

OEA Legal and Corporate Services Division

Unified Legal Services Program

OEA attorneys actively represent OEA and its members in statewide litigation involving education and other public interest issues. Our 3 in-house attorneys, with over 50 years combined experience and expertise in education law, who represent OEA members across the State of Oklahoma under the Guidelines of the OEA/NEA Unified Legal Services Program (ULSP) in defense of your employment including:

- Terminations, dismissals, non-renewals and other employment related disputes, OEA attorneys will represent you, **FREE OF CHARGE**
- Appeals to state or federal level courts, OEA attorneys will represent you, **FREE OF CHARGE**

Eight (8) OEA Advocacy UniServ Specialists who work across the entire State of Oklahoma with you and/or your local affiliate and coordinate with the OEA Legal and Corporate Services Division to answer questions and assist you, with disputes concerning:

- **Member Advocacy:** Advocates offer assistance with writing responses to evaluations, admonishments or plan of improvements, assistance with individual rights and employment problems, and representation with disciplinary issues.
- **Collective Bargaining Assistance and Preparation:** Over 200 local OEA affiliates are recognized to bargain in Oklahoma and OEA Advocates are trained in a variety of bargaining methods and skilled in every facet of the bargaining process, from preparing to circulate a petition for recognition to impasse resolution.
- **Local Association Advocacy:** Advocates provide assistance to local associations in grievance processing, contract maintenance, privatization issues, health and safety issues, and other local Association issues.

This coverage is for active members only and is a **BENEFIT OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP**. For more information, contact your local Advocacy UniServ Specialist or the OEA Legal Services Division at 1-800-522-8091.

Educators Employment Liability

The NEA Educators' Employment Liability (EEL) Program is a professional liability insurance program that is provided by OEA/NEA as a **BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP** to cover members during the scope of their employment or an investigation by a law enforcement agency that could give rise to criminal proceedings, and is underwritten by AIG Insurance Company. This benefit includes:

Up to \$1,000,000 in damages if you are sued for liability arising out of your educational employment activities.

- Up to \$300,000 in coverage if you are sued in an employment-related matter that involves civil rights violations.
- Up to \$35,000 for attorney fees* if you are charged in an employment-related criminal matter.
- Up to \$1,000 reimbursement for bail bond premium if you are arrested in an employment-related criminal matter.
- Up to \$500 for personal property damage if you are assaulted on the job. (Vehicles and school property are excluded).

You must be exonerated except in cases of corporal punishment.

This coverage is for **active members** only. For more information, contact your Advocacy Specialist or the OEA Legal Services Division at 1-800-522-8091.

Attorney Referral Program

OEA has for many years provided members full legal protection in employment-related matters, but in today's complex world, simply having legal help for employment-related matters isn't enough. At one time or another, each of us needs legal counsel on personal matters that are important to us and our families.

That's why NEA created the **Attorney Referral Program**. This unique program is designed to make sure that every NEA/OEA member in participating states has access to affordable legal advice. This program includes:

- 2 **FREE** 30-minute consultations per year
- A 30% discount off of the attorney's normal hourly rate

The five (5) "core" areas of coverage under this program are:

- Wills and estates
- Real estate
- Domestic relations
- Consumer protection
- Traffic violations

NEA is committed to making sure that qualified and competent attorneys participate in the NEA Attorney Referral Program. Before any attorney can become a part of the program, they must be approved by both the NEA and OEA. Also, they must agree to provide services to members at times that are convenient to members—times outside the normal working day.

Participating attorneys must agree to discuss fees before they render services. They must be willing to accept payment of their fees by installment payment plan or by credit card.

Who Can Participate?

Any active, life, support, retired member and their spouses and dependent

children are eligible for the NEA Attorney Referral Program. OEA has identified attorneys' throughout the state who have agreed to handle the core areas above at a substantially reduced rate.

Personal Legal Services Program

The OEA **Personal Legal Services Program** (PLSP) is provided by OEA as a benefit of membership. The PLSP is administered through the OEA Legal and Corporate Services Division in Oklahoma City and is divided into 5 categories, Planning, Financial, Family matters, Defense, and Advocacy. This program has been managed by the White & Weddle P.C. since its inception in 1996. Fully covered services include:

- Simple Will, Living Will
- Power of attorney
- Pre-nuptial Agreement
- Prep. of an authorization to consent to medical treatment
- Prep. of an authorization to transport a minor out of the U.S.
- Consultation and assistance in creditor disputes
- Child support enforcement (in-state litigation only)
- Name change
- Misdemeanor
- Paternity
- Juvenile court proceedings
- UNCONTESTED adoptions (step-parent only)
- UNCONTESTED divorces/annulment/ separation
- UNCONTESTED modification of a domestic relation order

Reduced rate services include:

- Personal injury/Property damage
- Felony
- Wrongful death/Nursing home neglect
- Identity theft
- Victim protection order
- Recovery of property wrongly held by another
- Defamation (libel/slander)
- Intentional infliction of mental distress
- Assault/battery/trespass
- CONTESTED divorce
- CONTESTED modification of a divorce decree

The PLSP is intended to provide services for **personal legal problems** for a member, the member's spouse and the member's dependent children. Funding will be available under the program not more than once each year from September 1 through August 31.

First and foremost, OEA members receive free legal advice and defense when facing disciplinary action and employment-related contractual disputes — *no deductibles* — *no cost to members* — *no referring of cases to inexperienced counsel or attorneys without education law experience*. Instead, we employ attorneys who have decades of experience successfully representing teachers and dealing with education issues — we win or successfully settle 75% of the cases we litigate, and our in house attorneys handle the majority of claims. Unlike the benefits provided by other organizations, disciplinary defense doesn't have a dollar limit. We have expended hundreds of thousands of dollars in defense costs on numerous individual cases — with the member paying only their annual dues and nothing more. We also litigate issues that have state-wide impact for all education professionals from protecting the due process rights of all education employees to ensuring that your rights are protected in the event of a reduction in force.

Second, OEA members receive an incredibly valuable set of benefits for legal services not related to their employment. Through the **Personal Legal Services Program** (“PLSP Program”), a member can receive a will, power of attorney, uncontested divorce, representation of misdemeanor charges, in-state child support enforcement — all at no charge. The value of any one of these services is a great deal more than annual dues.

Third, for matters not covered by the PLSP program, the NEA Attorney Referral Program provides a member with legal advice regarding real estate, estate planning, guardianship proceedings, adoption, traffic violations and much more at a discounted rate of 30 percent reduction off of participating attorneys' normal fees with two free 30-minute consultations per program year.

Finally, we also provide to members **personal liability insurance coverage** (i.e. if the member gets sued for on the job conduct) and provides legal defense in the event a member, while in the scope of employment, faces criminal charges. These programs are over and above the general legal services described in the preceding paragraphs and our coverage exceeds those of any other competing organization. **Our coverage documents are available for anyone to review — and before believing the promises of any other organization or any quotes relating to how much insurance they have, ask for a copy of their coverage agreement. If a document isn't forthcoming — don't believe what you don't receive. If a document is available, any OEA staff member will be happy to review it with you and do a line by line comparison of what OEA offers.**

In summary, there is no other organization, plan, or benefit that provides the quality and quantity of legal protection and services an OEA member receives as a benefit of their membership.

— Richard Wilkinson, OEA general counsel



Legal and Corporate Services Division



Oklahoma Education Association
putting education first™

323 East Madison
P.O. Box 18485
Oklahoma City, OK 73154
Phone: 405-528-7785
Fax: 405-523-4392
www.okea.org

