

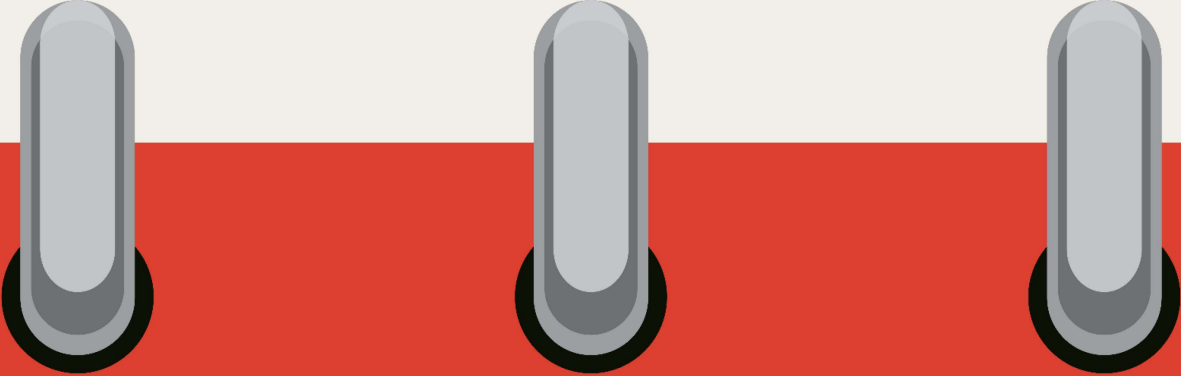
Summer 2026



***CLOCK TOWER
QUARTERLY***

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Save the Dates

July 2nd: Family Law Workshop

July 3rd: Independence Day Observed (County Closed)

July 16th: Family Law Workshop

August 6th: Family Law Workshop

August 20th: Family Law Workshop

August 22nd: 11th Annual Healthy Lives Matter Alzheimer's Education Seminar

September 3rd: Family Law Workshop

September 7th: Labor Day (County Closed)

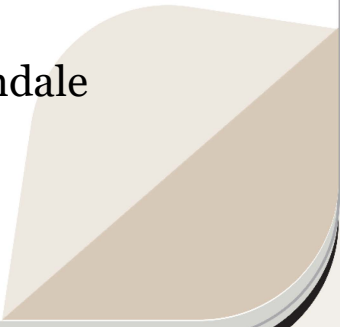
September 8th & 9th: 4th Annual Women in Agriculture Conference

September 17th: Family Law Workshop

September 26th: 'Keep Persevering Day' in Honor of Peggy Martindale

October 1st: Anniversary of Law Library Formal Opening in 1945

October 1st: Family Law Workshop



The Briefing: *Department Roundup*

Introducing *The Briefing: Department Roundup* – a new section dedicated to sharing updates, events, and announcements from departments across the County. Although these items aren't Law Library news, they offer a quick look at what's happening throughout the organization and highlight useful information from our County partners.

TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Tarrant County Public Health is intensifying World Cup '26 readiness through coordinated planning with local agencies, state partners, and federal departments to ensure a safe tournament. Internally, Tarrant County Public Health is strengthening outbreak preparedness, updating response protocols, and training staff for rapid mobilization. Enhanced syndromic surveillance and expanded wastewater monitoring will help detect early signs of infectious disease activity. Together, these efforts position Tarrant County to protect residents and visitors while supporting a successful global event.



Commissioner Roderick Miles, Jr. and The Honorable Roy Charles Brooks cordially invites you to attend the 11th Annual Healthy Lives Matter Alzheimer's Education Seminar on Saturday, August 22, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The event will be held at Tarrant County College Trinity River Campus, 300 Trinity Campus Circle, Fort Worth, Texas 76102.



THE TARRANT COUNTY OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ARCHIVES IS CELEBRATING ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY!

