

Suggested Timeline for LSBA “Lawyers in Libraries” Events

October 2017

Prior to Event:

1. Volunteer attorneys decide whether to provide individual “Ask-a-Lawyer” consultations, or alternatively, a classroom presentation on a specific legal topic. Attorneys should indicate their interest/availability, and preferred location, by emailing Nicole.Louque@lsba.org.
2. The LSBA will connect volunteer libraries and attorneys via an introductory email which provides additional information and resources, confirms the event time and location, and covers any unforeseen logistical details. Suggested time for an Ask-A-Lawyer event is approximately 2 hours. Suggested time for a community presentation is 1 hour, including a brief question and answer period. These can be adjusted according to the individual preferences of library and lawyer(s), and should be reported to Nicole.Louque@lsba.org for inclusion on the event calendar.
3. Participating libraries should advertise the event within their branch, as well as at neighboring branches, community centers, elderly care facilities, and other “high-traffic” locations deemed relevant by library staff. Customizable flyer templates are available in the “For Librarians” section at www.LouisianaLawyersinLibraries.org.
4. In addition to posting signage, librarians are encouraged to publicize the event by reaching out to local press. Also in the “For Librarians” section, is a press release template that you are able to customize and distribute. Posting notice on library websites and/or within monthly newsletters is also greatly appreciated. In our experience, press releases from local organizations are more likely to garner attention and response than if released by statewide entities like the Bar. We are happy to provide any assistance along the way, including providing contact information for local publications if feasible. Though it is requested that attorneys not directly solicit clients at the event, they should inform their partner library if they would like their name or firm included in the promotional materials.
5. During this time, the LSBA will promote all events in the state via LSBA publications and through partner organizations.
6. If providing an “Ask-a-Lawyer” event, libraries may want to sign up patrons for appointments in advance. A sample sign-up sheet is included in the online materials. Generally, attorneys schedule 15 or 20 minute sessions with the library patrons. The attorney and librarian should discuss this before sign-up begins.

7. If providing a community presentation, lawyers should inquire as soon as possible as to the availability of a TV, projector and/or any other desired visual aid.
8. Volunteer attorneys should review the “For Attorneys” section of the event website prior to the event. Please contact Access to Justice Staff Attorney Michael.Schachtman@lsba.org with any questions.

Day of Event:

1. Libraries should designate a space for the event, and display signage to direct patrons accordingly. If hosting an “Ask-a-Lawyer” event, a confidential sound-proof room is best. If this is not possible, please try to designate space out of earshot of other patrons.
3. If hosting an “Ask-a-Lawyer” event, it is suggested that library staff coordinate or monitor a sign-in list to ensure that people are served in the order they arrive. Completing a sign-up sheet prior to the day of the event often alleviates confusion and waiting periods.
4. For “Ask-a-Lawyer” sessions, all patrons must sign an “Intake Waiver.” This form requires patrons to acknowledge that they will not be receiving any legal representation resulting from this service. Following the discussion, attorneys are requested to check off the legal issue discussed (not specific facts), and the degree of assistance provided. Copies of the “Intake Waiver” are found in the resources list in the “For Lawyers” and “For Librarians” sections of the LouisianaLawyersinLibraries.org site. Libraries should print these waivers in advance.
5. Since the event will be open to the public, participants are likely to have various backgrounds and legal issues. Attorneys should make every effort to respond to questions they feel comfortable answering. The **Louisiana Legal Services & Pro Bono Desk Manual** is a concise resource designed to help legal aid attorneys respond to questions about frequent issues from low-income communities. The following topics are included in the Desk Manual: bankruptcy, consumer law, employment law, family law, federally subsidized housing, foreclosure, landlord-tenant, Medicaid, social security/disability, and successions. Attorneys are encouraged to utilize the online version of the Desk Manual which can be found on the “For Lawyers” page of the Louisianalawyersinlibraries.org site or at: www.loyno.edu/gillislong/deskbook.

Should a patron have a question the attorney can't answer, that person can be directed to another volunteer if available, or provided an explanation that this event has a limited scope, and given the prepared resources/referral list for further assistance. Included in this list is the Louisiana Civil Justice Center (LCJC), a legal hotline located at the LSBA offices which can provide basic information on a variety of legal issues. The LCJC Helpline number is (504) 355-0970 or toll-free (800) 310-7029.

6. We would like to collect information about the event for a news article. Please take the opportunity to note the number of people attending the event, and the names of the attorney and librarian volunteers.

Following Event:

1. We will provide librarians with a postage paid envelope with which to return the intake waivers completed by the attorneys conducting Ask-A-Lawyer events. A note including the information requested in #6 above returned in that same envelope will be appreciated.
2. Both attorneys and librarians should visit www.LouisianaLawyersinLibraries.org to fill out a brief survey about the event. It should take no more than 5 minutes to complete, and will greatly enhance this program in the future. Participating attorneys and libraries will be thanked in the Louisiana Bar Journal, on the LSBA website, and within other publications to be determined.

We appreciate your work to make this event a success. Please feel free to contact the Bar's Access to Justice staff with any questions.

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