, and veterans of the Vietnam War suffering from illnesses associated with exposure to Agent Orange.

The Veterans Assistance Project connects veterans with volunteer attorneys the Justice Center has trained to handle veterans' benefit cases. To participate, veterans contact the project by phone or email, and a brief intake interview is performed. The veteran is then given an appointment for the next legal clinic, which is hosted approximately once a month at the New York City Bar Association. At these legal clinics, a trained volunteer attorney interviews each veteran in more detail about his or her case. The Project's volunteer attorneys then work with each individual to help him or her apply for benefits for the first time, to increase a disability rating or to appeal the denial of a claim. Other issues handled have included cases of overpayment, survivor's benefits, and terminated or reduced benefits.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Since its inception, the Veterans Assistance Project has provided referrals to hundreds of veterans who have called seeking assistance that is outside the scope of our Project. While listening carefully to their concerns, we realized that low income New York City veterans do not have an inclusive source of information to aid them in their search for assistance. As a result, this guide was created to provide eligible low income veterans with a list of resources throughout New York City ranging from legal service providers to social service organizations.

The specific issues addressed in this guide are presented in order of the most frequently requested areas of assistance. Although this guide contains resources specifically for veterans, it also contains a number of organizations, informational resources, and service providers that are helpful to low income New York City residents in general.

A copy of this guide can be found on the City Bar Justice Center's website (www.citybarjusticecenter.org), the Veterans Assistance Project's Facebook page, and on LawHelp.org (www.lawhelp.org/NY). We hope that you find it helpful.

We acknowledge the generous support of The New York Community Trust in the creation of this guide.

Carol Bockner
Project Director
Veterans Assistance Project

VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROJECT ON FACEBOOK

Please visit the Veterans Assistance Project's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/veteransassistanceproject to find more information on the Project, to interact with fellow veterans or to reach out to fellow veterans' advocates. Our page has helpful links for veterans, various veterans' event postings, and many friends that are all concerned about veterans' issues.

CITY BAR JUSTICE CENTER'S LEGAL HOTLINE

The City Bar Justice Center's Legal Hotline provides simple legal advice, brief services, and referrals for civil legal issues such as consumer law and landlord-tenant disputes, but does not provide legal representation. The Legal Hotline may be reached at 212-626-7383.

LAWHELP.ORG

For those with internet access, [.lawhelp.org/](http://lawhelp.org/) or [.AyudaLegalNY](http://AyudaLegalNY.com) can be a great resource. LawHelp provides free legal aid and information about legal rights in a number of areas including, consequences of criminal charges, housing, family and juvenile issues, public benefits, health, education, immigration, workers' rights, taxes, veterans and military, and senior's issues.

VA DISABILITY BENEFITS

Service-Connected Disability Benefits, Pension, and Survivor's Benefits

Veterans are entitled to monthly compensation from the VA for service-connected injuries and illnesses. Certain veterans are also entitled to non-service-connected pension benefits from the VA and the survivors of some veterans may be entitled to VA survivors benefits. Filing claims for these benefits can be made easier with pro bono legal assistance.

1. City Bar Justice Center - Veterans Assistance Project

- The Veterans Assistance Project is designed to meet the needs of the 254,000 veterans living in New York City by providing pro bono assistance with disability benefits claims before the New York City Regional Office of Veterans Affairs. With the guidance of Justice Center staff, volunteer lawyers help veterans file claims and appeals with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Assistance ranges from locating service documents and medical records to preparing and filing claims and directly representing veterans at hearings. The Veterans Assistance Project hosts free legal clinics once a month. Appointments are required. Veterans should call to schedule an appointment.
 - Tel: 212-382-4722
 - Toll-free: 877-564-3383

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Many veterans face complicated housing issues such as eviction proceedings, landlord-tenant disputes, difficulties related to public housing, and difficulties related to a disability. In recognition of these challenges, a number of organizations offer advocacy and legal representation to address such matters.

1. Lawyer for a Day – Housing Assistance

- The Lawyer for a Day Housing Assistance program consists of volunteer attorneys that provide limited representation for unrepresented litigants in their nonpayment cases in the NYC Housing Court's Resolution Part. To get a volunteer attorney, litigants should consult the Help Center when they arrive at Housing Court.

2. A Tenant's Guide to New York City Housing Court

- This is a guide for tenants to the Housing Part of the Civil Court of the City of New York. It can assist tenants in understanding the kinds of lawsuits a landlord can start against a tenant and what a tenant can do to defend against such suits. Specific types of cases include lawsuits to collect rent, evict tenants, and enforce rights regarding housing conditions. This guide is a collaborative effort between the Association of the Bar of the City of New York Housing Court Public Service Projects Committee and the Civil Court of the City of New York.
 - <http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/housing/pdfs/tenantsguide.pdf>

3. The Legal Aid Society – Housing Assistance

- The Legal Aid Society's housing practice assists clients by preventing evictions, representing tenant groups, getting housing safety violations corrected, obtaining and preserving housing subsidies, challenging rent increases and overcharges, obtaining rent increase exemptions for seniors and disabled persons, and preventing foreclosures.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
 - **Manhattan Housing Court Office**
 - Tel: 212-766-2450
 - **Homeless Family Rights Hotline**
 - Tel: 1-800-649-9125
- *Bronx Locations*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
 - Homeless Family Rights Hotline: 1-800-649-9125
 - **Bronx Housing Court Office**
 - Tel: 718-681-8712

- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
 - Homeless Family Rights Hotline: 1-800-649-9125
 - **Brooklyn Housing Court Office**
 - Tel: 718-643-4819
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
 - Homeless Family Rights Hotline: 1-800-649-9125
 - **Queens Housing Court Office**
 - Tel: 718-739-6272
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677
 - Homeless Family Rights Hotline: 1-800-649-9125

4. Legal Services NYC – Housing Assistance

- Legal Services NYC represents clients with housing issues in courts and administrative tribunals and provides advice or referrals when representation is not possible.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Lower Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 646-442-3100
 - **Upper Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 212-348-7449
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services - Housing Unit Office**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services - Housing Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500
 - Housing Hotline- 718-237-5559
 - **Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A**
 - Tel: 718-487-2300
 - **Bushwick Office**
 - Tel: 718-487-0800
 - **East Brooklyn Office**
 - Tel: 718-487-1300
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Legal Services**
 - Jamaica Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Long Island City Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200

