

Our Mission and Vision

Access to the American legal system should be available to all people. Acting on our public interest values, [Access Justice](#)SM is committed to providing efficient and *affordable* access to justice for low- and moderate-income individuals, disadvantaged minorities, nonprofit organizations and small businesses whose limited resources have prevented them from securing the quality legal counsel they need and deserve.

It's About Time!

For far too long, millions of ordinary people have had to make a difficult choice. Very often, they don't qualify for free legal services, and can't afford most attorneys. They have to settle for whatever representation they can get, or none at all.

"Access Justice is just what the doctor ordered to meet ordinary people's legal needs."

- The Hon. Lawrence D. Cohen, former Mayor of St. Paul, MN



A Law Firm Different

[Access Justice](#) is a different kind of law practice. Teaming with like-minded professionals, we collaborate with public interest organizations, law schools, law firms, foundations and others, in order to address the needs of those not being effectively served by the existing legal system.

And, we do so either without cost (*Pro Bono*), for modest flat fees, or at very affordable rates (*Low Bono*)...never more than \$99/hour. Never.

Serving Ordinary People

No longer must our society accept the huge and unfortunate "gap" in the availability of quality, affordable legal services for ordinary people. [Access Justice](#), with our emphasis on social justice, offers quality assistance on a wide array of legal issues.

"Access Justice is something that is so desperately needed."

- Joel Albers, Executive Director,
United Healthcare Action Network

Clients' Needs, Access Justice's Experience

Our professional staff and broad network of affiliated attorneys offer our clients quality and affordable legal assistance to meet their needs. We answer questions, offer counsel, draft and review documents, provide valuable tools and resources for self-help and to settle disputes—helping clients avoid costly legal battles—in many areas of law, such as:

- Alternative Dispute Resolution & Mediation
- Collections, Credit, Consumer Protection
- Criminal Defense (Adults/Juveniles)
- Disability Issues
- Elder Law
- Employment Issues
- Family Matters (Divorce, Support, Adoption)
- Housing
- Immigration
- Individual & Human Rights
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Small Business Issues
- Wills, Trusts & Health Care Directives
- ...and many others!

The [Access Justice](#) team is constantly growing. Our commitment is to protect the rights of the poor, distressed and disadvantaged, and ordinary under-represented people and organizations. We vigorously voice their concerns in the legal system by offering quality, affordable legal assistance for *whatever* issues may arise.

People Make The Difference

Staff

[Access Justice](#) is headed by Jim Cohen, its Executive Director. Working with Mr. Cohen is an outstanding professional staff of attorneys and paralegals, qualified in diverse areas of law, research, writing, information dissemination, organizing, and nonprofit administration.

Interns and Volunteers

Our staff is ably assisted by a core of dedicated interns and talented volunteers who contribute hundreds of hours of service to the important work of [Access Justice](#).

Directors

[Access Justice](#) policy is established by an experienced and dedicated Board of Directors who commit significant time and talent to our mission. Their work helps secure the resources essential to the funding and growth of our programs and services.



National Board of Advisors

To compliment the Directors and staff, [Access Justice](#) is establishing a national Board of Advisors comprised of distinguished people in the legal, business and academic communities.

"I've imagined a firm like this for over 20 years."

- Bob Seng, Assistant General Counsel, Target Corporation



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Access Justice welcomes your support. Tax-deductible donations may be made securely at www.AccessJustice.net.



It's About Time!

Ordinary people of low- and moderate-income need and deserve access to quality and affordable legal services...Now!



Access JusticeSM
A Law Firm Different

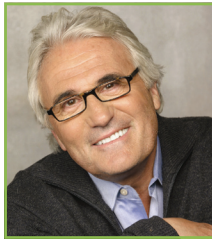
Serving clients' needs...and the public interest

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE LEGAL SERVICES
Never more than \$99 per hour. Never.

A Nonprofit Law Firm for Ordinary People
www.AccessJustice.net

Executive Leadership

Attorney Jim Cohen founded [Access Justice](#)SM in 2009 as the realization of a dream. Beginning with his service at the distinguished D.C. firm of Covington & Burling, Mr. Cohen's many and ongoing commitments as a human rights activist, public interest advocate and environmentalist include:



Jim Cohen, public interest advocate and Executive Director of Access Justice.

