



MONROE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

MODEST MEANS PROGRAM

The Modest Means Program offers limited representation for low income individuals and families in select legal practice areas at highly discounted rates*
Applicants must complete a Modest Means Application and provide verification of income

Applications may be obtained by

- Visiting the Monroe County Bar website at www.monroebar.org and clicking on Modest Means Program

Discounted legal services are limited to the following legal service areas*

- Discounted Consultation Fee of \$25.00
- Housing—Landlord/Tenant Disputes (Tenants Only)
Mortgage Foreclosures (Homeowner Only)
- Debt—Debt Collections or Chapter 7 Bankruptcy
- Employment—Unemployment Compensation
- Employment Issues—Expungements or Drivers License Suspensions
- Family Law—Child Custody, Child Support or Divorce
- Estate Planning—Simple Wills, Power of Attorney or Living Wills

DISCLAIMER

ASSISTING LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

The **Monroe County Bar Association's (MCBA) Modest Means Program** was developed to assist low income individuals and families in need of legal services. Upon review of the application, qualified applicants will be referred to lawyers who are members of the **MCBA** in good standing, licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and who choose to participate in the program. The **MCBA** lawyers who choose to participate in the program identify the areas of law in which they practice. The **MCBA** will not charge you for this service. However, the lawyer may charge you no more than \$25.00 for the first half hour of a consultation.

Household income must meet certain criteria. The **Modest Means Program** uses twice the **Federal Poverty Level** to determine the maximum allowable income per household. Income verification from all household residents must be provided as well as the number of people residing in the household.

The **MCBA** is not a law firm, does not employ any lawyers and does not represent clients. The **MCBA** does not recommend, rate, review or monitor the work of its lawyer members who participate in the **Modest Means Program**. The **MCBA** is not responsible or liable for any damages that result in any way from errors, omissions or any failure of performance of attorneys retained through the **Modest Means Program**. Should it be determined that all household income was not accurately disclosed at time of application, the **MCBA** and the lawyer have the right to disqualify you from the **Modest Means Program** resulting in additional cost to you.

THIS IS NOT A FREE SERVICE

*Restrictions May Apply

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WHY DO I NEED A LAWYER

Many decisions today are difficult and will affect the rest of your life. A lawyer can explain different aspects of the law and assist you with complicated legal matters. By law, only a lawyer may give legal advice and the right to practice law is given by the **Supreme Court of Pennsylvania**. Only after a lawyer has been admitted to the **Pennsylvania Bar** may they represent clients. Your lawyer is governed by the **Rules of Professional Conduct** and all details of your client-lawyer relationship are considered confidential. Self-representation, while permissible, comes with an expectation by the court system that you know and will follow all laws and procedures. If you don't know all the laws, then the **Monroe County Bar Association's Modest Means Program** is here to help.

WHAT IS THE MODEST MEANS PROGRAM?

The **Monroe County Bar Association's Modest Means Program** is offered as a service to those who do not qualify for pro-bono services yet cannot afford to pay regular lawyer fees. Because participating lawyers offer you services at a highly discounted rate, to qualify you must complete the application, provide verification of all household income, including but not limited to employment, unemployment, retirement or disability income, rental income, child or spousal support, public assistance including food stamps, utility assistance, and medical assistance. Upon receipt of the completed application and verification of income, we will review your application and contact you. If you qualify for services we will locate an attorney who practices in the field of law appropriate to your situation. If you do not qualify, we will offer to refer you to a lawyer through our **Find a Lawyer Program**.

PREPARING TO MEET WITH YOUR LAWYER

Once we provide you with the name and phone number of a lawyer who practices in the appropriate field of law, you will call the lawyer's office and set up an appointment. Remember the lawyer may charge up to \$25.00 for the first half hour of your consultation. Be prepared. Bring all documents relating to your legal problem to the first meeting. Give the lawyer all the facts relating to your case - both favorable and unfavorable. The lawyer will then discuss procedures that will be involved in handling the matter for you. You and the lawyer should discuss the fees to be charged for legal services and how that fee will be determined. Please ask the attorney about court related fees as these will be your responsibility. And finally, if you decide to hire the lawyer ask to have fees outlined in writing.

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