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- 5. Urban Justice Center – Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project
 - The Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project’s (“HOPP”) representation of individuals focuses on the enforcement of due process rights in the Cash Assistance, Food Stamp, and Medicaid programs. HOPP operates seven free and easily accessible walk-in legal clinics in food pantries and soup kitchens throughout New York City. HOPP also helps public assistance recipients seeking access to education programs through their legal clinic at Hostos Community College.
 - Tel: 646-602-5600
- 6. MFY Legal Services, Inc. – Neighborhood Preservation/East Side SRO Law Project
 - The Neighborhood Preservation Project works to preserve housing in MFY’s traditional neighborhoods, including Chinatown, the Lower East Side, and East Harlem. MFY assists by organizing tenants, providing legal support for local housing groups, and engaging in administrative advocacy, legislative lobbying, and affirmative and defensive litigation. MFY seeks to help households maintain affordable housing by providing advice, counsel and full representation at administrative and court hearings. In addition, MFY works to preserve traditional housing models for low-income and marginalized populations. MFY’s East Side SRO Law Project has defended the rights of residents of single room occupancy housing for 20 years by representing tenants in eviction proceedings, preventing the illegal conversion of SRO units, helping tenants to stabilize their income and benefits, and assisting city agencies in monitoring SRO compliance with existing law.
 - Tel: 212-417-3700
- 7. Eviction Intervention Services, Inc.
 - Eviction Intervention Services (“EIS”) serves low-to-moderate income residents on Manhattan’s East Side through legal and social advocacy and tenant education. EIS only focuses on housing groups on Manhattan's Upper East Side.
 - Tel: 212-308-2210
- 8. CAMBA – Homelessness Prevention Project
 - CAMBA’s Homelessness Prevention Project is targeted at low-income residents of Brooklyn who are at risk of losing their housing for a number of different reasons including, eviction, mental illness, substance abuse, difficulties related to HIV/AIDS, and difficulties related to transitioning from a shelter into stable housing. CAMBA helps clients stabilize their housing and financial situations by providing benefits, advocacy and referrals to legal services, case management, eviction prevention, comprehensive medical and mental healthcare, and temporary emergency housing.
 - Tel: 718-287-2600
- 9. Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation – Housing Legal Services
 - Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation’s attorneys provide full legal representation to individuals and tenant associations across Washington Heights and Inwood in Housing Court.
 - Tel: 212-822-8300

HOMELESSNESS ASSISTANCE

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 131,000 veterans are homeless on any given night. In addition, approximately 40% of homeless men in the U.S. are veterans according to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans. Homelessness is obviously a very serious challenge for many veterans.

There are a number of organizations that provide practical assistance for the homeless such as hot meals, showers, laundry facilities, clothing, medical care, recreational space, employment referrals, and other social services. Certain service providers focus on family needs, as well as the needs of single adults.

1. New York City Department of Homelessness Services

- The Department of Homelessness Services (“DHS”) prevents homelessness wherever possible and provides short-term emergency shelter and re-housing support whenever needed.
 - **Office of Client Advocacy**
 - The Office of Client Advocacy provides crisis intervention for people at risk of becoming homeless, assists clients to overcome the barriers to obtaining permanent housing, negotiates with other agencies and providers on behalf of clients, and helps mediate conflicts between shelter staff and clients.
 - Tel: 1-800-994-6494
 - **Drop in Centers**
 - DHS sponsors six Drop-In Centers located throughout the City that provide hot meals, showers, laundry facilities, clothing, medical care, recreational space, employment referrals and other social services. Staff also can help people find a safe and secure place to sleep.
 - Tel: Call 311 to find the most appropriate Drop in Center
 - **Shelter System**
 - DHS operates a comprehensive shelter services system for single adults with programs to assist individuals in addressing and overcoming their homelessness and securing and sustaining permanent housing. To enter a shelter, single homeless men or women who are 18 and older first must go to an intake facility. If possible, a person should bring the following identification to the intake: any form of ID with a picture and proof of age such as a driver's license, state-issued ID, passport or visa, welfare card, green card, Social Security card, Medicaid card, if available, and if working, their most recent pay stub.
 - Tel: Call 311 to receive directions and instructions regarding Shelter Intake Centers.

2. New York State Veterans Homes

○ **St. Albans Home - Queens**

- The New York State Veterans' Home at St. Albans is a 250-bed healthcare facility owned and operated by the New York State Department of Health for Veterans and their dependents.
 - Tel 1: 718-990-0300
 - Tel 2: 718-481-6994

○ **Long Island State Veterans Home**

- The Long Island State Veterans Home provides high quality and compassionate health care services for veterans and their families.
 - Tel: 631-444-8387 (VETS)

3. Borden Avenue Veterans Residence of the Salvation Army

- The Borden Avenue Veterans Residence is a single room occupancy facility that provides short-term housing and supportive services in contrast to the temporary housing assistance offered by a shelter. The purpose of this housing model is to assist homeless veterans reintegrate into the community and become self-sufficient by providing intensive case management services and employment services in a short-term setting.
 - Tel: 718-784-5690

4. New Era Veterans, Inc.

- New Era Veterans, Inc. operates a single room occupancy facility that provides a full range of social services specifically for veterans.
 - Tel: 718-904-7036

5. National Coalition for Homeless Veterans

- The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans is the resource and technical assistance center for a national network of community-based service providers and local, state and federal agencies that provide emergency and supportive housing, food, health services, job training and placement assistance, and legal aid and case management support for hundreds of thousands of homeless veterans each year.
 - Tel: 1-800-838-4357

6. Coalition for the Homeless – Crisis Intervention Program

- The Coalition's Crisis Intervention Program (“CIP”) provides same-day, walk-in help for New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; no appointment is necessary. CIP counselors and advocates are available five days each week to provide assistance and advocacy with problems at shelters and intake centers. CIP is limited in the daily number of clients served and help is on a first-come, first serve basis located at 129 Fulton St. in lower Manhattan. Those in need of help should arrive before 9 a.m. to sign up.
 - Tel: 212-776-2012

7. The Partnership for the Homeless

- The Partnership for the Homeless focuses on three major client constituencies: families with young children, older adults, and persons affected by HIV/AIDS, while they are living in temporary housing, leaving shelter for permanent housing, or at risk of losing their homes. The Partnership of the Homeless' goal is to return clients to housing within a 90-day timeframe, and then work closely with clients on an integrated plan of supportive services across multiple points of intervention including: access to employment, job training, and educational opportunities; links to quality healthcare in their new community; ongoing supportive services from multi-disciplinary teams; and making community connections in order to build social capital.
 - Tel: 212-645-3444

8. The Legal Aid Society – Homeless Rights Project

- The Homeless Rights Project protects and enforces the legal rights of homeless families and individuals in New York City. The Project does this through a combination of: litigation on behalf of groups of clients, direct client representation, operation of a daily, toll-free hotline, and regular outreach in emergency housing facilities.
 - Homelessness Rights Hotline: 1-800-649-9125
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
- *Brooklyn Location*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677

PUBLIC BENEFITS ASSISTANCE

Veterans, like many others, often need assistance in obtaining the public benefits they rightfully deserve. These benefits may include Medicare or Medicaid coverage, Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability, food stamps, and public assistance.

Veterans may be entitled to disability benefits from the VA as well as Social Security Disability benefits. Veterans should be sure to ask if they are about to receive both benefits at the same time to ensure that there is no conflict. Various organizations throughout New York City help low-income individuals sort through these often complex issues.

