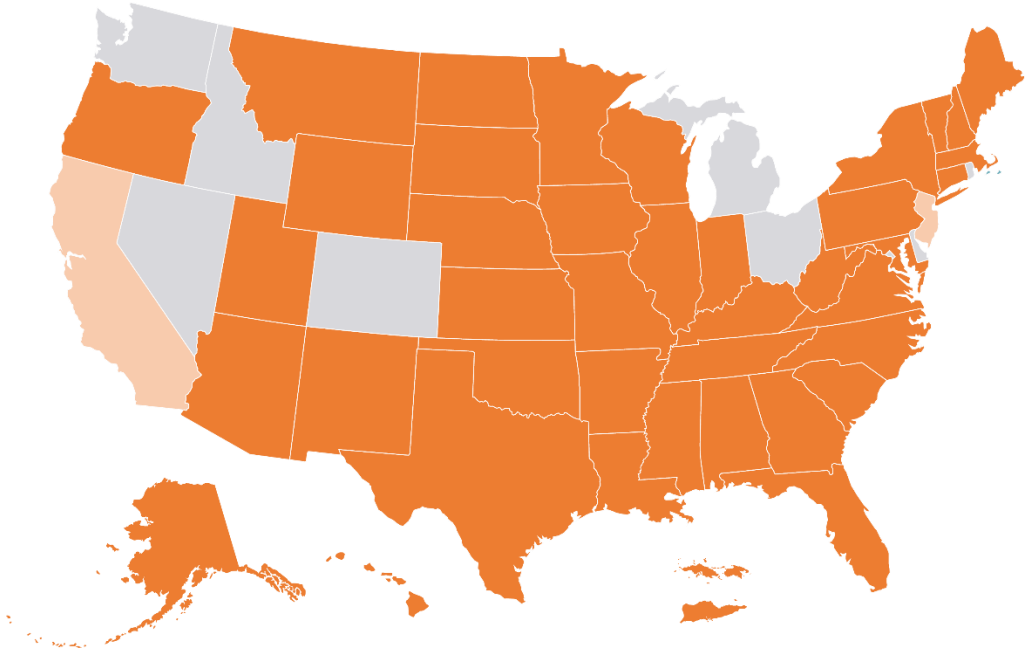
AMERICANBARASSOCIATION

Free Legal Answers

2024 Summary Report

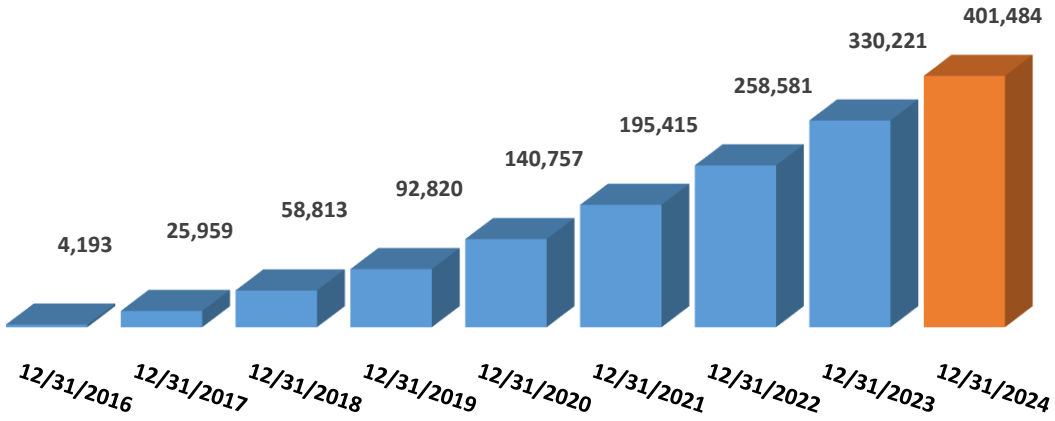
What is ABA Free Legal Answers?

ABAFreeLegalAnswers.org is an online pro bono legal clinic sponsored by the ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service, through which income-eligible clients can post civil legal questions to be answered by pro bono attorneys from their jurisdiction. Currently, **42 states and territories** are live for client access, including a federal portal that addresses veterans benefits and immigration questions.



A federal site is available to address immigration and federal veterans matters from across the U.S.

