

## Additional Representation

In those cases where a brief consultation with the Plan attorney will not be adequate, the participant has the option to retain the attorney for direct representation. This will not occur without express instructions from the client.

The Plan attorney will then bill the participant directly for these additional services. Participants will receive at least a 25 percent discount on legal fees for services not covered by the Plan.

## Disputes Among MNA Members

In cases of consultations which involve disputes among MNA members, the attorney may provide general or hypothetical advice on the legal issues presented, but cannot offer specific counsel or advocacy. The attorney cannot directly represent or advise one member against another, regardless of their status as participants in the Plan.

## Confidentiality

The Plan will maintain strict standards of confidentiality on behalf of each participant, unless expressly authorized otherwise.

## Access to the Attorney

Unless unlimited access to the attorney becomes excessive, any newspaper employee may contact the Plan attorney. It is up to the newspaper to decide which employees will be authorized to contact the attorney. A newspaper's local attorney or a newspaper company's general counsel may also consult the Plan attorney.



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## Minnesota Newspaper Association

# LEGAL HOTLINE PLAN

## Purpose and Scope of the Plan

The purpose of the Plan is to provide participants with a reliable, low cost, quickly available source of expert legal advice for answers to questions about legal issues in most areas of law affecting newspapers.

Few businesses need prompt, reliable, and accurate legal counsel more than newspapers do. The activities in which newspapers are engaged intersect with a wide range of legal issues, including libel, unfair competition, taxes, employee issues, privacy, the Internet, employee laws, and access to records and meetings. There are often important differences in these areas of law from one state to another.

MNA's Central Office is not always in a position to answer legal questions, and does not retain an attorney to answer such questions from members. If the member contacts an attorney, even MNA's counsel, the attorney must send the member a bill, sometimes unpleasantly large. Local attorneys, while very competent in the areas of law in which they normally practice, cannot be expected to keep up with the complex changes in laws affecting newspapers.

The rapid evolution of the laws affecting newspapers makes it more important than ever that newspapers have access to prompt and reliable legal advice. MNA's Hotline serves that need.



**The First Amendment**  
*of the United States Constitution*

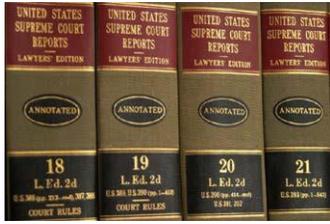
*Congress shall make no law  
respecting an establishment of religion,  
or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;  
or abridging the freedom of speech,  
or of the press;  
or the right of the people peaceably to assemble,  
and to petition the government  
for a redress of grievances.*



MINNESOTA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION  
FREE PRESS  
FREE PEOPLE  
1867

## How the Plan Works

Participants in the Plan pay a small annual fee to the Plan. With these funds, the Plan retains an attorney familiar with media and newspaper law.



This attorney is available to Plan participants to answer questions, by phone, e-mail or letter. There is no limit on the number of consultations per year, so long as the questions can be answered without the need for additional legal work, including research and investigation.

Experience shows that the great majority of legal issues that arise for newspapers can be disposed of in this manner, without the need for further legal expense.

**Specific Areas of Advice**  
Consultation will be available in the following areas, to the extent they are related to News-papers:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open records</li> <li>Open meetings</li> <li>Access to courts</li> <li>Legal and court procedures</li> <li>Antitrust/Unfair competition</li> <li>Postal regulations</li> <li>Independent Contractor rules</li> <li>Internet law</li> <li>Law enforcement procedures</li> <li>Legislation</li> <li>Libel, defamation, slander</li> <li>Public notice/legals</li> <li>Legal newspaper qualifications</li> <li>Employer-employee laws, such as Wages/Hours</li> <li>Discipline and discharge</li> <li>Discrimination</li> <li>Employee policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising laws</li> <li>Gambling/lottery</li> <li>Housing discrimination</li> <li>Supplements/inserts</li> <li>Releases</li> <li>Legal publication rates</li> <li>Political/candidate advertising</li> <li>Other advertising</li> <li>Newspaper tax matters</li> <li>Sales tax</li> <li>Use tax</li> <li>Tax on newsprint and ink</li> <li>Excise tax</li> <li>Shield law/reporters privilege</li> <li>Insurance regulations</li> <li>Invasion of privacy</li> <li>Copyright law</li> <li>First Amendment issues - miscellaneous</li> <li>Cameras in the courtroom</li> </ul>
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Whenever possible, the advice provided will be specific and comprehensive. However, the attorney will avoid involvement in the editorial process.

## Administration of the Plan

The Plan will be under the direct sponsorship and control of the Minnesota Newspaper Association. MNA collects fees, promotes the program, decides who should be the Plan attorney, and coordinates the operation of the Plan with the attorney.

MNA has no legal liability for advice given or actions taken by the Plan attorney.

## Participation

Participation in the Plan is strictly voluntary. Participants, however, must agree to remain in the Plan for a one-year period. They may join at any time, and may quit as of the expiration of each one-year term.

**Cost to Participants** Fees for the plan are based on the circulation of a newspaper, reflecting the fact that, as a rule, larger newspapers generate a greater number of legal questions. The following table gives the fee structure:

### Weeklies & Monthlies

Under 2,000	\$15.50/mo.	\$186/yr.
2,001-4,000	\$22.50/mo.	\$270/yr.
Over 4,000	\$31.50/mo.	\$378/yr.

Fees are paid in advance on an annual basis. Participants not paying fees in a timely manner may be excluded from the Plan.

### Dailies

Under 5,000	\$31.50/mo.	\$378/yr.
5,001-10,000	\$60.50/mo.	\$726/yr.
10,001-20,000	\$90.00/mo.	\$1,080/yr.
20,001-50,000	\$119.00/mo.	\$1,428/yr.
Over 50,000	Negotiated	

These rates apply for each newspaper participating, even if two or more papers are controlled by the same owner. However, in such common ownership situations, certain discounts are available, since many of the potential "HOTLINE" questions involve legal concerns of the newspaper owner

These discounts are as follows:

10%	discount for the second newspaper under common ownership
20%	discount for the third newspaper under common ownership
30%	discount for the fourth newspaper under common ownership
40%	discount for the fifth or more newspaper under common ownership

In this discount schedule, the largest paper in the group shall be considered the first newspaper, second largest in the group the second newspaper, etc.

Since employees of all newspapers in the Plan may call the attorney, every newspaper under common ownership should become a participant.