

We frequently hear from small business owners wrestling with sticky legal problems. While the NFIB Legal Center can often provide some general guidance, you will need to work with an attorney—licensed in your state—if you need legal advice.



HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- 1** Be proactive, not reactive. You should seek out counsel whenever you believe your legal rights to be in jeopardy, especially when hit with a lawsuit or enforcement act.
- 2** Act fast. It is best to seek out counsel early, as the longer you wait increases the risk that you waive legal claims or defenses.
- 3** Ask around for personal references.
- 4** You want someone with special expertise. You shouldn't assume that just any attorney will do — the contracts or collections attorney you previously worked with may not be the best attorney for handling your regulatory appeal.
- 5** If you have worked with an attorney in the past, it's always a good idea to consult them first. He or she will probably be connected with others in the legal community and should be able to point you toward someone (or a firm) with expertise on the issues you are facing.
- 6** Google is your friend. A quick search can reveal attorneys that specialize in each area of the law, as well as blogs discussing legal issues and developments.
- 7** Avvo is a helpful tool that provides online ratings for attorneys. Don't settle for just any attorney, Avvo is a tool to help you make more intelligent choices as a consumer.
- 8** Your state borders must confine your geography, but your locality should not. With phone and electronic communication widely available, you should not hesitate to seek out attorneys in other parts of your state for help.
- 9** Bigger does not equal better. While larger firms offer more attorneys and their own benefits, small and mid-sized firms often provide better value to small business owners.
- 10** Consult your state bar. Most offer free attorney referral services, which can be especially helpful if you've never had experience seeking out legal counsel. Find information on how to find a lawyer in your state, or your state's attorney referral service, below:

- **Alabama** – <https://www.alabar.org/contact/>
- **Alaska** – <https://alaskabar.org/for-lawyers/lawyer-referral-service/>
- **Arizona** – <https://www.azbar.org/for-lawyers/practice-tools-management/member-directory/>
- **Arkansas** – <https://mx.arkbar.com/Attorneys/Arkansas-Find-A-Lawyer>
- **California** – <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Public/LawyerReferralServicesLRS>
- **Colorado** – <https://www.cobar.org/Licensed-Lawyer>
- **Connecticut** – https://www.ctbar.org/public/pro-bono-legal-aid-services#find_a_lawyer
- **Delaware** – <https://www.dsba.org/online-lawyer-referral-service/>
- **Florida** – <https://www.floridabar.org/public/lrs/>
- **Georgia** – <https://gabar.reliaguide.com/home>
- **Hawaii** – <http://hawaiilawyerreferral.com/>
- **Idaho** – <https://isb.idaho.gov/lawyer-referral-service/>
- **Illinois** – <https://www.isba.org/public/illinoislawyerfinder>
- **Indiana** – https://www.inbar.org/page/local_bars
- **Iowa** – <https://www.iowabar.org/?pg=Find-A-LawyerHP>
- **Kansas** – https://ksbar.org/?pg=lrs_public
- **Kentucky** – <https://www.kybar.org/page/lawreferserv>
- **Louisiana** – <https://www.lsba.org/public/lawyerreferral.aspx>
- **Maine** – <https://mainebar.community.lawyer/>
- **Maryland** – <https://www.msba.org/site/site/content/Resources-and-Tools-Content/For-The-Public.aspx?hkey=60b9d077-7a36-4688-b444-86cfe064b5dd>
- **Massachusetts** – <https://www.massbar.org/public/lawyer-referral-service>
- **Michigan** – <https://lrs.michbar.org/LRS-Info/Lawyer-Referral-Service>
- **Minnesota** – <https://www.mnlawyerreferral.org/>
- **Mississippi** – <https://www.msbar.org/for-the-public/>
- **Missouri** – <https://mobar.org/public/LawyerSearch.aspx>
- **Montana** – <https://www.licensedlawyer.org/mt>
- **Nebraska** – <https://www.nefindalawyer.com/>
- **Nevada** – <https://nvbar.org/for-the-public/find-a-lawyer/lrs/>
- **New Hampshire** – <https://www.nhbar.org/lawyer-referral-service>
- **New Jersey** – <https://lsnjlawhotline.org/intake/1008/language/1/lawyer-referral>
- **New Mexico** – <https://www.sbnm.org/For-Public/I-Need-a-Lawyer/Online-Bar-Directory>
- **New York** – <https://nysba.org/new-york-state-bar-association-lawyer-referral-service/>
- **North Carolina** – <https://www.ncbar.org/public-resources/find-an-nc-lawyer/>
- **North Dakota** – https://www.sband.org/page/lawyer_referral_serv
- **Ohio** – <https://www.ohiobar.org/public-resources/lawyer-referral-services/>
- **Oklahoma** – <https://www.okbar.org/findalawyer/>
- **Oregon** – <https://www.osbar.org/public/ris/>
- **Pennsylvania** – <https://www.pabar.org/site/For-the-Public/Find-a-Lawyer>
- **Rhode Island** – <https://ribar.com/ReferralIntake.aspx>
- **South Carolina** – <https://www.scbar.org/public/get-legal-help/find-lawyer-or-mediator/>
- **South Dakota** – <https://findalawyerinsd.com/>
- **Tennessee** – <https://www.tba.org/?pg=find-an-attorney>
- **Texas** – <https://www.texasbar.com/Content/NavigationMenu/ForThePublic/DoYouNeedALawyer/CertifiedLawyerReferralServices1/default.htm>
- **Utah** – <https://www.utahbar.org/get-legal-help/>
- **Vermont** – <https://www.vtbar.org/find-a-lawyer/>
- **Virginia** – <https://vlrs.community.lawyer/>
- **Washington** – <https://www.wsba.org/for-the-public/find-legal-help>
- **Washington DC** – <https://www.dcbbar.org/for-the-public/hiring-a-lawyer>
- **West Virginia** – <http://www.wvlawyerreferral.org/>
- **Wisconsin** – <http://www.wisbar.org/forpublic/inedalawyer/pages/lris.aspx>
- **Wyoming** – <https://www.wyomingbar.org/for-the-public/hire-a-lawyer/>