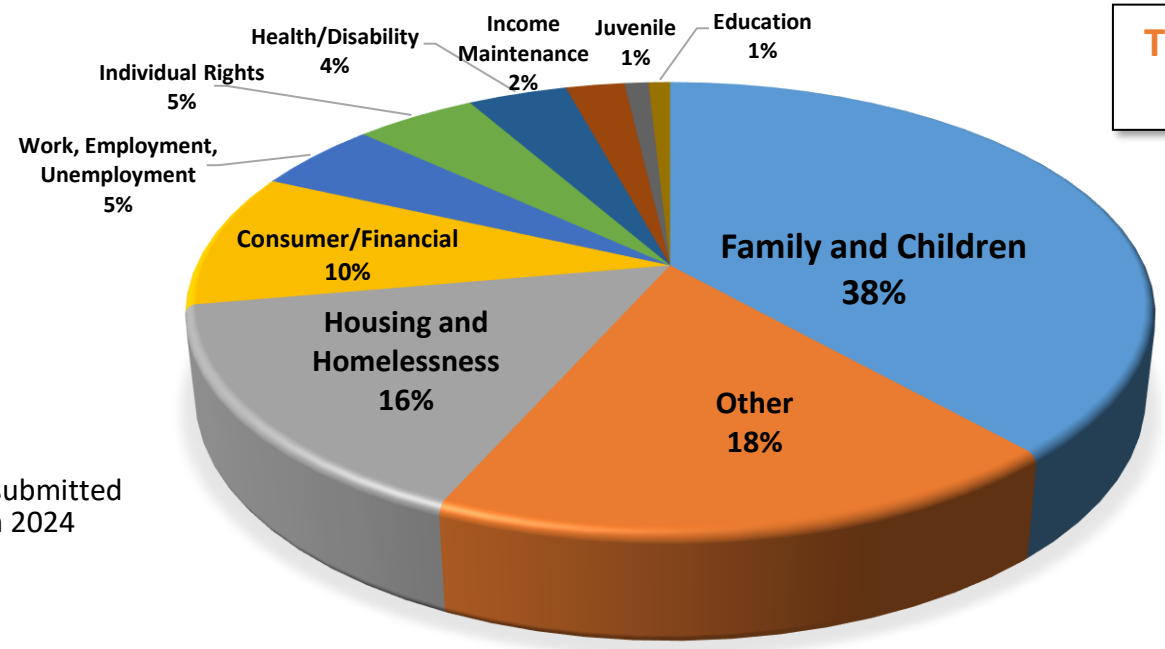
- Active for Client Access
- Committed to Participate
- In Discussions



71,263

Civil Legal Questions Responded to in 2024

Types of Questions Submitted



3,696 questions submitted by **veterans** in 2024

4,360 questions submitted by **seniors** in 2024

The Client Experience

ABA Free Legal Answers offers, in many cases, **the only opportunity to get assistance with a legal question** for those who face geographic or transportation constraints, or those who cannot be served by legal providers due to a conflict of interest or income limitations.

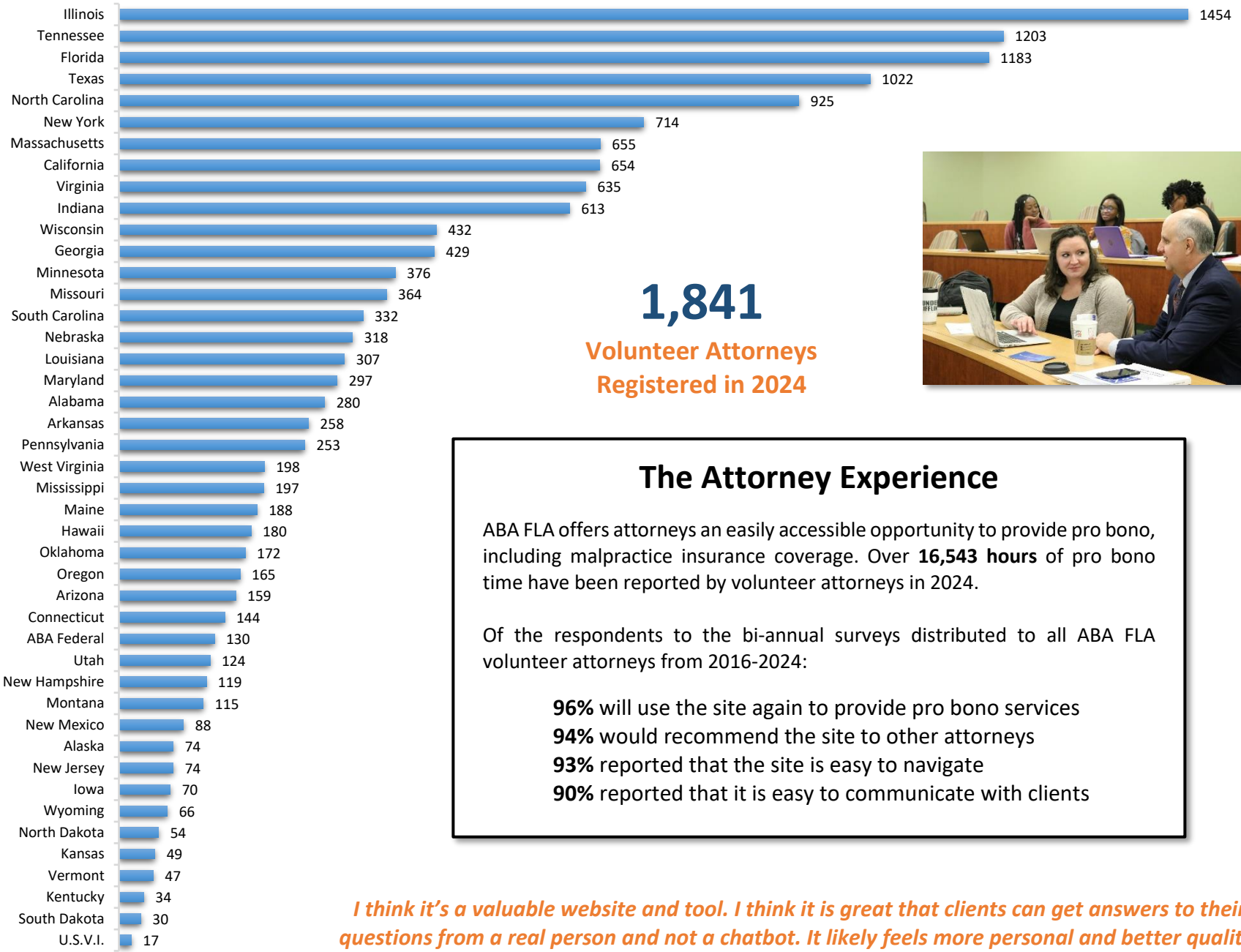
Of the respondents to surveys distributed to all ABA FLA clients upon close of their question from 2016-2024:

