Almost everyone will need **legal advice** at some point in their lives. Whether it's navigating a complex legal issue, protecting your rights, or resolving a dispute, understanding when and how to seek the help of a lawyer is crucial.

What if I Cannot Afford a Lawyer?

If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may be eligible for **legal aid,** which provides free or low-cost help for certain criminal and family law matters.

If you don't qualify, you can seek free legal advice from duty counsel, family law consultations, or community clinics, such as the UNB Legal Clinic or Fredericton Legal Advice Clinic. Additionally, online resources like the Public Legal Education and Information Service (PLEIS-NB) offer legal information, and specialized services for survivors of sexual violence may provide free legal consultations.

Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc.

New Brunswick Law Foundation
Fondation pour le droit au Nouveau-Brunswick

For more details on when and how to get legal help, visit our website.

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When and How to Get Legal Help



What Can a Lawyer Help Me With?

Lawyers can help with many issues, including criminal, family, business, employment, real estate, wills, injuries, and more. A lawyer will give you expert advice relating to your legal rights and responsibilities, the legal process, and the legal options and risks associated with your situation. You don't need to be in a conflict or lawsuit to get legal advice.

What Are Some Situations Where I Should See a Lawyer?

Speak to a lawyer as early as possible if your issue is complex, serious, or involves a formal legal process. You should get legal advice if:

- You being accused or arrested for a crime;
- You are involved in a serious accident causing personal injury or property damage;
- There is a change in family status (e.g. divorce, adoption, child custody dispute, or death);
- There is a change in financial status (e.g. losing or gaining valuable property, starting a business, or filing for bankruptcy); and
- You have been sued in a formal lawsuit.

How Do I Find a Lawyer?

Ask your family, friends, neighbours, or someone else you trust for a recommendation. If you are Indigenous and involved in a criminal law proceeding, you may also want to connect with an Indigenous Courtworker for a recommendation on a lawyer.

You can also search online for local lawyers who specialize in your issue. Talk to more than one lawyer if needed — choose someone you trust and feel comfortable with.



What Happens After I Find a Lawyer??

Share a brief description of your issue, the desired outcome, and any relevant documents with the lawyer, and ask about their experience, fees, and timelines. If they can take your case, they will send you a **retainer agreement** outlining services and costs and schedule a follow-up meeting. If they cannot, you can request a referral.

Once the retainer is signed, the lawyer will proceed based on your case. They'll provide legal advice, represent you in court, and guide you through your options. You will make the final decisions on how to proceed.

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