1. Access NYC – Public Benefits Screening Service

- Access NYC is a free online service that identifies, screens, and accepts applications for over 30 City, State and Federal human service benefit programs including food stamps, public assistance, and Medicaid.
 - Online: <https://a858-ihss.nyc.gov/>

2. New York City Human Resources Administration

- The New York City Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services (HRA/DSS) provides temporary help to individuals and families with social service and economic needs to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. HRA serves more than 3 million New Yorkers through essential and diverse programs and services that include: temporary cash assistance, public health insurance, food stamps, home care for seniors and the disabled, child care, adult protective services, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS support services, and child support enforcement.
 - Tel: 1-212-971-0626
 - HRA Info-line: 1-877-472-8411
 - Online: www.nyc.gov/html/hra/html/home/home.shtml

3. The U.S. Social Security Administration

- The U.S. Social Security Administration's official website is an appropriate resource to apply for or check the status of an application for retirement benefits, survivors benefits, disability, Supplemental Security Income, and Medicare. In addition, the website provides a wealth of information concerning these benefits.
 - Online: www.ssa.gov

4. Urban Justice Center – Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project

- The Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project's ("HOPP") representation of individuals focuses on the enforcement of due process rights in the Cash Assistance, Food Stamp, and Medicaid programs. HOPP operates seven free and easily accessible walk-in legal clinics in food pantries and soup kitchens throughout New York City. HOPP also helps public assistance recipients seeking access to education programs through their legal clinic at Hostos Community College.

- Tel: 646-602-5600

5. The Legal Aid Society – Government Benefits Assistance

- The Government Benefits practice assists clients in obtaining and maintaining government benefits. Located in all five boroughs of New York City, the practice provides information and assistance in benefits-related areas such as: public assistance, food stamps, Medicaid, housing allowances, workfare, and immigrant rights to public benefits
- *Manhattan Location*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
- *Brooklyn Location*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677

6. Legal Services NYC – Public Benefits Assistance

- Legal Services NYC represents clients seeking public benefits in courts and administrative tribunals and provides advice or referral information when representation is not possible.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Legal Services NYC - Manhattan Public Benefits Assistance**
 - Lower Manhattan Office
 - Tel: 646-442-3100
 - Upper Manhattan Office
 - Tel: 212-348-7449
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services - Public Benefits Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700

- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services - SSI/Disability Rights**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500
 - SSI/Disability Rights Hotline: 718-237-5562
 - **Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A - Public Benefits Assistance**
 - Shriver Tyler MacCrate Center for Justice
 - Tel: 718-487-2300
 - **Bushwick Office**
 - Tel: 718-487-0800
 - **East Brooklyn Office**
 - Tel: 718-487-1300
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Legal Services - SSI/Disability Assistance**
 - Jamaica Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Long Island City Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Public Assistance Hotline: 347-592-2172
 - Food Stamps Hotline: 347-592-2174
 - SSI/Social Security Hotline: 347-592-2175
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Legal Services - Public Benefits Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-233-6480

7. New York Legal Assistance Group – Public Benefits Assistance

- The attorneys, paralegals, and volunteer case handlers at the New York Legal Assistance Group secure entitlements including food stamps, home care, Medicaid, SSI, and other vital government support services for eligible, low income individuals.
 - Tel: 212-613-5000 (Initial Phone Intake Required)

8. Center for Disability Advocacy Rights

- The Center for Disability Advocacy Rights (“CEDAR”) provides legal services to some of New York City's most vulnerable residents including, impoverished people with disabilities, seniors, children, immigrants, and people with mental illness. CEDAR assists clients access public benefits and available services to meet basic needs such as income, food, health care, home care, and housing.
 - Tel: 212-979-0505

DEBT/CONSUMER ASSISTANCE

In light of the recent economy, many individuals face debt obligations for a wide variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include unpaid credit cards, bills, loans, and mortgages. In addition, fraudulent credit card charges continue to present a unique challenge for those attempting to correct their record. These organizations offer their services to assist with such matters. **For assistance with bankruptcy issues, please see our Bankruptcy Assistance section beginning on page 41.**

1. Civil Legal Advice Resource Office Projects

- **Bronx Supreme Court CLARO**
 - The Bronx Civil Legal Advice Resource Office provides limited legal advice to unrepresented debtor-defendants in New York City Civil Court.
 - Tel: 212-636-7671
- **Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program CLARO**
 - The Brooklyn Bar Association operates a program in partnership with Brooklyn Law School to provide assistance to pro se debtors being sued in consumer debt matters through the Civil Legal Advice and Resource Office every Thursday from 2:30-4:30 p.m. and 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Kings County Civil Court in downtown Brooklyn.
 - Tel: 718 624 3894
- **Queens County Bar Association CLARO**
 - The Queens CLARO provides limited legal advice to unrepresented debtor-defendants in New York City Civil Court.
 - Tel: 718 291-4500

2. Lawyer for a Day – Consumer Debt Assistance

- The Lawyer for a Day Consumer Debt Assistance Program assigns a volunteer attorney to unrepresented litigants in Manhattan and Brooklyn. The volunteer attorney will assist the litigant in vacating default judgments against them both during settlement negotiations and in court. The representation provided by this program begins and ends on the same day. To get a volunteer lawyer, litigants should consult the Help Center when they arrive at the court.

3. Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project – Consumer Assistance Project

- NEDAP's Consumer Law Project employs multiple strategies to combat high-cost discriminatory financial practices in New York City. Through the project, NEDAP provides free legal advice on a wide array of consumer finance issues, produces self-help and know-your-rights materials, advocates for systemic reform, and builds the capacity of legal services and community-based organizations.
 - Tel: 212-680-5100
 - Hotline Number: 212-925-4929

4. The Legal Aid Society – Consumer Assistance

- The Legal Aid Society's Civil Practice Program works to improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers by helping vulnerable families and individuals with consumer law issues through representation and advice.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
- *Brooklyn Location*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677

5. Legal Services NYC – Consumer Assistance Projects

- Legal Services NYC assists low-income individuals with consumer matters through representation and advice by stopping unlawful debt collection practices, overcoming illegal sale contracts or warranties, and preventing or overcoming utility terminations.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Lower Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 646-442-3100
 - **Upper Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 212-348-7449
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700
- *Brooklyn Locations:*
 - **Bedford Stuyvesant Office**
 - Tel: 718-636-1155
 - **Downtown Brooklyn Office**
 - Tel: 718-852-8888
 - **Brighton Office**
 - Tel: 718-852-8888
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500

6. MFY Legal Services, Inc. – Consumer Rights Project

- MFY's Consumer Rights Project provides advice, counsel, education, and representation to low-income individuals on a range of consumer issues including, debt, identity theft, and financial exploitation. The project prioritizes providing direct services to seniors and people with disabilities.
 - Tel: 212-417-3700

7. The Financial Clinic

- The Financial Clinic provides clients with legal support and financial counseling through: resolution of financial crises with legal and advocacy services; financial coaching and action plans that reduce debt, improve credit, build assets, and realize financial goals; year-round tax advice and preparation services; and connection to community-based financial products and services.
 - Tel: 646-810-4050

IMMIGRATION ASSISTANCE

Although veterans may require a large spectrum of immigration assistance, citizenship remains a particularly important issue. Veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces that are interested in becoming U.S. citizens may be eligible to apply for citizenship under special provisions provided for in the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”). Under section 328 of the INA, someone can qualify for naturalization who has served in the Armed Forces for a total of at least one year, and does not have to comply with the five year continuous residence requirement, the physical presence requirements, nor with the three month requirement of living in the state or district in which he or she applies for naturalization. Generally, service in the U.S. Armed Forces means service in one of the following branches: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, certain Reserve components of the National Guard, and Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve.

Besides citizenship issues, there are numerous organizations with special project groups to assist those in need of other immigration related issues including domestic violence, human trafficking, victims of violent or gender based crimes, green card and work permit renewals, refugee travel documents, asylum-related benefits such as employment authorization, and family based immigration petitions.

