

NEW HAVEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

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Modest Means Program Description

The NHCBA sponsors a low-income referral program for certain types of family law, landlord/tenant, unemployment compensation, small claims, and minor criminal cases. There is a \$25 referral fee to use this service. If the individual qualifies under our Financial Guidelines (assets no more than 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines), they would be referred to an attorney who has agreed to consult with clients and possibly take the case for a \$60 an hour fee, which is lower than the usual hourly rate in this area. That fee includes a \$500 retainer, which the client would need to provide up front, and which would pay for the first 8 hours or so of legal assistance.

The following is a step-by-step overview of the application process:

1. Fill out the application. This should include the Client Agreement Form, the Client Financial Disclosure Form, and the Form 8821 tax information release.
2. Add to the application copies of any financial documents you have that support the information provided on the Client Financial Disclosure Form. This would include: tax forms such as W-2s; statements from all open accounts going back at least 4 months; letters from any state or federal organizations from which you are receiving support; information from the divorce decree confirming alimony or child support payments (if applicable); etc. If you fail to include any of the supporting documents, your application will be denied as incomplete and you must restart the application process.
3. Send the application to the NHCBA by email, fax, or mail to the contact information listed in the letterhead.
4. Once we receive the application, we will take 1-2 business days to process the application. We will notify you whether you have been approved once the processing is complete.
5. If you are approved, we will begin trying to match you with an attorney. The matching process usually takes 3-5 business days. If no attorneys are available to take your case, the application will be denied.
6. Once we find an attorney match, we will charge the \$25 referral fee to the credit card provided in your application. You will receive the contact information for the attorney, and it is up to you to call them to set up your free half-hour consultation.
7. If you choose to retain the attorney, the attorney will charge a \$500 retainer fee at the rate of \$60 per hour.

If you have any questions about the program, or if you need help with the application process, please do not hesitate to contact Kiernan Michau (kmichau@newhavenbar.org) at the NHCBA office. The Modest Means application is available on our website, newhavenbar.org, or you can contact the office to request a copy mailed or emailed to you directly.