The archives was established in 1976. For the past 50 years, their mission has been to collect, preserve, and provide access to materials that serve as a record of Tarrant County history. These include documents, photographs, scrapbooks, land records, and so much more. The archives is located on the fifth floor of the Tarrant County Plaza Building and are open to the public for research. Check out their website for more information, and feel free to contact them or stop by for a visit!

tarrantcountytx.gov/archives

A Health and Wellness Expo for Seniors and Caregivers

EMPOWERING SENIORS *Expo 2026*

Thursday, October 1, 2026



Tarrant County Judge
Tim O'Hare

Hosted by

Commissioner
Matt Krause



You are invited to the 2026 Empowering Seniors Expo, hosted by Tarrant County Judge Tim O'Hare and Commissioner Matt Krause.

Attendees: Come learn about services that will empower seniors, family members, and caregivers to live a healthier lifestyle! As an attendee, you'll enjoy everything free including admission, lunch, parking, health screenings, workshops, tote bags, fun activities, and more!

Exhibitors/Sponsors: Let us help you reach over 2,500 attendees, more than 190 fellow exhibitors/sponsors, and 100+ incredible volunteers.

FREE EVENT

For all seniors and caregivers.

LOCATION

Will Rogers / Amon G. Carter Jr. Exhibits Hall

***FREE Admission, Lunch, Parking, Health Screenings,
Workshops, Tote Bag, Door Prizes, Fun Activities, and More!***



REGISTER NOW

www.empoweringseniors.com



WEBSITE

www.empoweringseniors.com

PHONE

817-248-6295

EMAIL

empoweringseniors@tarrantcountytx.gov

Have you...

Changed your name? or Moved Recently?



Update your **Voter Registration**
and be VOTE Ready for the
upcoming General Election in
November 2026.

Visit: www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/register2026



**ELECTIONS
ADMINISTRATION**



TARRANT COUNTY HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY HOUSING CHANNEL

The program objective is to provide affordable homeownership opportunities for low to moderate income families in Tarrant County.

Applicant's household income must be at or below 80% of HUD area median income adjusted for household size.

Dependent upon availability, up to \$50,000 in financial assistance is available for down payment, closing costs and principal reduction for income-qualified homebuyers to purchase homes within Tarrant County but outside Fort Worth, Arlington, and Grand Prairie.

For more information visit
HousingChannel.org
or call 817-924-5091.



TARRANT COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE LAUNCHES FREE NOTARY FRAUD ALERT SERVICE

The Tarrant County Clerk's Office is proud to announce the launch of Notary Fraud Alert, a new FREE service designed to help protect notaries from fraudulent activity.

As the first county clerk's office in Texas to offer this innovative protection tool, The Tarrant County Clerk's Office continues to lead the way in harnessing technology to safeguard public records and support notaries across our community.

The Notary Fraud Alert service allows registered users to receive notifications when a notary filing is recorded under their name. This early warning system helps notaries quickly identify potential unauthorized or suspicious activity and take action if needed.

"Our office remains committed to protecting the integrity of public records while providing modern, citizen-focused, cost-effective services," said Tarrant County Clerk Mary Louise Nicholson. "Notary Fraud Alert is another proactive step in fighting fraud."

For more information on or to register for NFA, visit:

[Tarrant County Clerk NFA](#)



REFERENCE DESK SIDEBAR

Statutes related to Notaries

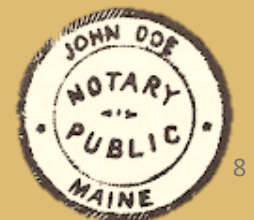
- Texas Government Code, Chapter 406
- Texas Civil Practice & Remedies Code, Chapter 121
- Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 4, Chapter 87

To become a notary public in Texas, you must:

- Be a Texas Resident;
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Maintain no convictions for a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude (theft, various misdemeanors).

Notary Complaints

A person harmed by the actions of a Texas notary public may file a complaint with The Office of the Texas Secretary of State. They may take disciplinary action against a Texas notary public in cases where good cause exist.



4th Annual

Women in Agriculture

CONFERENCE

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

September 2026

Tuesday, September 8 &
Wednesday, September 9

**REGISTRATION
NOW OPEN!**

Women in Agriculture Registration

\$199 Per Person

**Plus Processing Fee*

Click to Reserve Your Discounted Room!

