

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free Legal Assistance Available for Storm & Flood Survivors
Partnership between the Colorado Bar Association, ABA and
FEMA

Colorado lawyers are among those ready to lend a hand to the survivors of recent storms and flooding in Colorado. The Colorado Bar Association Disaster Relief Program is gearing up to offer no-cost, disaster-related legal advice to those impacted in Adams, Boulder, Clear Creek, El Paso, Jefferson, Larimer, and Weld Counties. The CBA and its Young Lawyers Division, Colorado Legal Services, Colorado Trial Lawyers Association, Colorado Criminal Defense Bar, and several local bar associations are partnering in this effort with FEMA and the ABA Young Lawyers Division.

“I’m proud to see attorneys from across the state stepping up to lend a hand to their fellow Coloradans and hope we can offer some assistance during these tragic events,” said Colorado Bar Association President Terry Ruckriegle.

Victims seeking legal advice can visit www.ColoFloodLegalRelief.org to complete a legal assistance form or call the toll-free helpline at **855-424-5347** 24 hours a day. Those seeking assistance are asked to provide as many details about their situations in the online form or message as possible. Applications of victims seeking help will be reviewed to determine the areas in which they need assistance and then paired with a volunteer attorney who has experience in those areas of the law. This free service begins immediately.

The type of legal assistance available includes:

- Assistance with securing FEMA and other government benefits available to disaster survivors
- Assistance with life, medical and property insurance claims
- Help with home repair contracts and contractors
- Replacement of wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster

- Assisting in consumer protection matters, remedies and procedures
- Counseling on mortgage-foreclosure problems
- Counseling on landlord/tenant problems

Background

When the U.S. President declares a major disaster, FEMA, in cooperation with the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, establishes a toll-free number for disaster survivors to request legal assistance. Funding for the toll-free line comes from FEMA under the authority of Section 415 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency assistance Act (Public Law 100-707). The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division in turn partners with state bar associations and other legal organizations to recruit volunteer lawyers in affected areas to handle survivors' cases.

Partnership Members

The following organizations have joined forces to establish a toll-free phone line for Colorado storm and flood survivors to request free legal assistance, and to provide volunteer attorneys to handle cases arising from recent storm damage.

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division — The ABA YLD, the largest national organization of young lawyers, provides leadership in serving the public and the profession, and promotes excellence and fulfillment in the practice of law. Its parent organization, the ABA, is the national voice of the legal profession and the largest voluntary professional membership group in the world.

Colorado Bar Association — CBA is a voluntary bar association with more than 18,000 members — almost three-quarters of all attorneys in the state — founded in 1897. The bar provides opportunities for continuing education, volunteering and networking for those in the legal profession while upholding the standards of the bar. The bar likewise works to secure the efficient administration of justice, encourage the adoption of proper legislation and perpetuate the history of the profession and the memory of its members.

Federal Emergency Management Agency — FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror. Through an agreement with the American Bar Association, FEMA underwrites the cost of operating toll free legal assistance lines for survivors in areas designated as federal disaster sites.