

Legal Services for People in Prison and Jail

These organizations provide legal assistance to people in prison. Each listing has been confirmed by the relevant organization within the last year.

Alabama

Equal Justice Initiative 122 Commerce Street Montgomery, AL 36104 <http://www.eji.org/> (334) 269-1806 fax (334) 269-1803 phone **Focus area/description:** EJI works with communities that have been marginalized by poverty and discouraged by unequal treatment. EJI litigates on behalf of condemned prisoners, juvenile offenders, people wrongly convicted or charged with violent crimes, poor people denied effective representation, and others whose trials are marked by racial bias or prosecutorial misconduct. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

Arizona

Middle Ground Prison Reform 139 East Encanto Drive Tempe, AZ 85281 <http://www.middlegroundprisonreform.org> middlegroundprisonreform@msn.com (480) 966-8116 phone **Focus area/description:** Middle Ground Prison Reform is involved in advocacy for Arizona families who have a member in prison or jail. Also offers public education and training seminars for families coping with imprisonment, litigates for the rights of prisoners and their supporters, and provides specialized fee-based consulting services for inmates and their families; includes Clemency Board presentation preparation, protective custody, medical, visitation, probation supervision and restoration of civil rights. Middle Ground Prison Reform is not a direct social-service delivery agency. (Confirmed: Jul. 21, 2014)

California

Prison Law Office General Delivery San Quentin, CA 94964 <http://www.prisonlaw.com> **Focus area/description:** The Prison Law Office provides free legal services to California state prisoners, and occasionally to California state parolees. Assistance is generally limited to cases regarding conditions of confinement. The Prison Law Office also provides self-help and informational materials to prisoners, some of which are published on their website, including a habeas corpus manual, parolee rights manual, and personal injury lawsuit packet, as well as material regarding administrative remedies, divorce, guard brutality, immigration, loss of personal property, plea bargains, release dates, workers' compensation, and worktime credits. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) of Southern CA 1313 West Eighth St., #200 Los Angeles, CA 90017 <http://www.aclusocal.org> (213) 977-9543 (no collect calls please) **Focus area/description:** The ACLU of Southern California works to preserve and guarantee the protections of the Constitution's Bill of Rights. It aims to extend these freedoms to segments of our population who have traditionally been denied their rights, including people of color; lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered people; women; mental-health patients; prisoners; people with disabilities; and the poor. (Confirmed: Jun. 24, 2014)

ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties P.O. Box 87131 San Diego, CA 92138-7131 <http://www.aclusandiego.org/> 619-232-2121 x240 **Focus area/description:** The ACLU of San Diego and Imperial Counties fights for individual rights and fundamental freedoms for all. We generally file cases that affect the civil rights of large numbers of people, rather than those involving a dispute between two parties. (Confirmed: Jun. 28, 2014)

Colorado

ACLU of CO 303 E. 17th Ave., Suite 350 Denver, CO 80203 <http://www.aclu-co.org/> (303) 777-5482 **Focus area/description:** The ACLU of Colorado's mission is to protect, defend, and extend the civil rights and civil liberties of all people in Colorado through litigation, education, and advocacy. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

Connecticut

Inmates' Legal Assistance: A Program of Schulman & Associates 78 Oak Street PO Box 260237 Hartford, CT 06126 (860) 246-1119 fax(860) 246-1118 phone(800) 301-4527 phone **Focus area/description:** Inmates' Legal Assistance program provides legal assistance to incarcerated people in Connecticut in civil matters involving terms and conditions of confinement only. Also helps female inmates with civil matters including including family matters such as divorce, child support, visitation and custody issues. (Confirmed: Jul. 15, 2014)

District of Columbia

D.C. Prisoners' Project Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs 11 Dupont Circle NW, Suite 400 Washington, D.C. 20036 <http://www.washlaw.org/projects/dc-prisoners-rights> (202) 319-1010 Fax(202) 319-1000 General information, no collect calls(202) 775-0323 Prisoner help line, collect calls accepted **Focus area/description:** Helps D.C. prisoners and ex-prisoners advocate for humane treatment, particularly with regard to medical and mental health services, safe conditions of confinement, access to the courts, and parole grant and parole supervision issues. (Confirmed: Jun. 20, 2014)