**Springhill Suites
Fort Worth Stockyards**



INSPIRED BY ANNIE'S PROJECT

Vision:

Women in Agriculture are change agents who
strengthen their businesses, families & communities

Mission:

To empower women to be successful through
education, network and resources

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Hosted by:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Tarrant County
Ag/NR Agent Jacklyn Jones-Doyle
jacklyn.jones@ag.tamu.edu or call 817-884-1945.

Educational programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, natural origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioner Courts of Texas Cooperating. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid service, or an accommodation in order to participate in this event are encouraged to contact Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service office listed above.



DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Tarrant County Dispute Resolution: Supporting Peaceful Resolution Through Mediation

Tarrant County Dispute Resolution (TCDR) is committed to helping neighbors, families, businesses, and organizations resolve conflict in a respectful, efficient, and affordable way. Our goal is simple: to provide a structured, neutral environment where people can work through disagreements and reach mutually acceptable solutions.

What Is Mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process that allows parties in conflict to meet with a trained, impartial third party—the mediator—who guides a structured conversation. Unlike a judge or arbitrator, a mediator does not decide who is right or wrong. Instead, the mediator helps participants clarify issues, explore options, and craft their own agreement.

The mediation process empowers individuals to maintain control over the outcome while reducing the time, cost, and stress often associated with court proceedings. Because parties design their own solutions, mediation frequently leads to more durable, satisfying resolutions.

Services Provided by Tarrant County Dispute Resolution

TCDR offers a range of services designed to meet the needs of individuals, families, businesses, and the legal community. Our services include:

- **Civil Mediation:** For neighborhood disagreements, consumer-merchant issues, landlord-tenant disputes, property matters, and other civil conflicts.
- **Family Mediation:** Assisting families with parenting plans, communication issues, visitation matters, and other sensitive domestic concerns.
- **Court-Referred Mediation:** Partnering with local courts to provide timely, neutral mediation services that help reduce caseloads and support early resolution.
- **Community Education & Outreach:** Offering presentations and information about conflict management, mediation benefits, and how alternative dispute resolution strengthens community relationships.

Our Commitment to the Community

Tarrant County Dispute Resolution is proud to serve residents by providing accessible, affordable services supported by highly trained mediators. We believe every person deserves the opportunity to resolve conflict in a safe, respectful environment. Through mediation, we help restore communication, preserve relationships, and promote lasting resolution.

For more information about scheduling a mediation, upcoming educational opportunities, or general questions about our services, the Tarrant County Dispute Resolution office is always here to help. For more information visit: <https://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/disputeresolution>

NATIONAL LAW DAY



Left to Right:
Nancy, Deneshia,
Amanda, Judge
Swearingin Jr.,
Amarainie, Cara,
Colleen

May 1st was National Law Day! The library celebrated by dressing as Judges and showcasing the Texas Constitution.



Boom or Bust: Understanding Fireworks Laws from State to City

By: Amarainie Marquez

Summer in Texas usually comes with fireworks blazing in the sky near 4th of July across the state. You can typically see multiple fireworks shows happening simultaneously, but if you decide to make your own fireworks fun instead of heading somewhere to see a professional performance, you'll want to understand fireworks laws so that your celebrations don't end in a bust! Here's what you need to know to keep the festivities legal, safe and fun.

STATE: According to the Texas Occupations Code Section 2154.003, Texas allows consumer grade fireworks at 1.4G statewide, which includes things like sparklers, fountains, snap pops, Roman candles, smoke devices and small rockets/firecrackers that are compliant with federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standards.

TARRANT COUNTY: In **unincorporated** Tarrant County, all fireworks stands and stores must pass a fire and life safety inspection from the Fire Marshal's Office and are required to have a permit. Fireworks display and show launch sites must also be inspected. Summer sales windows to buy fireworks are from June 24 – midnight July 5. If you want to light your own fireworks, you must do so in unincorporated areas of Tarrant County, on private property with the owner's permission. Unincorporated areas of Tarrant County are those outside city limits, managed directly by the county and not governed by local municipalities.