93% reported the site is easy to use
84% understood their attorney
83% received a timely response
74% were satisfied with the help they received
66% received information they could not afford otherwise
61% reported the assistance will help to address their legal problem
58% better understand their legal rights and options

The information provided by your organization greatly helped in resolving my issue with the dentist. I could not have done it without your help. We seniors have precious little money to lose.

— Texas Free Legal Answers Client with Consumer Rights Matter

Read More Here



1,841

Volunteer Attorneys Registered in 2024

The Attorney Experience

ABA FLA offers attorneys an easily accessible opportunity to provide pro bono, including malpractice insurance coverage. Over **16,543 hours** of pro bono time have been reported by volunteer attorneys in 2024.

Of the respondents to the bi-annual surveys distributed to all ABA FLA volunteer attorneys from 2016-2024:

- **96%** will use the site again to provide pro bono services
- **94%** would recommend the site to other attorneys
- **93%** reported that the site is easy to navigate
- **90%** reported that it is easy to communicate with clients

I think it's a valuable website and tool. I think it is great that clients can get answers to their questions from a real person and not a chatbot. It likely feels more personal and better quality. Very easy to navigate and see the questions. I get a notification if they respond. Love the site.

-- Volunteer Attorney from Nebraska

2024 Highlights

Disaster Relief

ABA Free Legal Answers (ABA FLA) is an effective disaster recovery response resource and is being deployed to serve individuals affected by the 2024 hurricanes.

Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia implemented adjustments to their sites, such as temporarily increasing the eligibility income cap to reach more survivors. In North Carolina, attorneys licensed out of state were able to register as volunteers pursuant to state supreme court order. Disaster relief categories were added on all sites, allowing questions to be sorted and quickly assigned to attorneys currently standing by to assist.

Volunteer Training and Resources

With funding from the American College of Bankruptcy Foundation, the ABA hosted a complementary CLE webinar for attorneys, many of whom are ABA FLA volunteers and administrators, on how to advise low-modest means individuals whether to file bankruptcy and if they do, how to navigate the bankruptcy court system on their own. In all, **four consumer bankruptcy practitioners** from various U.S. regions educated **134 attorneys** during this webinar, which was well-received.

As part of the webinar materials and to benefit website users and volunteer attorneys in all states, practitioners created a national bankruptcy FAQ, which included a template for state-specific guidance from Indiana, Massachusetts, New York and North Carolina.

SUMMER ASSOCIATE CHALLENGE
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Free Legal Answers

During the 2024 ABA Free Legal Answers Summer Associate Challenge, nearly **50 summer associates** and over **60 attorneys from eight law firms** answered over **180 civil legal questions** posted by income-eligible individuals in **seven states,** donating approximately **250 pro bono hours.**

Of the participating firms, West Virginia's Bowles Rice LLP answered the **most questions (71)** with the assistance of **seven summer associates and eight attorneys**, contributing a total of **37.5 pro bono hours**. Legal issues included housing rights, employment issues, family law matters and consumer rights. The following additional firms were the most active: Adams and Reese LLP, Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP, Butler Snow LLP, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, Koley Jessen P.C.

Website Development and Expansion

In March, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC announced a renewed commitment to ABA FLA with another major investment of financial and technology resources. This generous contribution will ensure the platform continues to increase access to legal advice and information to those in need for years to come.

In addition, ABA FLA increased its geographic expansion. A **Kansas** FLA site was launched in April, registering **25 attorneys** to help respond to the nearly **550 questions** submitted during the year.

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For more information about ABA Free Legal Answers or to make a tax-deductible donation, go to Ambar.org/FLA or contact Tali Albukerk at tali.albukerk@americanbar.org.