1. New York Immigration Coalition – Immigration Hotline for NYC

- The New York Immigration Coalition (“NYIC”) is the central policy and advocacy organization that provides informational resources for immigrants and refugees.
 - **Immigration Hotline:** 1-800-566-7636
 - Tel: 212-627-2227

2. City Bar Justice Center

- Immigration Projects of the City Bar Justice Center
 - **Immigration Outreach Project**
 - The Immigration Outreach Project is a collaborative effort among community-based organizations including, the South Queens Boys and Girls Club, Children’s Aid Society, and The Legal Aid Society. The project organizes legal clinics, presentations, and workshops with volunteer immigration attorneys to provide information about immigrant rights and options, as well as assistance in the preparation of naturalization applications.
 - Tel: 212-382-6710
 - **Refugee Assistance Project**
 - The Refugee Assistance Project represents individuals who have suffered torture and other forms of persecution in their home countries and who are seeking asylum in the United States. The project also assists with filing relative petitions and obtaining asylum-related benefits such as employment authorization, refugee travel documents, and green cards.

- Tel: 212-382-6626

- **Immigrant Women and Children Project**

- The Immigrant Women and Children Project assists survivors of violence, abuse, and human trafficking to legalize their immigration status in the United States.
- Tel: 212-382-4711

- Immigration Intake Line: 212.382.6710

3. The Legal Aid Society – Immigration Assistance Unit

- The Legal Aid Society’s Immigration Assistance Unit provides consultation and representation to immigrants in the following legal areas: deportation/removal defense, family-based petitions, naturalization applications, changes of status, Violence Against Women Act self-petitions, appeals, employment/workplace issues, and youth representation.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
 - Immigration Hotline: 212-577-3456
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
 - Immigration Hotline: 212-577-3456
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
 - Immigration Hotline: (212) 577-3456
- *Brooklyn Location*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
 - Immigration Hotline: 212-577-3456
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
 - Immigration Hotline: 212-577-3456
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677
 - Immigration Hotline: 212-577-3456

4. New York Legal Assistance Group – Immigrant Protection

- New York Legal Assistance Group (“NYLAG”) provides direct consultation and representation to clients applying for naturalization who are faced with obstacles due to disability, age or recent changes in law. NYLAG also assists refugees and asylees regarding immigration matters such as green card applications, maintaining refugee status, and naturalization while also safeguarding the needs of children by advocating for necessary government benefits.
 - Tel: 212-613-5000 (Initial Phone Intake Required)

5. Legal Services NYC – Limited Categories of Immigration Assistance

- Legal Services NYC provides free consultation and representation to immigrants in the following areas: Violence Against Women’s Act self petitions to adjust legal status for undocumented victims of domestic violence, naturalization applications and appeals, green card and work permit renewals, and family based immigration petitions.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Lower Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 646-442-3100
 - **Upper Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 212-348-7449
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Bedford Stuyvesant Office**
 - Tel: 718-636-1155
 - **Downtown Brooklyn Office**
 - Tel: 718-852-8888
 - **Brighton Office**
 - Tel: 718-852-8888
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Legal Services - Public Benefits Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-233-6480

6. Families for Freedom

- Families for Freedom is a multi-ethnic defense network by and for immigrants facing and fighting deportation. Specifically, Families for Freedom provides legal services for families of green card holders arrested on immigration violations.
 - Tel: 646 290 5551

7. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York – Legal Services for Immigrants

- Catholic Charities Community Services Provides legal consultations, representation, and assistance to documented and undocumented persons regarding most immigration matters including, citizenship applications, family petitions, cases involving domestic violence, and cases that are in immigration court. Clients are charged a nominal service fee, which may be reduced or waived according to need. The consultation fee is fifty dollars, with an eighty-five dollar fee if the consultation is with an attorney. Fees for other services vary.
 - Tel: 212-419-3700

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Unfortunately, many veterans and their families face unique challenges related to military service. Military families may cope with deployment and separation from loved ones, illness, injuries, mental health effects of military service including post-traumatic stress disorder, and disruptions in parenting and care giving. In some cases, these challenges facing military families lead to divorce or payment of alimony or child support. Veterans should ask how these actions may affect their VA benefits.

Along with these issues that are related to military service, veterans may also need assistance with domestic violence issues, orders of protection, divorce, custody and visitation proceedings, and child and spousal support. New York City has a number of organizations that are able to aid families and individuals with these matters.

1. The Legal Aid Society – Family Assistance/Domestic Violence Assistance

- The Family/Domestic Violence Practice provides representation in the following areas: orders of protection, custody/visitation, child/spousal support, property distribution, divorce, domestic violence-related immigration, housing, and public benefits issues. The Practice also provides its clients with essential social services by collaborating with community-based organizations dedicated to serving survivors of domestic violence.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
- *Brooklyn Location*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677

2. Legal Services NYC – Family Assistance

- Legal Services NYC’s family assistance practice preserves families wherever possible by: helping victims of domestic violence obtain orders of protection and other relief; helping clients prepare guardianships or adoptions for dependent children; helping clients obtain divorces, separation agreements, annulments, child custody and child support claims; and representing parents in abuse and neglect cases and at termination of parental rights proceedings.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Lower Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 646-442-3100
 - **Upper Manhattan Office**
 - Tel: 212-348-7449
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services - Family Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Brooklyn Family Defense Project**
 - Brooklyn Family Defense Project’s mission is to provide high quality legal representation to protect parents’ due process rights while promoting access to the services necessary to build safe and stable families.
 - Tel: 347-592-2500
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services - Family Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500
 - **Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A - Family Assistance**
 - Shriver Tyler MacCrate Center for Justice
 - Tel: 718-487-2300
 - **Bushwick Office**
 - Tel: 718-487-0800
 - **East Brooklyn Office**
 - Tel: 718-487-1300
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Legal Services - Family Assistance**
 - Jamaica Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Long Island City Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Legal Services - Family Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-233-6480

3. New York Legal Assistance Group – Matrimonial and Family Assistance

- New York Legal Assistance Group provides consultation, advocacy, and representation in a wide range of family law issues including representation in divorces, child custody/visitation, orders of protection, spousal and child support, and foster care matters.
 - Tel: 212-613-5000 (Initial Phone Intake Required)

4. InMotion

- InMotion provides assistance to low-income women who need free legal services in matrimonial, family, and immigration law. InMotion’s services are designed to address the unique needs of women who suffer from abuse. Most of InMotion’s clients are survivors of domestic violence. InMotion also focuses on reaching women living in immigrant communities who are isolated by language and cultural barriers.
 - Tel: 212.695.3800

5. Sanctuary for Families

- Sanctuary for Families provides domestic violence victims, sex trafficking victims, and their children with a range of comprehensive services. Sanctuary for Families Center for Battered Women’s Legal Services offers legal advice, assistance, and representation in cases involving divorce, child custody, child visitation, and child and spousal support.
 - Tel: 212-349-6009

6. Safe Horizons – Domestic Violence Law Project

- Safe Horizons’ Domestic Violence Law Project provides free legal information and advice to domestic violence victims with family law-related matters. Additionally, the project provides direct legal representation to low-income and indigent domestic violence victims in family and supreme court proceedings. Specific areas of assistance include orders of protection, child and spousal support, child custody and visitation, and divorce.
 - Tel: 718.834.7430, Ext. 10

7. Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program – Family Assistance

- The Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program (“VLP”) offers direct representation in custody and visitation disputes and child support matters. Through its Pro Se Uncontested Divorce Clinic, the VLP also provides help to individuals filing uncontested divorce papers. In addition, the VLP will provide assistance in matters relating to orders of protection.
 - Tel: 718-624-3894

FORECLOSURE ASSISTANCE

Like debt, foreclosure has become a pressing issue in the current economic climate. In fact, the Department of Veterans Affairs is making a special effort to assist veterans that are having trouble making their home mortgage payments. Specifically, the VA provides informational resources for homeowners on alternatives to foreclosure. In addition, the VA provides home loans for veterans in specific cases. The VA, however, is not the only resource for veterans facing foreclosure. Various organizations throughout New York City have responded to the increasing need for legal assistance and provide advice, advocacy, and litigation services for a wide array of homeowners.