Delaware

ACLU of Delaware 100 W. 10th Street, Suite 603 Wilmington, DE 19801 <http://www.aclu-de.org> **Focus area/description:** The mission of the ACLU of Delaware is to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the constitutions and laws of the United States and Delaware guarantee everyone. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

Florida

Florida Institutional Legal Services (FILS) 14260 W. Newberry Rd., #412 Newberry, FL 32669 (352) 375-2494 phone1-888-375-2494 Toll Free **Focus area/description:** FILS provides high-quality, aggressive and holistic advocacy to prisoners, jail inmates, incarcerated juveniles, immigrants held in detention and individuals in indefinite civil detention or commitment. FILS also provides direct legal services to formerly incarcerated individuals re-entering into society to help end the cycle of recidivism through successful re-entry into the community. (Confirmed: Jul. 23, 2014)

Florida Justice Institute (FJI) Attention: Intake 100 SE 2nd St., Suite 3750 Miami, FL 33131-2113 <http://www.floridajusticeinstitute.org> (305) 358-0910 Fax(305) 358-2081 phone **Focus area/description:** FJI handles civil rights actions affecting conditions in Florida's prisons and jails. Legal services provided to inmates also include damages suits and civil rights cases. No post conviction or criminal cases are accepted. Prisoners or family should contact this group by visiting the website and clicking "Contact Us." (Confirmed: Jun. 24, 2014)

Hawaii

Hawaii Office of the Ombudsman 465 S. King Street 4th floor Honolulu, HI 96813 <http://www.ombudsman.hawaii.gov> (808) 587-0773 fax(808) 587-0770 phone(808) 587-0774 TTY **Focus area/description:** Receives, and where deemed appropriate, investigates complaints from inmates regarding administrative acts of staff of the Department of Public Safety, State of Hawaii. Does not provide advocacy or legal services. Open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, except for state holidays. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

Illinois

Prisoners Rights Research Project University of Illinois College of Law 504 East Pennsylvania Champaign, IL 61820 (217) 333-4205 Voice **Focus area/description:** Prisoners' Rights Research Project is a student run organization at the University of Illinois College of Law. PRRP can provide legal research on specific questions on Illinois or federal law. PRRP can also provide print copies of specific legal documents (such as cases or statutes) from all jurisdictions. (Confirmed: Feb. 14, 2014)

John Howard Association 375 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 529 Chicago, IL 60611 <http://www.thejha.org/> (312) 503-6306 Fax **Focus area/description:** Advocacy on prison conditions and prisoners' rights. The John Howard Association monitors policies, practices, and conditions of confinement in prisons and jails in Illinois and advocates on behalf of incarcerated individuals, parolees, and the formerly incarcerated. The Prison Response Project of JHA cannot furnish legal counsel or provide representation, as this project does not employ licensed attorneys. JHA can provide incarcerated individuals with statutes, court decisions, and other information. If it is possible to do so, JHA can provide forms and rules. JHA can also explain penal policies and practices related to the state of Illinois. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

The MacArthur Justice Center Northwestern University School of Law 375 E. Chicago Ave. Chicago, IL 60611 <http://www.law.northwestern.edu/macarthur/> (312) 503-1271 phone **Focus area/description:** Impact litigation on criminal justice issues, focused specifically on Illinois. Individual prisoner cases are rarely accepted. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

Indiana

ACLU of IN 1031 E. Washington St. Indianapolis, IN 46202 <http://www.aclu-in.org/> (317) 635-4059 **Focus area/description:** The ACLU of Indiana litigates cases involving the constitutional and religious rights of prisoners, including prison and jail conditions in Indiana. We do not litigate cases involving post-conviction relief or appeals of criminal convictions. We do not usually litigate individual damages cases. (Confirmed: Jun. 30, 2014)

Massachusetts

Prisoners' Legal Services 10 Winthrop Square Floor 3 Boston, MA 02110-1264 <http://plsma.org> (617) 451-6383 Fax(617) 482-2773 Main **Focus area/description:** PLS provides civil legal services, not criminal defense services, to people in Massachusetts prisons and jails. The office focuses on four issues: health and mental health care, guard-on-prisoner violence, physical conditions of confinement, and segregation and isolation. PLS has a toll free speed dial number accessible to all state prisoners on the PIN system: #9004. County prisoners must call collect on (617) 482-4124. Families and friends of prisoners can also call PLS for free on 1-800-882-1413 toll free from anywhere in the

state. Prisoners who cannot reach us by phone should write to the address above. Regular call-in hours are 1:00 to 4:00 on Monday afternoons unless you are in segregation, in which case you can call between 9:00 and 4:00, Monday to Friday. If you are calling from seg, please state your unit to our receptionist to get through. On weeks when Monday is a holiday, PLS accepts calls on Tuesday from 1:00 to 4:00. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