No matter where you are in Texas, it is considered a Class C Misdemeanor to set off fireworks within 600 feet of any church, hospital, asylum, school, child care center, or other similar institution, selling/igniting within 100 feet of a place where flammables are located or fireworks are stored or sold, and igniting within, from, placing in or throwing at a motor vehicle. If any of these results in at least \$200 of damage or injury, it becomes a Class B Misdemeanor.

CITIES – FORT WORTH: Zero fireworks allowed! As noted in Section 5601.1.3 of Fort Worth City Code, "The possession, manufacture, storage, sale, handling and use of fireworks are prohibited." The only exception is for permitted professional fireworks displays. There is up to a \$2,000 fine for illegal fireworks in the city. Most cities in DFW follow suit – stick to unincorporated Tarrant County instead.



<https://pantherislandpavilion.com/event/fort-worths-fourth-4/>

<https://www.tdi.texas.gov/fire/documents/fmfirewrkstac.pdf>

<https://countygoprodblob2023.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/cms/tac/media/default/member-services/legal/burn-ban-fireworks/2026-web-fourth-of-july-fireworks.pdf>

<https://www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/content/dam/main/fire-marshall/FM-FireworksPenalties.pdf>

<https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/news/2025/6/rerun-fireworks-warning>

Before we jump into more fireworks fun information, there's one thing I'd like to mention for my DIY fireworks fans. Fireworks fire and bodily injuries are a very real threat to consider. Fireworks started an estimated over 32,000 fires in 2023 which caused several deaths, injuries and millions of dollars in property damage. US hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 9,700 people for fireworks related injuries, and that's only considering the folks who sought treatment! Of those, nearly half were injured on their extremities (hands, fingers, legs, arms) and 22% were injured to the head, face and ears.

That being said, if you still want to try fireworks out on your own and are able to find a safe, legal location to pop fireworks (likely private property with the owner's permission, in unincorporated Tarrant County) here are some tips to keep the fun safe! Firstly, be sure to buy only from reliable fireworks sellers and never experiment or attempt to make your own fireworks. Store them in a cool, dry place and always have water or a fire extinguisher handy in case of a malfunction or fire. Find a smooth, flat surface away from buildings, dry leaves or grass and always have adult supervision. When you're ready to pop some fireworks, keep these tips in mind:

1. Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks! That includes sparklers – which reach temperatures of 1800° F and more.
2. Always read and follow label directions, warning and instructions
3. Only ignite fireworks outdoors and away from as much as possible, especially houses, people, buildings and other structures
4. Be sure that other people and pets are out of range and as far away as possible before lighting fireworks
5. Only light one firework at a time
6. Never re-light a firework that was not fully functional
7. Never throw fireworks – especially at a person, vehicle, animal, etc.
8. Never carry fireworks in your pocket
9. Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers
10. Dispose of spent fireworks properly – contact your local fire department to schedule a drop off or arrange a pickup. Do not put them in your garbage or recycling bins, and do not take them to the Environmental Collection Center or solid waste drop off stations.



4th of July can be a great way to celebrate the establishment of the United States, enjoy summer fun and see fireworks light up the sky at night. Consider attending city-sanctioned professional shows, for the safest and fully legal option for fireworks fans. Don't ruin the fun – inform yourself on all the applicable laws, follow guidelines and rules, respect city boundaries and practice safety when popping fireworks on your own. If you keep these things in mind, you can let your celebrations boom without letting legal trouble bring your fun to a bust. Happy (and legal) celebrating!

Heat & Housing: Tenant Rights During Extreme Temperatures in Texas

By: Amarainie Marquez

Texas is no stranger to extreme temperatures. Last summer, DFW saw 7 days of 100°F or higher temperatures, but only a few years ago in 2023, we saw 55 days of 100°F or higher temperatures. As of this writing, our monthly average temperatures are already higher than the past few years, so I am anticipating we'll see plenty of extreme temperatures this summer. With air conditioning being a vital way of staying cool in the Texas heat, this article is going to go over tenant rights when those conditions force people to stay indoors to avoid heat-related threats like heat stroke and more.

