



What can NJVLA do for you?

NJVLA helps New Jersey artists and arts and cultural organizations to resolve their arts-related legal issues by referring them to volunteer attorneys.

Whom does NJVLA serve? Anyone involved in any creative or cultural endeavor, including music practitioners, visual artists, dancers, choreographers, filmmakers, writers, and poets, or any organization involved in culture or the arts.

What is an arts-related legal issue? Almost any legal issue can be an arts-related issue in the right context. Just a few examples are copyright; contracts between an artist and a gallery, a musician and a record label, a songwriter and an agent, or an author and a publisher; taxes on songwriter royalties; real estate and landlord/tenant issues regarding studio space; and arts organization formation.

What legal services does NJVLA provide?

- **Legal Lines:** A Legal Line is a one-time telephone consultation with an attorney to discuss a particular arts-related legal issue. The attorney will only speak with the client once, usually for 30-60 minutes, and will only answer questions. If the client requires further assistance, he/she should contact NJVLA and begin the process again. Legal Lines are free and available to any artist or arts or cultural organization, regardless of income or annual budget. Examples are:
 - “I want to register my copyrights in all my photographs. Do I have to register each one individually, or can I group them together?”
 - “I receive songwriter royalties from ASCAP. Is that taxable income?”
 - “The Post Office lost a painting I sent to a buyer, insured for half its value. What can I recover?”
- **Law Faxes:** A Law Fax is essentially a Legal Line for a document. Attorneys review short (no more than three-page) legal documents, and discuss the contents with the client in one-time telephone calls. This service is for



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reviewing language, suggesting potential changes, and explaining terms and rights and responsibilities. An attorney will not rewrite a document in a Law Fax referral. Law Faxes are free and available to any artist or arts or cultural organization, regardless of income or annual budget. Examples are:

- “I’ve been offered a recording contract. I don’t understand all the terms. For example, what does ‘work made for hire’ mean?”
- “I signed a consignment agreement with a gallery for three of my paintings. They sold two of them and damaged the other, but they won’t pay me for all three. What are my rights?”
- **Full Service:** Full Service representations are for matters that cannot be resolved with a single telephone call; the attorney’s time is provided on a *pro bono* (free) basis, with the client responsible for any costs such as court fees. Full Service representation is available to non-profit organizations with an annual budget of \$750,000 or less or individual artists who, if single, have an annual gross income of \$30,000 or less or, if married or cohabiting, have a combined annual gross income of \$50,000 or less, with a \$2,000 credit per dependent. There are similar limits on liquid assets. Examples are:
 - “A photographer is selling photographs of a mural I painted without my permission. He has refused to give me credit or pay me. Please write a letter and, if that doesn’t work, help me sue him.”
 - “I am starting a record company and need help drafting agreements with my performers that will protect me and be fair to them.”
 - “I work with an artists’ cooperative. We want to buy an old warehouse and convert it to studio space for artists and need help with the real estate transaction.”

NJVLA also presents educational programs and provides speakers on a wide range of arts-related legal topics. NJVLA’s website, www.njvla.org, contains links and general information on a variety of legal and other issues of interest to artists and those who work in the arts and cultural fields.

NJVLA is the recipient of grant awards from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts; The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation; and The IOLTA Fund of the Bar of New Jersey.



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