North Carolina

North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services, Inc. PO Box 25397 1110 Wake Forest Road Raleigh, NC 27611 <http://www.ncpls.org> ncpls@ncpls.org Email(919) 856-2223 Fax(919) 856-2200 Main **Focus area/description:** Provide legal services to people incarcerated in North Carolina to ensure that all prisoners are treated humanely. Although NCPLS cannot provide representation to every prisoner who contacts them, they respond to every inquiry they receive, and keep track of recurring complaints so they can identify and concentrate on areas of broad concern. (Confirmed: Dec. 19, 2014)

New Jersey

NJ Office of the Corrections Ombudsman PO Box 855 Trenton, NJ 08625 <http://www.state.nj.us/correctionsombudsman/> 1-555-555-5555 Inmate only toll free number(609) 633-2596 Main **Focus area/description:** The Office of the Corrections Ombudsman provides a mechanism for the continuing resolution of issues, problems or complaints of state prisoners within New Jersey's Correctional System regarding their living conditions and treatment. The Corrections Ombudsman investigates complaints where the inmate has failed to get satisfactory results through available institutional channels. (Confirmed: Jun. 24, 2014)

ACLU of New Jersey PO Box 32159 Newark, NJ 07102 <http://www.aclu-nj.org/> (973) 642-2084 **Focus area/description:** The ACLU-NJ works to defend liberty throughout our state. One's civil liberties are protected by the First Amendment and include rights to equal treatment, fairness, privacy, freedom of speech or religion. The ACLU-NJ is involved in litigation and advocacy on behalf of individuals, including prisoners. (Confirmed: Jun. 30, 2014)

Nevada

ACLU of NV 601 S. Rancho Drive, # B-11 Las Vegas, NV 89106 <http://www.aclunv.org> (702) 366-1226 **Focus area/description:** The ACLU of Nevada works to defend and advance the civil liberties, civil rights and other fundamental human rights of all Nevadans. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

New York

Prisoners' Legal Services of NY 41 State Street, Suite M112 Albany, NY 12207 <http://www.plsny.org/> (518) 445-6050 fax(518) 445-6053 phone **Focus area/description:** Prisoners' Legal Services of New York (PLS) provides free civil legal services to New York state prisoners. The decision to assist with any particular case depends on the issue or problem presented, the chance of success, the amount of time and resource necessary to properly assist, the office's resources, staff availability and caseload. PLS is also happy to provide self-help and informational materials to prisoners. Due to the large number of inquiries, PLS cannot accept telephone calls from prisoners and their families. (Confirmed: Dec. 19, 2014)

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project (PAILP) The Cast Iron Building, Suite 304 South 718 Arch Street Philadelphia, PA 19106 <http://www.pailp.org> alove@pailp.org Email(215) 925-5337 Fax(570) 523-1104 Lewisburg Office(215) 925-2966 Main/Philadelphia Office(412) 232-0276 Pittsburgh Office **Focus area/description:** The Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project (PAILP) provides free legal assistance in civil matters to low-income people who are incarcerated or institutionalized. Intake Process: By phone, M-F, 9am-5pm. PAILP has a staff person who responds to every inquiry. An assessment of legal merit is made and if appropriate, information and referrals are provided. (Confirmed: Dec. 19, 2014)

Rhode Island

ACLU of Rhode Island 128 Dorrance Street Suite 220 Providence, RI 02903 <http://www.riaclu.org/> (401) 831-7171 **Focus area/description:** The mission of the ACLU is to preserve and protect First Amendment rights, the right to equal protection under the law, the right to due process, the right to privacy. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

South Carolina

Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. 3710 Landmark Dr, Ste 208 Columbia, SC 29204 <http://www.pandasc.org> (803) 782-0639 1-866-232-4525 toll-free voice/TDD **Focus area/description:** Provides legal assistance on conditions and treatment issues to prisoners with disabilities. Does not do criminal work. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

