

LEGAL NETWORK FOR GENDER EQUITY

Attorney FAQs

2019

**LEGAL
NETWORK**
FOR GENDER
EQUITY

**TIME'S[™]
LEGAL DEFENSE FUND
UP**

Thank you for joining the Legal Network for Gender Equity! The Legal Network for Gender Equity is housed at and administered by the National Women’s Law Center Fund.

Please Review these FAQs carefully and retain them. They explain the processes used by the Network and your obligations as a member of the Network.

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Q: How does the Legal Network for Gender Equity work?

A: When someone contacts us about sex discrimination or harassment, we email the person the names and contact information of three attorneys in the Legal Network who practice in the person’s geographic area.

If we send your contact information, you will receive an email from us at that time.

The person contacts the attorneys on the list we gave them. They will let you know that they got your name through the Legal Network.

Q: What are my obligations as a member of the Network?

A: By Joining the Network, you agree:

1. You or another attorney at your office will respond to individuals who receive your name from the Legal Network within five business days and provide these individuals with a free consultation over the phone or in person.
2. You will alert the office staff you work with that you have joined the Legal Network so that they can direct calls accordingly.
3. You have undergone training in trauma-informed services. This may include NWLC’s webinar on Trauma Informed Legal Advocacy, available [here](#).
4. You are an attorney in good standing and have not been subject to discipline or other sanction by any bar or court and there are no complaints or allegations of misconduct currently pending against you.

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Q: What are my obligations as a member of the Network? (cont.d)

5. You are in compliance with the rules of all jurisdictions in which you are licensed to practice law with respect to malpractice insurance.
6. You have determined that being listed is consistent with applicable state law and professional responsibility rules. You have determined that you may ethically be listed as part of this Network according to your State's statutory or regulatory provisions and waive any potential claim against the National Women's Law Center arising out of your failure or mistake in so concluding.
7. You will provide an update to NWLC if there are any changes to the conditions you agreed to.

Please also provide us with brief updates when you consult with or agree to represent someone.

1. These updates should be brief and should not include privileged or confidential information.
2. You should email your updates to legalnetwork@nwlc.org. You are not obligated to represent or provide free legal services to these individuals beyond the initial free consultation.

Q: What do you mean by “initial consultation?”

A: We expect that:

1. Individuals will be able to speak with you or another attorney at your firm.
2. You will talk them through what options, legal and otherwise, may be available to address their situation. The people who reach out to you may be out of time or not have experienced something illegal, and you will have to explain that to them.
3. If they are dealing with issues outside of your area of expertise that you cannot assist with, such as securing unemployment benefits or restraining orders, you will point them towards referrals or other resources. [Here](#) is a list of resources we send that may be helpful.

Q: Does the Legal Network screen requests for assistance?

A: The Network screens intakes solely to determine whether the intakes address sex discrimination in employment, education, or health care. We do not screen for other legal matters (e.g. timeliness or whether the claim meets a specific legal threshold). Thus, part of your initial consultation may involve explaining to the individual whether they do or do not have a legal claim.

Q: Can I advertise my membership in the Legal Network?

A: You may state that you are a member of the Legal Network for Gender Equity. We do not allow members to state that the Legal Network or TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund has otherwise endorsed you or your firm.

Q: How many intakes will I receive?

A: The number of intakes you receive will vary based on your location, the number of other Legal Network attorneys in your area, and the issue areas in which you practice. If you are receiving too many inquiries at any point, contact us at legalnetwork@nwlc.org and we can adjust the frequency with which we share your information.

Q: How does the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund fit in/what resources are available for funding?

A: If you decide to take a case and it involves workplace sexual harassment or related retaliation (including defending against defamation claims because a person spoke up about workplace harassment), the case may be able to receive funding from the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund. Funding can go towards fees and/or costs.

You can learn more about the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund [here](#) and find the criteria and application for funding [here](#). Funding cannot be used to pay clients back.

Q: Does the client have to have signed a retainer agreement in order for the attorney to apply for funding?

A: No. You may apply for funding after you have provided the free initial consultation and before any agreement is signed.

Q: Can TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund funding be used for the retainer amount?

A: Yes. If you want TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund funding for the retainer, you should include that request in the funding application and wait for a funding determination before charging the client. Many clients from the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund will want to wait for the funding determination before signing a retainer agreement. Please note that funding from the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund cannot be used to pay a client back for money the client has expended. Therefore, if you are applying for the retainer, you should not charge the client for it.

Q: May I charge the client for the time it takes to complete the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund funding application?

A: No. Most individuals using the Legal Network to find representation cannot afford to pay the regular rates for legal services. Therefore, you should not charge potential clients for filling out the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund Case Funding Application. The application is short and straightforward and should not require significant time to complete.

Q: What resources are available for dealing with media or helping survivors share their stories?

A: If you decide to take a case that involves workplace sexual harassment or related retaliation and you or your client would like assistance with the media (either generating or managing press), you may be able to receive support from a public relations firm through the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund.

This support may be available to survivors who are not pursuing litigation, but to be eligible we require individuals to have an attorney. Representing people to help them share their story is another way you can support survivors of workplace sexual harassment through the Fund. You can find more information on the process [here](#).

Q: If I receive support from the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund, will the Fund have influence over the case's legal strategy?

A: No, the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund does not in any way control the legal strategy or decision-making for cases that it funds.

Q: What training materials or other resources are available to Legal Network members?

A: We've created:

1. [Training materials](#) on Trauma Informed Legal Advocacy.
2. [Webinars](#) about litigating sexual harassment cases as well as other intersecting issues and other forms of discrimination.
3. Resources on discrimination in education, including:
 - a. **Sexual harassment:** [Sexual harassment toolkit](#) (for students of all genders and education levels), [FERPA fact sheet](#), [Title IX Myth-busting fact sheet](#), [Cyberbullying fact sheet](#), [LGBTQ Students fact sheet](#), [Mandatory Police Referrals fact sheet](#).
 - b. **Pregnancy and parenting:** [Pregnancy and parenting toolkit](#) (for students of all genders and education levels).
 - c. **Athletics:** [Athletics toolkit](#) (for students of all genders and education levels).
 - d. **Discipline:** [Discipline toolkit](#) (for K-12 girls of color), [Dress Code report \(for K-12 girls of color\)](#).
4. [Resources](#) on sex discrimination in health care.

We hope that through your involvement in the Legal Network you know that you are connected to a large network of attorneys—currently over 700—all across the nation who are fighting to end sex discrimination.