



*Because libraries are at the heart of our communities
and justice is at the heart of our democracy.*

Lawyer's guide to presenting the Law Day program at your local library

Welcome. And thank you for your willingness to participate in Lawyers in Libraries, Law Day. Based on our experience and feedback from last year we want to give all participating lawyers more flexibility to provide an appropriate program for their library and community.

The focus of the day continues to be Access to Justice, but talking points will be part of the introduction. Most participants wanted time with the lawyer to get some direction with their own legal issues and we encourage participating lawyers to provide time for those individual consultations. To that end we are providing some suggested talking points for a general introduction, after that the floor could be opened to general questions from the audience, and then the program could move to individual consults.

You should partner with your library to determine the exact time and length of the event in your community. Feel free to publicize your presence at the event.

The introduction should include:

A welcome to Law Day and a thank you to the library for participating.

A self-introduction of the lawyer(s), which can include their connections to the specific community and reasons for participating in this Law Day event.

Indication of the materials from civil legal aid providers, the courts and the Lawyer Referral Service. You will be provided with a "Legal Resources in Maine" handout to guide this. Each library should have an area where provider brochures will be displayed. Short explanation of HelpMeLaw.org that can be accessed through the internet at the library or at home.

A reference to the Maine Justice Action Group Collaboration, which includes the Maine State Bar Association, Maine's public libraries, Pine Tree Legal Assistance, the Volunteer Lawyers Project, the State of Maine Judicial Branch and other organizations interested in helping people access the legal resources that they need, all working together under the coordination of the Maine Justice Action Group.

Brief Discussion of the importance of Access to Justice, perhaps using the following references:

Civil Legal Aid:

Civil Legal Aid assures fairness for all in the justice system, regardless of how much money you have.

It provides access to legal help for people to protect their livelihoods, their health, and their families.

Civil Legal Aid makes it easier to access information—whether through easy-to-understand forms, including online forms; legal assistance or representation; and legal self-help centers—so people can know their rights.

Civil Legal Aid also helps streamline the court system and cuts down on court costs.

When we say the Pledge of Allegiance we close with “justice for all.” We need programs like Civil Legal Aid to ensure that the very principle our founding fathers envisioned remains alive: justice for all, not the few who can afford it.

Lawyer Referral Service:

**Get help finding an affordable lawyer in your community.
Asking about “unbundled legal services” when your resources are limited.**

Any other remarks that seem appropriate for the day and your community.

Group Questions:

Before you open the floor to questions, explain that you can only answer in generalities and cannot give legal advice in this setting.

Individual Consultations:

For each person that consults with you, be sure to go over the form provided (it will be emailed to you prior to the event and available at www.lawyersinlibraries.org) that explains that they are not engaging you to be their lawyer beyond this brief consultation and you will only be helping them to identify next steps that they could take to resolve and legal problem. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this limited representation, please contact Steve Nelson, Esq. at snelson@pwless.net.