Texas

Disability Rights Texas 2222 West Braker Lane Austin, TX 78758 <http://www.drxtx.org> (512) 454-4816 voice/TDD(800) 252-9108 voice/TDD **Focus area/description:** Advocacy for disabled people in Texas county jails. (Confirmed: Aug. 4, 2014)

Vermont

Prisoners' Rights Office 6 Baldwin Street, 4th Floor Montpelier, VT 05633-3301 <http://www.defgen.state.vt.us/> (802) 828-3194 phone **Focus area/description:** This section of the Vermont Office of the Defender General handles prisoners' rights cases. (Confirmed: Jun. 30, 2014)

ACLU of Vermont 137 Elm St. Montpelier, VT 05602 <http://www.acluvt.org/> (802) 223-6304 **Focus area/description:** The American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont is dedicated to the defense of individual rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as well as the Vermont Constitution. The ACLU operates a number of specific projects, including the AIDS Education Project of the National Prison Project and the Gay and Lesbian Rights Project of the ACLU. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

Washington

ACLU of WA 901 Fifth Avenue, Suite 630 Seattle, WA 98164 <https://www.aclu-wa.org> (206) 624-2180 (206) 624-2184 **Focus area/description:** The mission of the ACLU is to preserve and protect First Amendment rights, the right to equal protection under the law, the right to due process, the right to privacy. (Confirmed: Jul. 10, 2014)

Columbia Legal Services, Institutions Project 101 Yesler Way, Suite 300 Seattle, WA 98104 <http://www.columbialegal.org/> (800) 542-0794 (206) 382-3399 collect **Focus area/description:** The Institutions Project (IP) represents people confined in Washington's jails, prisons, juvenile detention facilities, mental health facilities, and facilities for people with developmental disabilities. This work has focused on conditions of our clients' confinement, discrimination, sentencing and placement, alternatives to institutionalization, and access to courts, as well as issues related to rehabilitation, re-entry, and reductions in recidivism. (Confirmed: Jul. 7, 2014)

National organizations

These organizations offer help to prisoners in any state by providing legal assistance or inexpensive, high-quality self-help materials. See the individual listings for details.

Equal Justice Initiative 122 Commerce Street Montgomery, AL 36104 <http://www.eji.org/> (334) 269-1806 fax(334) 269-1803 phone **Focus area/description:** EJI works with communities that have been marginalized by poverty and discouraged by unequal treatment. EJI litigates on behalf of condemned prisoners, juvenile offenders, people wrongly convicted or charged with violent crimes, poor people denied effective representation, and others whose trials are marked by racial bias or prosecutorial misconduct. (Confirmed: Jun. 23, 2014)

Prison Law Project - Jailhouse Lawyers Handbook National Lawyers Guild 132 Nassau Street, RM 922 New York, NY 10038 <http://www.jailhouselaw.org/> (212) 679-2811 fax(212) 679-5100 phone **Focus area/description:** This Handbook is a resource for prisoners who wish to file a Section 1983 lawsuit in federal court regarding poor conditions in prison and/or abuse by prison staff. It also contains limited information about legal research and the American legal system. The Handbook is available for free online to anyone at www.jailhouselaw.org, or by mail. Prisoners can write to the addresses above. (Confirmed: Jun. 18, 2014)

Human Rights Defense Center / Prison Legal News P.O. Box 1151 Lake Worth, FL 33460 <http://www.prisonlegalnews.org> and www.humanrightsdefensecenter.org (561) 360-2523 phone **Focus area/description:** The Human Rights Defense Center publishes a monthly magazine on prisoner rights (for incarcerated people, \$30/year; for others please write or see website), and also sells litigation manuals, law and self-help books. (Confirmed: Jul. 28, 2014)

This resource list is edited by the Prison Policy Initiative which confirms each listing at least once per year. For longer descriptions of each organization or to submit other organizations to the list, please visit <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/resources/legal/>. Because people in prison cannot access the internet, Prison Legal News is distributing this resource guide on paper. Prison Legal News P.O. Box 1151 Lake Worth, FL 33460. PLN's website has all back issues of the magazine and the most comprehensive database of detention facility news and litigation. www.prisonlegalnews.org. This resource guide was printed on January 20, 2015. If that is more than a year ago, please see the Prison Policy Initiative website for a newer version before making further copies of this guide.