NJEA-NEA legal services protect and provide for members with serious job problems and personal legal issues.
Legal Services

Serious job problems

Eligible NJEA-NEA members are protected by a Legal Services Program through a network of New Jersey law firms standing ready to handle approved employment related legal issues on their behalf.

NJEA-NEA stands behind you if you have serious job problems.

As an educator or support staff there may be an occasion in which your employment is at risk. Under such circumstances, NJEA-NEA members may be eligible for financial assistance through the NJEA Legal Services Program (“Program”). The Program supports the defense of members’ rights in the workplace, and local affiliates’ rights as labor organizations.

The Program is supported by NJEA’s PR&R Committee, which is made up of appointed NJEA members. The Committee is responsible for:

- Promoting and protecting the legal and professional rights of members;
- Reviewing cases involving affirmative litigation in such areas as rights for non-tenured staff, academic freedom, negotiations, and hardship cases resulting from member rights efforts;
- Supervising staff investigations and assistance for individual members and local associations when warranted; and

Refer to njea.org for the most up-to-date out-of-state attorney contact information.
Recommending appropriate action to the Executive Committee, including the granting of financial assistance.

The PR&R Committee is partially funded by contributions from the National Education Association’s DuShane Unified Legal Services Program. NJEA also budgets funds for the protection of members’ legal rights. NJEA and NEA provide its members with one of the strongest legal defense programs in the country.

**Paid legal protection for employment-related matters**

NJEA-NEA members and local affiliates are protected by a Legal Services Program which may provide payment of up to 100 percent of legal costs for qualifying matters. The Program consists of a network of New Jersey law firms from all areas of the State that stand ready to handle approved member and local affiliate cases.

Where cases are approved, NJEA funds the cost of litigation. All cases require utilization of the services of an approved NJEA-NEA network attorney, unless a specific exception is granted. All of these network attorneys are well-qualified and well-trained in school law and employment matters.

The firms may only be contacted and retained through formal request from the local association's UniServ field representative. Certain cases will require approval from the Legal Services Program administrator. The attorneys, who are included in the network by approval of the Executive Committee, also work with NJEA in the following ways:

- Attend periodic NJEA briefings and conferences about legal strategies;
- Provide NJEA offices with routine advice and participate in decisions to appeal;
• Share information about cases and cooperate with NJEA staff training; and
• Consult with members to offer advice upon review of a matter of concern when applicable under this Program.

Are you eligible?
To qualify for this service, a person must be an NJEA member at the time of the incident for which assistance is requested, must be an active member on the date service is requested, and must maintain their membership throughout the duration of the matter. This may include active on-leave membership, retired membership, or NEA Reserve membership for a member who has been dismissed, non-renewed, riffed, or placed on certain types of administrative leave.

Legal services under the Program may be rendered to either an individual or on behalf of a local affiliate.

How do I know if I have a case and can utilize a network attorney?
YOU MUST CONTACT YOUR UNISERV FIELD REPRESENTATIVE to obtain approval to contact a network attorney for an employment related matter or issue. Contact your local association representative first, who can assist you in making this connection. Do not contact a network firm directly regarding an employment-related matter.

How do I know if I qualify for the Program?
Not all employment related matters may be eligible for coverage. For example, coverage is not available in the following situations: suits against your employer seeking monetary damages, disputes between members, workers’ compensation matters, third party insurance carrier claim denials,}

Go to njea.org/legal services for the most up-to-date contact information.
For major cost savings on legal services for personal legal services, contact these law firms:

NJEA Attorney List for Personal Legal Services

Law Office of Robert N. Agre
4 Kings Highway East Burlington/Camden/Haddonfield, NJ 08033 Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem
(856) 428-7797 attyagre@gmail.com Domestic Relations, Traffic Violations

Michael A. Armstrong & Associates, LLC
79 Mainbridge Lane Atlantic/Burlington/Willingboro, NJ 08046 Camden/Gloucester
(609) 877-5511 Real Estate, Wills, Domestic Relations, Consumer, Traffic Violations

Bergman & Barrett
103 Carnegie Center, Suite 210 Somerset Princeton, NJ 08540
(609) 921-1502 Traffic Violations

Caruso Smith Picini, P.C.
60 Route 46 East Essex/Union Fairfield, NJ 07004
(973) 667-6000; Fx:(973) 667-1200 tsmith@carusosmith.com Real Estate, Wills, Domestic Relations, Traffic Violations

Chamlin, Rosen, Uliano & Witherington
268 Norwood Avenue Monmouth P.O. Box 38 West Long Branch, NJ 07764
(732) 229-3200; Fx:(732)571-8741 Real Estate, Wills, Consumer
and suits filed against the NEA, NJEA, or one of their affiliates.

