Is this a Legal Issue?

Identifying Legal Issues in the Course of Consumer Dialogue
The Northwest Justice Project is a not-for-profit corporation established to provide civil legal services to low-income persons throughout the State. Each year NJP provides critical civil legal assistance and representation to thousands of low-income people in cases affecting basic human needs such as family safety and security, housing preservation, protection of income, access to health care, education and other basic needs.

**CLEAR Helpline:**
1-888-201-1014

**CLEAR*Sr Helpline:**
1-888-387-7111
Legal Services – Idaho & Oregon

Idaho Legal Aid Services
A non-profit law firm & community education organization
www.idaholegalaid.org

Idaho Senior Legal Hotline: 1-866-345-0106

Legal Aid Services of Oregon
www.lasoregon.org

Oregon Public Benefits Hotline: 1-800-520-5292
Washington Elder Law Access Workgroup

Under a U.S. Administration for Community Living grant, a coalition of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), legal services attorneys and others are working to improve access to legal services and develop legal education programs for older adults in Washington.
Washington Legal Needs Survey

**What?** A short survey on given to AAA/ADRC case managers, information specialists and others working with older adults.

**When?** August 2014

**Goal?** Understand the intersection of social and legal services for older adults in Washington State in order to improve access to legal services and information.
Washington Legal Needs Survey

167 Participants

- Case Manager/Case Aide: 61%
- Information Specialist: 17%
- Other: 22%

NW-AIRS Conference - Oct. 2014
“Other” Participants

- Caregiver Support Specialists
- Family Educators
- Nurses
- Nurse Consultants
- ESL Coordinators
- Legal Services Attorneys
- Nutrition Program Specialists
- Program Managers/Coordinators
- Resident Services Coordinators
- SHIBA Volunteers
- Community Services Directors
- Counselors

NW-AIRS Conference - Oct. 2014
How often do older consumers (60+) ask you legal questions?

- < 1 per week: 60
- 1-2 per week: 50
- 4-5 per week: 20
- > 5 per week: 10
When an older consumer asks you a legal question, what do you do?

Referral & Information

Private Attorney

NJP, CLS, NWIRP, Legal Voice, Asian Counseling & Referral, etc.

Washington lawhelp.org

Volunteer Lawyer Program or Law School Clinic

Senior Center Workshop

211

Volunteer Lawyer Program or Law School Clinic

Senior Center Workshop

211
Most Common Legal Problems?

1. Housing
2. Power of Attorney
3. Medical Coverage
4. Income Maintenance
5. Long-Term Care
6. Guardianship
7. Abuse
8. Bankruptcy/Debts
9. Wills/Estates
10. Family Law
When do I know it’s a legal problem?
Criminal Law
Housing
Advanced Planning
Health Care & Long Term Care
Financial Security
Guardianship
Abuse & Financial Exploitation
Consumer & Debt
Family Law
Finding Resources
What Resources Do You Need?

• “Brochures are very helpful and we often **hand them out** to clients who come into the office as well as **mail** them out to people.”

• “I like **facts sheets** that answer frequently asked questions.”

• **Streamlined** brochures on specific legal topics.”

• “We could use **low literacy** materials on medical coverage issues.”

• “**Translated** materials in Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian/Khmer, Spanish, Tagalog would be wonderful!”
What Resources Do You Need?

- “Short Videos for staff and clients educating might work better than providing written information. Provide both.”

- “Pamphlets that clarify the services the particular agency will provide and how best to reach them.”

- “Clinics at locations where seniors can access not far from home.”

- “Cheat sheet or decision tree for CMs with updated and bulleted information.”

- “Trainings for CMs regarding basic information topics often asked by seniors.”
Finding Resources

• Legal Advice & Referral Hotlines

• Legal Clinics

• *Pro Bono* Attorneys

• Informational Pamphlets

• Self-Help Forms

• Videos
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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON POWERS OF ATTORNEY

COLUMBIA LEGAL SERVICES

JULY 2013

1. What is a power of attorney?

It is often convenient—or even necessary—to have someone else act for you. When you give someone the authority to act for you, you give what is called a power of attorney. If you give a power of attorney, you are called the principal and the person you give it to is called the agent or the attorney-in-fact.

A paper signed by a principal giving powers to an agent is sometimes itself called a power of attorney.

A paper giving a power of attorney should be clear and understandable. It should give only those powers you want to give. The power given may be very limited or very broad.

The basic laws about powers of attorney can be found in Chapter 11.94 of the Revised Code of Washington. The Revised Code of Washington should be available in most public libraries. You can find it on the Internet at www.law.wa.gov by selecting "Laws and Agency Rules."

2. What kinds of things may I authorize an agent to do?

Many things that people do may be done through agents. An agent may be authorized to:

• manage a business
• collect debts
• invest money
• cash checks
• manage financial matters generally
• sue on behalf of the principal

3. When does a power of attorney take effect and how long does it last?

A power of attorney can be written to take effect immediately or to take effect at some time in the future. The future time may be a specific date or may be defined by the occurrence of some event—for example, a certification by your doctor or by some other person of your choice that you are unable to make decisions on your own. A power of attorney can be written to last either for a limited period of time or indefinitely.

Your power of attorney ends when you dies, so it is not a substitute for a will. The effect of mental incapacity on a power of attorney is discussed in the next section.

4. What is a durable power of attorney?

Unless your power of attorney specifically says otherwise, your agent’s power ends if you become mentally incapacitated.

However, a power of attorney can last it...
Videos

www.YouTube.com/NWJusticeProject
The End