It's also important for veterans to be aware of the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act. This law entitles certain veterans to lower interest rates on loans and mortgages, as well as rent reductions and other relief.

1. City Bar Justice Center – Pro Bono Foreclosure Project

- The City Bar Justice Center's Lawyers Foreclosure Intervention Network matches low-income homeowners facing foreclosure with free volunteer attorneys to keep people in their homes. The Project provides services to individual homeowners.
 - Tel: 212-626-6766

2. Department of Veterans Affairs

- The VA New York Regional Office offers information and guidance for veterans that may be facing foreclosure.
 - **NY Regional Office**
 - Tel: 1-800-827-1000
 - Online: www.va.gov

3. Lawyer for a Day – Foreclosure Program

- The Lawyer for a Day Foreclosure Program provides unrepresented litigants with a volunteer attorney that will help them prepare for mandatory settlement conferences and accompany them to those conferences as well. The program is available to litigants in Queens, and periodically in Brooklyn and the Bronx. To get a volunteer lawyer, litigants should consult the Help Center when they arrive at the court.

4. The Center For NYC Neighborhoods – Foreclosure Prevention Assistance

- The Center for NYC Neighborhoods and its partners provide free, local, nonprofit housing counseling and legal services to New York City residents that are at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure.
 - Foreclosure Helpline: 646-786-0888

5. Parodneck Foundation

- The mission of the Parodneck Foundation, which is a city-wide, tax-exempt, not-for-profit agency, is to provide low and moderate-income residents with resources and capabilities that will enable them to create, own, and manage their own housing and improve their neighborhoods.
 - Tel: 212-431-9700

6. Pratt Area Community Council – Home Services Assistance

- Pratt Area Community Council Home Services facilitates homeownership through a wide range of services including: foreclosure prevention counseling, workshops which guide attendees step-by-step towards home ownership, access to lenders offering below-market rate loan products, direct grants and other programs, mortgage and down-payment grant packaging, outreach and education for those targeted by predatory lenders, financial education workshops, counseling for debt management, and savings plans.
 - Tel: 718-522-2613

7. The Legal Aid Society – Foreclosure Prevention

- The Legal Aid Society offers foreclosure prevention services to individual homeowners through its Housing Assistance Project.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Homeless Family Rights Hotline: 1-800-649-9125
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
 - **Manhattan Housing Court Project**
 - Tel: 212-766-2450
- *Bronx Locations*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
 - **Bronx Housing Court Office**
 - Tel: 718-681-8712
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
 - **Brooklyn Housing Court Office**
 - Tel: 718-643-4819
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
 - **Queens Housing Court**
 - Tel: 718-739-6272

- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677

8. Legal Services NYC – Foreclosure Prevention Project

- Through its Foreclosure Prevention Project, Legal Services NYC provides legal assistance to individual homeowners including, advice, advocacy, and litigation services.
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Bedford Stuyvesant Office**
 - Tel: 718-636-1155
 - **Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A - Foreclosure Prevention**
 - Shriver Tyler MacCrate Center for Justice
 - Tel: 718-487-2300
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services - Foreclosure Prevention**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Legal Services - Foreclosure Prevention**
 - Jamaica Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Long Island City Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Legal Services - Foreclosure Prevention**
 - Tel: 718-233-6480

9. New York Legal Assistance Group – Foreclosure Prevention Project

- New York Legal Assistance Group’s Foreclosure Prevention Project provides legal representation and court-based services for borrowers with sub-prime and unconventional mortgages that face foreclosure. The project also provides community education and financial counseling.
 - Tel: 212-613-5000 (Initial Phone Intake Required)

10. Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program – Foreclosure Intervention

- The Brooklyn Bar Association’s Foreclosure Intervention Project offers direct representation, advice, and counsel to poor and low income families. Pro bono attorneys assist homeowners by representing them at mandatory court settlement conferences.
 - Tel: 718 624 3894

11. New York County Lawyers Association – Mortgage Foreclosure Project

- The New York County Lawyers Association Mortgage Foreclosure Project represents Bronx County homeowners at their mandatory settlement conferences.
 - Tel: 212-267-6646

CRIMINAL DEFENSE AND REENTRY ASSISTANCE

Specific areas of assistance for low-income individuals include criminal trial defense, criminal appeals, parole revocation defense units, and special litigation units. In addition, certain organizations assist individuals with reentry issues such as discrimination or privacy violations due to a criminal record, drug or alcohol addiction, and HIV/AIDS. Finally, there are resources that explain how Certificates of Relief and Certificates of Good Conduct can assist individuals to restore certain rights.

1. N.Y. State Div. of Parole – Certificates of Relief and Good Conduct Information

- The New York State Division of Parole website provides informational resources regarding Certificates of Relief and Certificates of Good Conduct. The information provided explains what these certificates are, who is eligible, how to apply, and how the certificates can assist individuals restore certain rights.
 - Tel: 518-473-9400
 - Online: www.parole.state.ny.us/certrelief.html

2. The Legal Aid Society – Criminal Assistance

- In addition to representing individuals at trial and on appeal, The Legal Aid Society also represents clients in administrative and civil proceedings related to their criminal cases, including school suspension hearings, property forfeiture proceedings, sex offender classification hearings, and probation or parole revocation proceedings. The Legal Aid Society provides legal advice and representation to members of the public on criminal matters including, surrendering on an arrest warrant, appearing in a police-arranged line-up, responding to a court subpoena, answering questions during a police investigation, criminal defense of individuals at trial, criminal appeals for individuals, parole revocation defense for individuals, and special litigation.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212-426-3000
- *Bronx Locations*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450

3. Bronx Defenders – Criminal Defense

- The Bronx Defenders' Criminal Defense practice provides legal representation to individuals facing criminal charges.
 - Tel 1: 718-838-7878
 - Tel 2: 1-800-597-7980

4. Brooklyn Defender Services

- Brooklyn Defender Services directly represents clients in a wide variety of cases, including serious felonies and misdemeanor cases, as well as Family Court matters.
 - Tel: 718-254-0700

5. Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem

- The Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem (“NDS”) provides public defense assistance that addresses underlying issues that bring clients into contact with the criminal justice system and provides comprehensive social service support to avoid or minimize future problems. NDS also assists clients to resolve issues that arise from employment, schooling, family, housing, and immigration, either through direct representation or through referrals to appropriate service providers.
 - Tel: 212-876-5500

