

How to Apply

Applications are available
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**For more information,
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Community Counsel

Free Legal Services

Offered Through

*Bay Area Legal Services
Community Law Program
Gulfcoast Legal Services
Legal Aid of Manasota*



Region-wide assistance to
Community-based groups,
Not-for-profits and Coalitions
in
Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco,
Pinellas and Sarasota Counties.

Is **Community Counsel** Right for You?

Community Counsel Program

offers business law assistance to nonprofit organizations and community groups seeking nonprofit status.

Community Counsel services are available to nonprofit organizations and groups with programs designed to better economic and social conditions for low-income residents and distressed communities.

Community Counsel helps clients more effectively address legal and risk management issues that arise in connection with their operations. All legal services provided through **Community Counsel** are free of charge, through volunteer attorneys or staff. **Community Counsel** does not accept litigation matters and any necessary costs or filing fees are the responsibility of the client.

Your organization must lack the financial resources to retain and pay a private lawyer for the legal services requested.

Areas of legal expertise available from staff and volunteer lawyers include corporate, tax, contract, real estate, employment, zoning, land use, insurance, intellectual property and regulatory.

Case Selection Criteria

Community Counsel gives the highest priority to regional area nonprofits that sponsor projects or initiatives that will lead to:

A safe and affordable place to live---

Including affordable housing, shelters and transitional housing

A living wage ---

Including job training and placement services, microenterprise loan programs, welfare-to-work projects, commercial revitalization which leads to new jobs in low-income communities

and

The elimination of barriers to either of these goals ---

Transportation initiatives, quality affordable child care, homeownership training, and credit counseling programs.

Other social service programs may be accepted as resources permit, especially groups that serve vulnerable populations – the elderly, the disabled, the homeless, domestic violence victims, seasonal agricultural workers and others.

Community impact one case at a time.....

A group of friends had a vision and were motivated to achieve it. Their research showed that a need existed....the trouble was, they couldn't decide how to get their idea off and running. They had administrative hurdles, legal questions and extreme difficulties finding funding without tax-exempt status. That is when they decided to look for help and came to the Community Counsel Program (CCP).

CCP helped this group crystallize their vision and mission. Soon after, a pro bono attorney worked with them to prepare the appropriate nonprofit corporate documents leading toward 501(c)3 status. Within a few months this newly-born corporation was launched. During the process, their board worked together, with counsel, to prepare for the future, which included launching their visionary program. The program was a tremendous success.

As a result, the corporation received a generous grant in addition to other public donations to expanding services. Community impact with the help of CCP.