



Pro Bono

Joseph F. Rice School of Law

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



**South
Carolina
Bar**

GROW South Carolina

The GROW SC Small Business Assistance Program provides free legal information, services, and resources to entrepreneurs and small business owners in South Carolina.

Who We Help:

We provide free legal information and services to entrepreneurs and small business owners, with limited means, in South Carolina.

Who Is Eligible:

1. SOUTH CAROLINA BASED:

You must own a small business located in, or be an entrepreneur living in, South Carolina. Entrepreneurs who live elsewhere but provide their services primarily in the state will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2. CLEAR LEGAL NEED:

Your business must be well positioned to benefit from legal services. Start-ups are required to provide a business plan and demonstrate that their venture is at a stage where legal assistance is appropriate.

3. COST PROHIBITIVE:

You must provide information affirming why you cannot currently afford legal services.

What We Do:

We offer a range of legal services, including one-on-one volunteer attorney consultations related to your specific business issues, webinars, and other informational materials, on various legal topics relevant to small businesses, including:

- **Business Formation & Choice of Corporate Entity**

Make an informed decision on the best legal structure for your business (Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, LLC, C-Corporation, S-Corporation) based on an understanding of the differences in cost, complexity, flexibility, control and tax treatment.

Register a limited liability entity for a business, draft bylaws, operating agreement and other organizational documents, and take all formation steps required by regulators, licensors and taxing authorities.

- **Corporate governance**

Understand and observe all applicable corporate formalities, including separation of business and personal finances and required corporate meeting minutes.

- **Financing Transactions**

Review and understand documentation related to loans from banks, government agencies, and other sources.

Document and understand structure, negotiation and requirements for taking on investors in a business.

Explain the rights and obligations under an existing loan, including working with creditors to negotiate and restructure debt that is in default.

- **Contract Drafting & Review**

Document all important business arrangements and agreements in writing, including with customers, website users, investors and independent contractors.

- **Commercial Leases**

Explain the rights and obligations under an existing or proposed lease, including lease negotiation techniques, common terms, hidden costs, and other potential pitfalls.

- **Trademark Protection**

Consult with an attorney on the best way to protect your intellectual property. Limited availability to assist with trademark registration.

- **Employment Law**

Maintain adequate employment documentation and understand employer responsibilities, including wage and hour, discrimination laws, workers comp, disability, payroll taxes, personnel files, and employee versus independent contractor.

- **And Many Others**

Questions?

Not sure if the Small Business Legal Program is right for you? Or, do you have any other questions? Please reach out to Probono@mailbox.sc.edu.

Eligibility Criteria:

	Income of Each Individual Owner	Assets (liquid) of all owners	Profits	Gross Sales
Start Up (<1 year):	≤200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines	≤\$50,000		
Existing Business (≥1 year):	In addition to the above, the business must meet the following criteria →		≤\$75,000	≤\$250,000

Annual Income Levels at 200% FPL

- **1 Person: \$31,300**
- **2 Persons: \$42,300**
- **3 Persons: \$53,300**
- **4 Persons: \$64,300**
- **5 Persons: \$75,300**
- **6 Persons: \$86,300**
- **7 Persons: \$97,300**
- **8 Persons: \$108,300**
- **For households with more than 8 members, add \$11,000 for each additional person**

FAQ**If I'm accepted, how long will I have the attorney's services?**

The amount of time needed to complete an engagement depends on the nature of the engagement. When you work with an attorney, you will identify your legal needs, and then the attorney will work to meet those needs. The attorney/client relationship concludes once those identified needs are met. We strive to conclude matters within 90 days.

Are the services really free?

Yes! Lawyers are encouraged to provide 50 hours of free legal services every year to those who cannot afford an attorney. All of the firms that have partnered with GROW SC have agreed to offer their services completely free of charge. As a client, you will need to cover your own filing and registration fees, but you will never have to pay for legal services.

I have worked with GROW SC previously and now I need additional legal services. Can I reapply?

Yes. Simply fill out another application and note that you are a return client. Our hope is that eventually, your business will be prosperous enough that you will no longer qualify for our services. Until then, you are welcome to work with us.

Small Business Resources:

<https://www.score.org/>

[CLIMB Fund | Lending for Opportunity](#)