6. Community Service Society – Reentry Assistance

- The Community Service Society seeks to ease the reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals by promoting employment. To do so, it educates community-based organizations serving that population about the benefits available to employers who hire such individuals, the legal protections job-seekers enjoy against employment discrimination, and certificates that both remove statutory employment barriers and provide presumptive evidence of rehabilitation. Community Service Society helps people get these certificates and understand their criminal record while providing legal advice and representation to individuals who are experiencing employment discrimination because of their criminal record.
 - Tel: 212.614.5306

7. Legal Action Center – Reentry Assistance

- The Legal Action Center serves individuals in the criminal justice system and assists them in making a successful transition back to the community. LAC diverts many appropriate offenders from prison to community sanctions and offers a continuum of services aimed at addressing the needs of offenders through intensive case management, job development and retention services, alcoholism and substance abuse treatment, parenting skills and reunification assistance, housing and health referrals, and other valuable supportive services.
 - Tel: 212-243-1313
 - Toll free: 1-800-223-4044

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Upon returning to civilian life, many veterans wish to start their own businesses. To aid this effort, veterans and widows or widowers of veterans receive special status for a general vendor license in New York City. In addition, organizations throughout New York City provide various legal services necessary to help entrepreneurs start off on sound footing. Specific areas of assistance include guiding individuals or groups with matters such as incorporation and tax issues, commercial lease negotiations, copyrights, trademarks and patents, and license and permit applications.

1. City Bar Justice Center – Neighborhood Entrepreneur Law Project

- The Neighborhood Entrepreneur Law Project's volunteer attorneys guide clients through matters such as incorporation and tax issues, commercial lease negotiations, copyrights, trademarks and patents, and license and permit applications. Volunteer attorneys also offer presentations and legal clinics at community-based organizations for micro-entrepreneurs.
 - Tel: 212-382-6633

2. New York City Business Solutions Center

- NYC Business Solutions Center helps businesses start, operate, and expand in New York City. Their services are provided at no cost, regardless of the size or stage of your business. Services include: business courses, legal review of contracts and leases with a network of lawyers offering pro-bono services, financing assistance to help identify lenders, package loan applications to increase the chance of receiving a loan, incentives to save money as a business relocates, expands or makes capital improvements, assistance in understanding government regulations, recruiting employees to provide access to a ready pool of screened job candidates, training employees to improve the skills of entry-level employees and increase the quality of business operations, and help obtaining government contracts.
 - **Brooklyn Center**
 - Tel: 718.875.3400
 - **Lower Manhattan Center**
 - Tel: 212.618.8914
 - **Upper Manhattan Center**
 - Tel: 917.493.7243
 - **Queens Center**
 - Tel: 718.577.2148
 - **Staten Island Center**
 - Tel: 718.285.8400
 - **Washington Heights Center**
 - Tel: 212.453.5366

3. New York State Small Business Development Center

- The New York State Small Business Development Center assists NY residents and businesses through direct counseling on a range of management and technical matters.
 - **Brooklyn Center**
 - Tel: 718-797-0187
 - **Manhattan Centers**
 - *Midtown Location*
 - Tel: 646.312.4790
 - *Downtown Location*
 - Tel: 212-618-6655
 - **Queens Centers**
 - *Jamaica Location*
 - Tel: 718-262-2880
 - *Long Island City Location*
 - Tel: 718-482-5303
 - **Bronx Center**
 - Tel: 718-960-8806
 - **Staten Island Center**
 - Tel: 718-982-2560

4. Small Business Administration

- The Small Business Administration's Office of Veterans Business Development seeks to maximize the availability, applicability, and usability of all SBA programs for veterans, service-disabled veterans, reserve component members, and their dependents or survivors.
 - **Office of Veterans Business Development**
 - Tel: 631-370-8891
 - **New York District Office**
 - Tel: 212-264-4354
 - **Long Island Branch Office**
 - Tel: 631-454-0750

5. New York City Dept. of Consumer Affairs, Vendor License, Veterans Applications

- The Department of Consumer Affairs' Licensing Center provides information regarding general vendor licenses and how to apply for such a license.
 - Tel: 212-487-2710
 - Online: www.nyc.gov/html/dca/html/licenses/094.shtml

6. Urban Justice Center – Street Vendors Project

- The Street Vendors Project holds clinics to educate vendors about their legal rights. In addition, the Street Vendors Project organizes vendors to participate in the political process that affects vendors' rights and engages in systemic advocacy.
 - Tel: 646-602-5600

7. The Legal Aid Society – Community Development Project

- The Community Development Project (“CDP”) supports the creation and growth of small businesses that generate jobs and economic activity in low-income communities. Clients include street vendors, bodegas, child care providers, restaurants, bakeries, caterers, hair salons, and internet-based businesses. The CDP works closely with economic development and microfinance organizations that provide technical assistance and financing.

- **Harlem Community Law Offices**

- Tel: 212-426-3000

BANKRUPTCY ASSISTANCE

There are several organizations throughout New York City that provide free assistance to low-income residents who are considering bankruptcy. When appropriate, these services assist debtors prepare and file bankruptcy petitions, as well as provide other bankruptcy related advice and guidance.

1. City Bar Justice Center – Consumer Bankruptcy Assistance

- The Consumer Bankruptcy Project provides legal assistance to low-income consumers city wide with outstanding debts and assists debtors filing pro se bankruptcy petitions.
 - Tel: 212-626-7383

2. Legal Services NYC – Bankruptcy Assistance

- Legal Services NYC’s Bankruptcy Assistance Project provides struggling low-income debtors with direct representation to get the bankruptcy relief needed.
 - Tel: 646-442-3630

3. Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program – Bankruptcy Assistance

- The Volunteer Lawyers Project offers direct representation, advice, and counsel to Brooklyn residents in matters relating only to Chapter 7 bankruptcy filings.
 - Tel: 718 624 3894

SUBSTANCE ABUSE, PTSD, AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE

New York City makes a number of resources available for those struggling with substance abuse, PTSD, and other mental health issues. Various resources and services throughout the City exist to ensure that individuals receive the treatment they need in a comfortable and supportive way.

1. Veterans Health Administration

- The VA offers a number of options for those seeking both individual and group treatment for substance abuse. These options include therapy, as well as medications to help veterans reduce their use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
 - **Manhattan Campus of the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System**
 - Tel: 212-686-7500
 - **Brooklyn VA Medical Center**
 - Tel: 718-836-6600
 - **James J. Peters VA Medical Center**
 - Tel: 718-584-9000
 - Online: www.mentalhealth.va.gov/substanceabuse.asp
 - **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
 - Tel: 1-800-273-8255
 - **National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**
 - Information Line: 1-802-296-6300
 - Online: <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

2. New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services

- The New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services seeks to improve the lives of New Yorkers by offering addiction information and prevention, treatment, and recovery services.
 - **Downfield Operations Office**
 - Upper Manhattan Tel: 646-728-4566
 - Lower Manhattan Tel: 646-728-4561
 - Bronx Tel: 646-728-4544
 - Brooklyn Tel: 646-728-4549
 - Queens/Staten Island Tel: 646-728-4592

