

# THE MASSACHUSETTS SENIOR LEGAL HELPLINE



**(800) 342-5297**



## **ARE YOU 60+ AND IN NEED OF LEGAL HELP?**

The Helpline is a project of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Boston. We provide free legal information and referral services to Massachusetts residents who are 60 years old or older.

**The Helpline is open Monday through Friday 9AM-12PM.**

### **Can I get a free attorney?**

Most callers will not be eligible for a free attorney. Helpline advocates can help you find out if you *are* eligible and complete an application for services with a Massachusetts civil legal services program. Legal services law types include: Social Security/SSI, Veterans Benefits, Mass Health, Medicare, Consumer, Public Benefits, Unemployment, Foreclosures, Utilities, Guardianship, Wills/Advance Directives, Bankruptcy, Housing, Family law, and Nursing Home.

### **Can I get referrals to reduced fee and private bar attorneys?**

If you are not eligible for a free attorney and have some ability to pay an attorney, we can refer you to reduced fee attorney referral programs where attorneys will charge you on a sliding scale based on your income.

We can also refer you to private bar attorney referral programs. Private attorneys will charge for their services. Some cases, such as medical malpractice, workmen's compensation, personal injury, and Social Security benefits denials do not require you to pay money upfront in order to get an attorney. The attorney fees are taken from your award only if you win your case.

### **Can I get free legal information or referrals?**

Yes. Your Helpline advocate will research your legal issue and provide you with information or referrals on most legal topics. We can also text, e-mail, or mail you links or written materials.

### **What if I need help with a non-legal issue?**

Please see the other side for a full list of resources helpful to Massachusetts seniors.

### **Where can I find social services or resources?**

**Executive Office of Elder Affairs** (800) AGE-INFO (800-243-4636) • TTY (800) 872-0166  
Information on prescription drug assistance, care giving, community resources, local programs, homecare, housing/assisted living facilities, and other topics. The EOEA can also refer you to elder services programs in your community with services to improve your quality of life, such as housing counseling, home care services, public benefits, healthcare access, financial help, and others.

### **How do I report elder abuse?**

**Elder Protective Services:** (800) 922-2275

### **Where can I find help with a consumer matter?**

**Attorney General's Elder Hotline** (888)-AG-ELDER (1-888-243-5337)  
Statewide, toll-free service providing consumer information and referrals to seniors about consumer transactions, telemarketing fraud, and home improvement scams.

### **Who helps elder homeowners with financial problems?**

**Homeowner Options for Massachusetts Elders (H.O.M.E.)**  
www.elderhomeowners.org (978) 970-0012 • 1-800-583-5337  
H.O.M.E. provides comprehensive in-home counseling to low/moderate-income elder homeowners on financial and homeownership issues to enable successful aging-in-place. Services include remainder-of-life planning, budgeting, income maximization, equity conservation, foreclosure prevention, consumer protection, equity conversion, and creative financial options specially crafted for seniors.

### **What are Councils on Aging/Senior Centers?**

Councils on Aging are municipally appointed agencies that offer a wide range of resources, including: housing search and advocacy, social services, assistance with applications for government benefits and community services, translation services and advocacy, transportation assistance, education, recreation and socialization, abuse and neglect services, mental health resources, exercise programs, volunteer opportunities, meal/food services, healthcare advocacy, technology trainings, and more.

To find the Council on Aging for your town, go to [www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com) or [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov), or call your local city or town hall.

### **Where can I find help with Medicare/Health?**

**Executive Office of Elder Affairs: Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE)**  
www.800ageinfo.com (800) AGE-INFO 800-243-4636 • TTY (800) 872-0166  
Free health insurance information, assistance and counseling to Medicare beneficiaries of all ages. Help compare costs and benefits of various health plans, explain benefits of Medicare and additional insurance options, including Medigap, HMOs, MassHealth and prescription drug options, and assist with enrollment, claims, billing, or denial of care issue.