To start off, there is no state law that specifically gives tenants the right to be provided with climate control measures like air conditioning or heating. However, the law or lease agreement may require the landlord to protect their tenant against extreme temperatures or to maintain existing climate control units. Check your lease to see if it mentions air conditioning or heating – has your landlord agreed to maintain them? Check your local ordinances as well – your city may have specific requirements for your landlord regarding HVAC systems.

According to Fort Worth city code § 7-88, “Fixed air conditioning systems, when provided, shall be maintained in good condition...” which is further clarified as “designed to cool to a 20 degree differential between inside and outside temperatures and shall function to at least a 15 degree differential.” What does this mean? If it's 100°F outside, your A/C should be designed to cool the inside of your home to 80°F and should actually cool to a minimum of 85°F.

As far as repairing that existing climate control unit, as we know some A/C units may have a hard time keeping up with the rising temperatures, your landlord **is required** to make certain kinds of repairs: **those that affect ordinary tenants' physical health and safety**. These could typically include roaches, rats, sewage leaks, roof leaks, faulty electrical wiring and normal “wear and tear” such as broken flooring. People with disabilities may have the right to additional repairs. Some things to keep in mind:

1. Do not make repairs yourself: it's usually not a good idea to try to make repairs yourself or call a repair person yourself either. You might not get reimbursed for your time and money and if you make the damage or situation worse, you may end up paying even more than expected.
2. Give your landlord written notice: If you send it by certified mail return receipt requested, you only need to do this once. Otherwise, you will need to send a second notice. Take

pictures, be very specific about repairs needed and keep copies of everything. Give the landlord at least 7 days for repairs.

3. Your landlord may refuse to make repairs: your landlord is only required to fix the problem if you are current on rent when you give the notice, you report the problem to the place where rent is paid and the problem affects your health and safety. Even then, they don't have to fix the problem if you or your guests caused the damage or if the issue is about getting utility service when utility lines aren't reasonably available.
4. Your landlord cannot evict you if you ask for repairs: your landlord cannot retaliate against you for requesting repairs that affect your health and safety for the next 6 months from your request to repair (they also can't terminate your lease or increase your rent unless it's already scheduled).
5. If your landlord ignores your written request(s): terminate the lease or go to court.
 - a. Termination: if you gave a written request and you don't owe rent, give a written notice about why you are terminating and the date you'll leave. You have the right to a refund for rent already paid for the days you won't be there and for your security deposit.
 - b. Court: Sue your landlord to make the repairs and for damages. A court can order your landlord to make repairs, reduce your rent from the date you asked for repairs and award you damages caused by failure to repair, damages of one month's rent plus \$500, court costs and attorney's fees. If your damages are \$20,000 or less, you can sue in JP court where you won't need a lawyer and the court should be able to hear your case fairly quickly, as soon as 10 days from when you file.

Under Texas Property Code Section 92.0561, tenants can have the condition repaired and then deduct the costs of repairs from a subsequent rent payment. This is known as the "repair and deduct" remedy but it has very strict requirements about notices, deduction amounts and repairs. Failure to follow the exact steps can have serious consequences, including late fees, civil penalties and even eviction.³ If you're considering any of these options, but especially this one, it's a good idea to talk to a lawyer first.

Lastly, while your landlord cannot retaliate against you for 6 months from your request to repair, it's also always a good idea to be on your best behavior – they can still certainly choose to take action against you, including eviction, if you threaten the safety of the landlord or intentionally damage the property. Then you'd really have a hard time staying cool in the Texas heat!

BEACH READS: SUMMERTIME LEGAL HEAT

By: CK Hardy



Because nothing says “fun in the sun” quite like chlorine, melted desserts, and cosmic land grabs.

The Woman Who Owns the Sun (and Is Using Her Powers for Good?)

Spain gave us tapas, flamenco, and apparently a woman bold enough to file paperwork claiming legal ownership of the Sun (the actual star, not the “newspaper”). Her plan? To sell solar usage rights and list parcels of our nearest star on eBay with a portion of profits marked for charity. Ultimately, eBay disagreed, treaties disagreed, astrophysics disagreed... but as summer legal curiosities go, it’s pure gold.