Coverage may be available for employment related matters such as disciplinary matters, including but not limited to defense of tenure charges, issues with leave time and disability accommodations, pension matters before the Board of Trustees of a state pension fund, and certification matters before the State Board of Examiners.

This is only a list of examples of matters that may or may not be available for coverage under the Program. Together with your local association representative, contact your UniServ field representative if you believe you may be eligible for services.

For the record

Individuals and associations have benefitted from NJEA's protection in the following situations:

- Local associations have won numerous unfair labor practices.
- Title I, compensatory education and supplemental teachers continue to win proper salary and benefit entitlements.
- School employees have successfully challenged RIFs and have been reinstated to their positions.
- School employees are regularly defended against tenure dismissal charges.
- Improper seniority determinations have been reversed.

Winning a negotiations agreement and enforcement of a new statute is not enough. Implementation of both must be monitored. Attempts at circumvention must be legally challenged. NJEA-NEA knows that a well-argued case sets precedents and establishes a body of case law which benefits everyone. In protecting members’ legal
Attorney Referral Program for Personal Legal Services

Personal legal services

NJEA-NEA’s Attorney Referral Program provides personal legal services for NJEA active, life, and retired members. Eligible members can obtain assistance with real estate, wills and estates, domestic relations, consumer protection and traffic violations.

NJEA active, life and retired members are entitled to receive two free 30-minute consultation sessions during each membership year, and a 30 percent discount on personal legal services. If requested by the member, spouses and dependent children may also receive the discount.

Currently there are several statewide law firms participating in the NJEA-NEA Attorney Referral Program. To obtain assistance, simply call an attorney (see list on pages 12-14) and say that you are an NJEA member who needs legal assistance in one of the following Core Areas. Show the attorney your NJEA-NEA card to verify your membership.

You will save on routine legal services including:

- Buying a home,
- Writing a will,
- Drawing up a lease,
- Resolving family law matters,
- Defense of certain traffic violations.

Attorney Referral Program

Reg. 13 – Hunterdon & Somerset counties
27 Minneakoning Road
Flemington, NJ 08822-5726
(908) 782-2168 (908) 782-2329 (F)

Reg. 15 – Union County
312 North Avenue E
Cranford, NJ 07016-2464
(908) 709-9440 (908) 709-9456 (F)

Reg. 17 – Morris County
601 Jefferson Road, Suite 105
Parsippany, NJ 07054-3790
(973) 515-0101 (973) 515-9333 (F)

Reg. 19 – Hudson County (Newark-Essex)
6600 Kennedy Boulevard East, Suite 1L
West New York, NJ 07093-4217
(201) 861-1266 (201) 868-5920 (F)

Reg. 20 – Hudson County - South
1600 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Suite B
Jersey City, NJ 07305-1749
(201) 653-6634 (201) 653-0922 (F)

Reg. 21 – Essex County
70 South Orange Avenue, Suite 250
Livingston, NJ 07039-4903
(973) 762-6866 (973) 762-9750 (F)

Reg. 23 – Bergen County - East
110 Kinderkamack Road, Suite 2B
Emerson, NJ 07630-1854
(201) 265-6200 (201) 265-1335 (F)

Reg. 25 – Bergen County - West
777 Terrace Avenue, Suite 108
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604-3111
(201) 292-8093 (201) 292-8098 (F)

Reg. 27 – Passaic County
Preakness Valley Office Park
504 Valley Road, Suite 150
Wayne, NJ 07470-3534
(973) 694-0154 (973) 694-1338 (F)
For a serious job problem... call UniServ first!