3. New York State Office of Mental Health

- The New York State Office of Mental Health (“OMH”) promotes the mental health of all New Yorkers, with a particular focus on recovery for individuals and families struggling with depression, anxiety, stress, and personal issues. OMH provides informational resources and referrals to appropriate mental health service providers.
 - Tel: 212-330-1650
 - Online: <http://www.omh.state.ny.us/>

4. Mental Health Association of NYC – LifeNet Call Center, Veterans Mental Health

- The Mental Health Association of the City of New York (“MHA-NYC”) addresses the mental health needs of New Yorkers with a three-part mission of services, advocacy, and education.
 - **LifeNet Call Center**
 - MHA-NYC’s LifeNet Call Center is a hotline for support, information, and referrals to treatment for mental health and substance abuse.
 - Tel: 800-543-3638
 - Online: www.800lifenet.org
 - **Veterans Mental Health**
 - MHA-NYC formed the Veterans Mental Health Coalition of NYC, which promotes the mental health and well-being of New York City service members, veterans, and their families through education, information, collaboration, and promotion of an array services.
 - Tel: 212-254-0333

5. Bellevue Hospital Department of Psychiatry

- Bellevue is a member hospital of New York City’s Health and Hospital Corporation that provides a free walk-in clinic for emergency psychiatric services, including evaluations and medication. Those seeking medication renewals or new prescriptions should arrive at the clinic by 7:45 a.m.
 - Tel: 212-562-1000

6. Home Again Veteran’s Program

- The Home Again Veteran’s Program provides individual and family counseling services to Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in New York City.
 - Tel: 646-957-0853

7. Legal Action Center – Criminal Justice Assistance – Alcohol and Drug Advocacy

- Legal Action Center provides legal services to New York residents that are facing discrimination or privacy violations due to drug or alcohol addiction. The Legal Action Center can also make referrals to help people find appropriate treatment for both drug and alcohol addiction.
 - Tel: 212-243-1313
 - Toll free: 1-800-223-4044

8. Borden Avenue Veterans Residence of the Salvation Army

- The Borden Avenue Veterans Residence is a single room occupancy facility that provides short-term housing and supportive services including substance abuse treatment and counseling.
 - Tel: 718-784-5690

9. New Era Veterans, Inc.

- New Era Veterans, Inc. operates a veteran specific single room occupancy facility that provides the services of multi-lingual substance abuse specialists.
 - Tel: 718-904-7036

10. Phoenix House

- Phoenix House operates Community Residences in New York for people who are struggling with substance abuse and diagnosed mental illness. The residential programs offer a structured, safe, and supportive living environment where clients can receive comprehensive treatment.
 - **Manhattan Location**
 - Tel: 212-831-1555, ext. 7500
 - **Brooklyn Location**
 - Tel: 718-789-4616

11. The Samaritans of New York City

- The Samaritans of New York City is an international volunteer network devoted to responding to people in crisis by providing 24/7 suicide prevention assistance.
 - **City Wide Hotline:** 212-673-3000

12. Oxford House

- Oxford House provides alcohol and drug free housing for men, which supports substance abuse recovery and relapse prevention.
 - **Oxford House Locations in Queens**
 - Forest Hills, Tel: 718-268-4345
 - College Point, Tel: 718-460-4853
 - Flushing, Tel: 718-460-3699

TAX ASSISTANCE

Veterans may need help with tax related issues. In fact, veterans should determine whether they face unique tax issues concerning their VA benefits because in some cases, compensation from the VA is not subject to the Federal Income Tax.

Various programs and services in New York City provide legal representation, advice, and referrals to low-income taxpayers who may or may not have disputes with the I.R.S. or the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. Various organizations have attorneys that are able to provide legal services to protect clients' assets, including providing assistance with all aspects of tax disputes including audits, court proceedings, appeals, and collections.

1. Legal Services NYC – Tax Assistance

- Legal Services NYC provides tax assistance to low income individuals through direct representation in courts and administrative tribunals or by providing advice and referral when direct representation is not appropriate.
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services - Low Income Taxpayer Clinic**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Legal Services - Tax Assistance**
 - Jamaica Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Long Island City Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
- *Brooklyn Location*
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services - Tax Assistance and Tax Refunds**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500

2. Neighborhood Economic Development Project – Financial Justice Hotline

- NEDAP's Financial Justice Hotline advises callers about their rights regarding tax refund loans and other financial justice matters.
 - Tel: 212-680-5100
 - Hotline Number: 212-925-4929

3. The Legal Aid Society – Low Income Taxpayer Clinic

- The Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic (“LITC”) assists taxpayers in disputes with the IRS and/or the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. Typical cases include the following tax issues: earned income tax credit, child tax credit, filing status, exemptions for dependents, innocent spouse relief, and employee classification.
 - Tel: 212-426-3013

4. The Financial Clinic

- The Financial Clinic provides clients with legal support and financial counseling through year-round tax advice and preparation services.
 - Tel: 646-810-4050

WILLS, GUARDIANSHIP, HEALTHCARE AND FINANCIAL DIRECTIVES

Veterans may require assistance with obtaining wills, healthcare directives, and financial directives. Various organizations throughout New York City assist low income individuals with a number of estate planning issues including powers of attorney, living wills, designation of health care proxies, special needs trusts, long-term care insurance, guardianship, property, finances, and ensuring adequate food, clothing, and shelter.

1. City Bar Justice Center – Elderlaw Project/Cancer Advocacy Project

- The City Bar Justice Center’s Elderlaw Project hosts clinics that seek to provide counseling and representation for elderly New Yorkers that are 60 years of age or older in a variety of help areas including wills, living wills, health care proxies, powers of attorney, government benefits, and consumer issues.
- The City Bar Justice Center’s Cancer Advocacy Project assists both cancer patients and survivors, regardless of age.
 - Tel: 212-382-6658

2. New York Legal Assistance Group – Advanced Directives

- NYLAG’s Total Life Choices (“TLC”) Project assists individuals in taking control of their health care wishes in the event that illness or injury renders them unable to do so. The TLC Project provides legal information and services for people who want to complete advanced health care directives. TLC staff provides educational workshops and staff trainings at senior centers, naturally occurring retirement communities, hospitals, and social service organizations throughout NYC.
 - Tel: 212-613-5000 (Initial Phone Intake Required)

3. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest – Guardianship Information

- New York Lawyers for the Public Interest provides facts and resources regarding how to obtain an Article 81 Guardianship.
 - Tel: 212-244-4664

4. The VERA Institute of Justice – Guardianship Project

- The Guardianship Project provides guardianship services for elderly and disabled people in New York City who have been determined by a judge to be unable to care for themselves. Project staff consists of lawyers, social workers, and bookkeepers that oversee an array of services including: health care, home care, money management, and helping clients to remain independent and engaged in their communities.
 - Tel: 212-334-1300

5. Volunteers of Legal Services – Elderly Poor Assistance

- Volunteers of Legal Service’s (“VOLS”) Elderly Project assists persons living in Manhattan who are over the age of 60 through twelve legal clinics each month at eleven senior centers. At these clinics, seniors can discuss their legal concerns in confidence, receive legal advice and, where appropriate, obtain referral to a volunteer lawyer for representation. Areas of legal assistance include wills, medical directives, powers of attorney, housing, consumer matters, and Medicaid.
 - Tel: 212-966-4400

6. Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program – Elderlaw Assistance