Please wear sunscreen; we do not yet know her stance on enforcement.

Pool Rules: No Diving, No Running, And Keep Accurate Records

Douglas v. Brittain Resorts & Hotels, LLC reminds us that pool safety is serious business, especially when chemical logs are falsified. During a vacation, a toddler suffered chlorine burns after a dip in the resort pool. Discovery later revealed that the pool chemical logs were...let’s say, creatively authored. The judge required the resort to disclose current net worth and compelled production of historical pool logs and employee hours. Eventually, news outlets reported a \$26 million settlement instead of a jury trial.

The Floating Home That Became a Supreme Court Case

Lozman v. City of Riviera Beach (2013) Is it a house, a boat, or a houseboat? Lozman lived in a floating home docked in Florida. The city first tried and failed to evict him from the marina, so then “the city brought a federal admiralty lawsuit in rem against the floating home”. The Eleventh Circuit Court originally held that the house was not a vessel but was later reversed when two Supreme Court judges dissented stating that “It is not clear that Lozman’s craft is a vessel. It is clear, however, that we are not in a good position to make such a determination based on the limited record we possess.”



Cape Cod’s Legendary Beach Umbrella Tort

In O’Sullivan v. Shaw (2000), a man dove into the shallow end of a pool and suffered an injury. The Massachusetts high court ruled that the danger of diving into shallow water “is open and obvious to a person of average intelligence, the defendants had no duty to warn the plaintiff of this danger as a matter of law and, therefore, they could not be found liable for his injuries.”

THE MELTED ICE CREAM DOCKET



Case v. Wal-Mart

Deborah Case worked for Frito-Lay, stocking chips at a Wal-Mart. Not feeling well one morning, she brought her husband to help. At some point, vanilla ice cream melted onto the floor. Deborah slipped, fell, and suddenly her workday became a case. She sued for damages, and her husband sued for loss of consortium. Everyone filed for summary judgment. Wal-Mart stocked the ice cream; Frito-Lay stocked the chips; the court stocked the docket and denied both motions for Summary Judgement.

600 lb. Gorillas, Inc. v. Fieldbrook Foods Corp. & Mister Cookie Face (“MCF”)

600 lb. Gorillas, Inc. (yes, that’s real) sued Fieldbrook Foods Corp. and Mister Cookie Face (yes, also real) for failing to manufacture ice cream to specification. After 14 days of trial a jury determined:

- MCF breached the contract,
- MCF and Fieldbrook breached good-faith duties and were liable for negligent misrepresentation,
- *and*, plot twist, Gorillas also breached the contract.

Damages flew in both directions: \$725,000 to Gorillas in damages and \$270,785.37 in damages to MCF on quantum meruit, “the reasonable value of services; damages awarded in an amount considered reasonable to compensate a person who has rendered services in a quasi-contractual relationship”,

With a name like 600 lb. Gorillas, you’d think they’d win by sheer intimidation. But apparently even a 600-pound metaphorical primate can lose a contract claim when the ice cream isn’t up to code.

Buckley v. Bruster’s (2026)

Floridians have a new reason to fear dessert. A woman in Palm Bay purchased ice cream only to discover nails and metal shards blended in. She required emergency surgery and suffered life-changing injuries. A jury found that the franchise was liable and awarded Buckley \$14,147,5245.39.

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DELL DEHAY LAW LIBRARY

Hours:

Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm

Note: Public computers automatically shut down at 4:00pm

Phone Number:

817-884-1481

Email:

lawlibrary@tarrantcountytexas.gov

Physical Address:

100 W. Weatherford St., Suite 420

Fort Worth, TX 76196

Website:

<https://www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/law-library.htm>

CONNECT WITH A LAW LIBRARIAN

Although not required, we recommend scheduling a one-on-one appointment with a Law Librarian for in-depth research questions to ensure we can give your request the time and attention it deserves.

Note: Librarians cannot provide legal advice, which includes choosing specific forms, applying facts to the law, telling you what to do in your case, or performing any tasks that would be considered the practice of law. However, we can help you find information and legal resources to support your research.

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