Reg. 1 – Cape May & Atlantic counties
436 Chris Gaupp Dr., Suite 201
Galloway Twp., NJ 08205-4464
(856) 652-9200 (856) 652-8653 (F)

Reg. 2 – Cumberland, Gloucester & Salem counties
Tomlin Professional Bldg.
7 Myers Drive
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062-9512
(856) 628-8650 (856) 628-8656 (F)

Reg. 3 – Camden County
1020 Laurel Oak Road, Suite 101
Voorhees, NJ 08043-3518
(856) 782-1225 (856) 627-6024 (F)

Reg. 5 – Burlington County
509 South Lenola Road, Bldg. 4
Moorestown, NJ 08057-1556
(856) 234-2485 (856) 234-0024 (F)

Reg. 7 – Ocean County
Bayview Corporate Center
1433 Hooper Avenue, Suite 225
Toms River, NJ 08753-2200
(732) 349-0280 (732) 505-1939 (F)

Reg. 8 – Mercer County
172 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608-1104
(609) 896-3422 (609) 895-0238 (F)

Region 9 – Monmouth County
1345 Campus Parkway, Suite A9
Wall Township, NJ 07753-6828
(732) 403-8000 (732) 403-8008 (F)

Reg. 11/12 – Middlesex County
Raritan Plaza II
91 Fieldcrest Avenue, Suite A3
Edison, NJ 08837-3627
(732) 287-4700 (732) 287-9055 (F)

Legal services covered by the program, the "Core Areas"

- **Real Estate** – Purchase or sale of property to be used for residential purposes by a member; a dispute with a buyer or seller of real estate or with a landlord; a property-line dispute; a zoning law or land use regulation problem, a real estate tax assessment.

- **Wills and Estates** – Wills; estate planning; representation of a member who is named as an executor/executrix; administrator/administratrix of an estate; guardianship and conservatorship.

- **Domestic Relations** – Dissolution; annulment; divorce; separation; alimony; custody; child support; guardianship; adoption; paternity; name change.

- **Consumer Protection** – Consumer credit or financing; identity theft; garnishments and attachments; warranty protection for a purchased item; a dispute with a retailer who supplied defective merchandise.

- **Traffic Violations** – Charge of operating under the influence; reckless driving or other offenses involving potential loss of license, financial liability in excess of $50, or jail sentence.

What will the attorneys do?

All legal services that may be necessary or appropriate in connection with matters in the above Core Areas will be available to a member under the Program. Participating attorneys may, as necessary and appropriate: consult with and advise the member; do office work and document drafting; investigate, negotiate and make appropriate settlements; file and defend lawsuits; appear in court or before any other hearing body, etc.
What other benefits do I receive?
In addition to the 30 percent discount, members receive two free 30-minute consultation sessions (in person or by phone) during each membership year (September 1 to August 31).

Are there any limits on the discounts?
Discounts apply only to regular attorney fees and do not include court costs, filing and services fees and other out-of-pocket expenses.

Should I call the UniServ office?
No. Contact the appropriate law firm directly. Tell the firm that you are a member who has been referred through NJEA's Attorney Referral Program.

What do the attorneys charge?
Each firm has established standard rates for legal assistance. Your NJEA-NEA membership entitles you to a 30 percent discount on the fees normally charged by the firm.

How are bills paid?
Participating attorneys will bill members directly for personal legal services rendered. Fees will be 30 percent less than those normally charged by the firm. Installment payments or credit card use may be arranged by mutual consent. Not all firms have a credit card system or will agree to installment payments. Payment of fees will be directly arranged between you and the firm.

What if I have a complaint?
If you have a complaint about the program, contact NJEA Legal Services/Member Rights, 180 West State Street, PO Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211. If a grievance involves the member attorney relationship and cannot be resolved informally, it will be decided by a panel made up of a representative each for the member, the attorney and NJEA-NEA.

Which legal services are not covered?
Participating attorneys are not required to give NJEA-NEA members a 30 percent discount on any matter not specified for coverage, including but not limited to the following matters:
- Business dealings,
- Bankruptcies,
- Preparation or defense of Internal Revenue Service income tax returns,
- Defense of criminal violations,
- Cases in which the adverse party is the NEA, an NEA affiliate (this includes NJEA), or another NJEA-NEA member (except in separation or divorce proceedings), and
- Cases or matters not specified as a Core Area as covered by the program.
- Any matter arising out of the employment relationship between a member and a school district, college or university system, or any other institution involved in the teaching-learning process. Participating attorneys who are contacted by a member in regard to a matter of this type will recommend that the member refer it to the state affiliate for processing in accordance with the provisions of the DuShane Unified Legal Services Program.

Discounts do not apply if the attorney was retained prior to becoming a participating attorney or if another law firm was retained previously.