- Volunteer Lawyers Program attorneys aid elderly full-time residents of Brooklyn in matters relating to advanced medical directives, drafting of wills, and visiting the homes or hospitals of disabled or ill clients if required.
 - Tel: 718 624 3894

7. Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program – Article 17A Guardianship

- The Article 17A Guardian Project assists residents of Brooklyn with obtaining guardianship of a mentally retarded or developmentally disabled person. The Volunteer Lawyers Project will assist residents of Brooklyn either with pro se assistance or direct representation in Kings County Surrogate’s Court. Petitioners will meet with attorneys to complete all the necessary forms to obtain guardianship pro se. If it appears that additional assistance is required, an attorney may choose to appear in court with the litigant.
 - Tel: 718-624-3894

8. New York County Lawyers Association – Article 81 Guardianship Project

- This project provides assistance to lay guardians appointed in New York County who are responsible for the property management or personal needs of an incapacitated person who has little or no assets. Volunteer attorneys provide basic counseling, assistance in obtaining the commission, and help in preparing the initial and annual reports.
 - Tel: 212-267-6646

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Like foreclosure, bankruptcy, and debt, employment has recently become a growing concern for many New York City residents. New York City has a wealth of organizations that provide various services to individuals that need assistance with employment issues. Such assistance includes representation and advice concerning unemployment insurance, wage and hour violations, and workplace discrimination.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act provides important rights to veterans. This federal law is intended to ensure that persons who served or have served in the Armed Forces, Reserves, National Guard or other “uniformed services” are: (a) not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their service; (b) are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty; and (c) are not discriminated against in employment based on past, present or future military service.

1. New York State Department of Labor – Unemployment Benefits Assistance

- The New York State Department of Labor website offers informational resources and online application for unemployment assistance, as well as job search resources.
 - Online: www.labor.ny.gov/unemploymentassistance.shtm

2. Goodwill Vets – Employment, Career Counseling, and Skills Training

- Goodwill Vets provides training and resources to veterans to assist them in finding jobs.
 - Tel 1: 718-728-5400
 - Tel 2: 718-246-7885

3. The Legal Aid Society – Employment Assistance

- The Legal Aid Society’s Employment Law practice provides representation, advice, and community education to low wage and unemployed workers.
- *Manhattan Locations*
 - **Headquarters Location**
 - Tel: 212-577-3300
 - Employment Law Project Hotline: 1-888-218-6974
 - **Harlem Community Assistance Offices**
 - Tel: 212- 426-3000
- *Bronx Locations*
 - **Bronx Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-991-4600
 - Employment Law Project Hotline: 1-888-218-6974

- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Brooklyn Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-722-3100
 - Employment Law Project Hotline: 1-888-218-6974
- *Queens Locations*
 - **Queens Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-286-2450
 - Employment Law Project Hotline: 1-888-218-6974
- *Staten Island Location*
 - **Staten Island Neighborhood Office**
 - Tel: 718-273-6677
 - Employment Law Project Hotline: 1-888-218-6974

4. Legal Services NYC – Employment Assistance

- Legal Services NYC provides legal advice and representation at hearings and in unemployment insurance appeals. The Unemployment Insurance Advocacy Project also engages in legal advocacy to address the larger systemic barriers that prevent workers from accessing benefits.
- *Bronx Location*
 - **Bronx Legal Services - Employment Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-928-3700
- *Brooklyn Locations*
 - **Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A - Welfare-to-Work Project**
 - Tel: 718-487-2300
 - **South Brooklyn Legal Services - Employment Assistance**
 - Tel: 718-237-5500
- *Queens Location*
 - **Queens Legal Services - Unemployment Insurance**
 - Jamaica Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200
 - Long Island City Office
 - Tel: 347-592-2200

5. MFY Legal Services – Workplace Justice Project

- The Workplace Justice Project provides advice, counsel, and direct representation to hundreds of workers each year facing unpaid wage claims, employment discrimination, health and safety violations, and minimum wage and overtime violations. The Project also works to ensure that employers make appropriate accommodations for victims of domestic violence. MFY holds an Employment Law Clinic twice a month, where workers speak directly with an MFY attorney, paralegal, or pro bono attorney to get advice and counsel on an employment problem. The project also connects formerly incarcerated people who are attempting to re-enter the workforce with pro bono attorneys to handle problems with securing licenses.

- Tel: 212-417-3700

6. Urban Justice Center – Community Development Project

- The Community Development Project works with grassroots organizing groups and represents members of these groups in litigation to combat fair wage and hour violations, workplace discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliatory discharge. Plaintiffs in these cases include domestic workers, restaurant workers, spa workers, and garment factory workers.
 - Tel: 646-602-5600

WORKER'S COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE

Workers' compensation laws provide money and medical benefits to an employee that suffers an accident, injury or occupational disease on-the-job. Workers' compensation is designed to protect workers and their dependents against the hardships from injury or death arising out of the work environment.

1. New York Worker's Compensation Board

- The New York Worker's Compensation Board provides informational resources on worker's compensation in general and how to apply.
 - **New York Worker's Compensation Board Headquarters**
 - Tel: 1-877-632-4996
 - **Manhattan District Office**
 - Tel: 1-800-877-1373
 - **Brooklyn/Staten Island District Office**
 - Tel: 1-800-877-1373
 - **Queens District Office**
 - Tel: 1-800-877-1373
 - Online: <http://www.wcb.state.ny.us/>

2. Legal Referral Service

- The Legal Referral Service provides referrals to private attorneys with expertise in this area. The Legal Referral Service does not directly provide advice or representation services.
 - Tel (English): 212-626-7373
 - Tel (Spanish): 212-626-7374

NEW YORK CITY COURT OF SMALL CLAIMS DIRECTORY

Veterans and New York City residents in general may need access to court in order to bring legal action for matters such as: damage caused to automobiles, other personal property, real property or person; failure to provide proper repairs, services, merchandise, or goods; failure to return security, property, a deposit or money loaned; failure to pay for services rendered, salary, an insurance claim, rent, commissions or for goods sold and delivered; breach of lease, contract, warranty or agreement; loss of luggage, property, time from work or use of property; and bounced or stopped checks.

The proper venue for these actions is the City of New York Small Claims Part, which is a simple, inexpensive, and informal court where people can sue for money without a lawyer. A claimant or defendant may hire an attorney if they choose to do so, but it is not necessary. The Small Claims Court has a monetary jurisdiction up to \$5,000.00. Claims for more than \$5,000.00 may not be brought in Small Claims Court, but must be started in the Civil Part of the court or in a different court. The following is a directory of the Small Claims Courts in New York City.

1. [://www.nycourts.gov/courts/lowerappeals](http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/lowerappeals). York County
 - Court of Small Claims
 - Address: 141 Livingston St., Brooklyn, NY 11201
 - Phone: 347-404-9021
2. Queens County
 - Court of Small Claims
 - Address: 89-17 Sutphin Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11435
 - Phone: 646-386-5700
3. Bronx County
 - Court of Small Claims
 - Address: 851 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10451
 - Phone: 718-618-2518
4. Richmond County
 - Court of Small Claims
 - Address: 927 Castleton Ave., Staten Island, NY 10310
 - Phone: 718-675-8460
5. Kings County
 - Court of Small Claims
 - Address: 141 Livingston Street , Brooklyn, NY 11201
 - Phone: 646-386-5700