

Being in the Know-Part 2

It is also important to be an informed consumer about important areas in your life such as; estate planning, trusts and wills, real estate concerns, landlord/tenant disputes, domestic/family matters such as separation or divorce, child custody and/or support, and business matters.

A valuable resource is your local State Legislators who have booklets on:

- a. **Consumer Protection Resource Guide.** This booklet contains consumer rights/protection, home improvement programs, consumer credit loan and more.
- b. **Tenant and Landlords-A Practical Guide.** This booklet contains information on rental agreement, and the tenant/landlord relationship.
- c. **Peace of Mind-A Guide to Medical and Legal Decisions.** This booklet contains the “do’s and don’ts” of will preparation for yourself, your family members and/or your significant others).
- d. **Michigan’s Friend of the Court.** This booklet contains information on child support, child custody, and visitation for Michigan children.
- e. **Changes and Choices.** This booklet contains legal rights of senior adults such as; guardianship, durable power of attorney, selecting a nursing home and more. This booklet also contains information on estate planning and how to start the probate process.

You can obtain these booklets by calling your State Legislator or going online at www.michigan.gov, you can get them online by going to:

- www.michigan.gov
- Click “Online Service” at the top of the website
- Scroll down to “A to Z Listing”
- On right hand side under Quick Links click “MI Legislature”
- When you get to the Michigan Legislature Website on the left hand side near the bottom`` click “Publications”
- Scroll down to Publication and you will see General Interest Publication

3. There are other resources on the DOC Work/Life web page. You can access the web page by going to: www.michigan.gov/corrections, click on “Human Resources”, and click on “Work/Life Services” then click on the Legal Service page, which lists several valuable resources such as

- a. State Bar of Michigan (Michigan On-line Self Help Center, Consumer Tips and Alerts)
- b. American Association of Retired Persons-AARP (This agency will help AARP members with legal services for the fraction of the cost of a private practice attorney).

- c. United Way -211 (a free telephone number that connects people with community services such as health care, job training, mortgage foreclosure assistance and more).

Seeking assistance from a legal professional to help manage your legal problems or questions may seem intimidating, and many people won't seek out the assistance of an attorney because of this fear. If you want to go this route it is important to find someone you feel comfortable with and that you can afford. The following are some suggestions to help you;

- Inquire with relatives, and friends.
- Ask someone you respect, such as a religious leader, or a community leader.
- Call the State Bar of Michigan for a list of names of lawyers and interview them before setting up an appointment.
- If you have sought out the assistance from a lawyer in the past and have been satisfied, go back to that person.

If you have further questions the State of Michigan Employee Service Program (ESP) provides EAP assistance to classified state employees and their eligible family members. You can talk with Employee Service Program counselors by phone or in person, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. anywhere in Michigan at 800-521-1377. ESP's web page is located at www.michigan.gov/esp