- Founding Director of the Washington D. C. office of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (now Earth Justice)
- President of the Environmental Task Force, a national grass-roots-based environmental organization
- Executive Director of Community Environmental Legal Services, a public interest environmental law firm
- A Deputy Assistant Director of the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Consumer Protection
- Advocate for the constitutional and civil rights of American Indians.

Throughout his more than four decades as an advocate for un- and under-represented clients, Mr. Cohen has seen first-hand how, all too often, our legal system consistently works best for clients with the greatest financial resources. For Jim and the qualified team of legal professionals at [Access Justice](#), that is neither fair nor acceptable...and must change.

“Tens of millions of forgotten Americans—especially low- and moderate-income working families— still find access to justice an elusive process. Quality and affordable legal services are beyond their reach. That can and must change. Our commitment at Access Justice is to play a meaningful role in helping to ensure that such unfairness is minimized in Minnesota and eventually nationwide.”

-Jim Cohen, Founder & Executive Director, [Access Justice](#)



Proactive Legal ServicesSM

People often wait until they are sick or in pain to go to the doctor. And when it comes to legal issues, many wait until there is a critical problem to find an attorney. That model is inefficient, ineffective and more expensive.



At [Access Justice](#), we believe in Proactive Legal ServicesSM - preventive legal counsel that emphasizes, whenever possible, solving problems efficiently without resort to costly litigation, and always with an eye toward serving the public interest.

George, developmentally delayed and unemployed, lived with his elderly mother, Mary. When Mary's health seriously deteriorated, she lost everything including her savings and even their home. Mary had no healthcare directive, no will and no written plan for George's care. As a result, George was placed in adult foster care and was unable to visit with his mother.

If Mary had received proactive legal counsel from [Access Justice](#), she would have been advised on how to protect her home, assets and the benefits available to George due to his disability. And, with a written health care directive, Mary could have had her end-of-life wishes honored.

“Our non-litigious approach solves problems efficiently and saves clients' time and money. By staying out of court as much as possible, we help clients protect what is rightfully theirs and achieve their goals at minimal cost.”

- Jessica, [Access Justice](#) Attorney; Volunteer: Tubman Safety Project, MN LegalCorps, Legal Aid, SMRLS

Collaboration

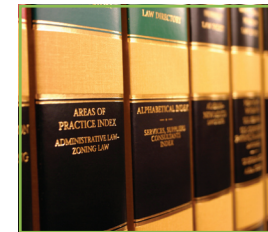
Re:SourcesSM: Shared Information

[Access Justice](#) is not just a new way to practice law. We also will act as a clearinghouse for the best practices and the most relevant information on various legal issues affecting ordinary people of low- and moderate-income. Rather than constantly re-inventing the legal wheel at unnecessary cost, our team of legal professionals will collect and share online materials and proven strategies used to solve people's everyday problems most effectively.

Re:Sources is a collaborative approach.

Working with other public interest organizations, law schools, law firms and others, we will provide access to a central data base of case materials, research, forms, pleadings and other resources. This effort will serve both the public interest law community and the private bar.

Re:Sources projects include an online newsletter, blog and conferencing capability.



On the Horizon

[Access Justice](#) is planning new programs to better serve the diverse legal needs of our clients and to strengthen the collective impact of public interest law as a whole. Among them:

- **Minorities, New Immigrants and Senior Citizens Project:** A comprehensive and focused program of education, resource support, community networking and legal assistance for the poor, disadvantaged and under-represented persons, the elderly and nonprofit organizations with limited access to the legal system.
- **Resource Guides:** Practical information manuals about specific issues of importance to low/middle-income people and small nonprofits, such as elder law, disability law, employment issues, and others.
- **Speakers Bureau:** A program bringing [Access Justice's](#) executive director, professional staff and recognized legal experts to communities in Minnesota, and throughout the country, to inform and educate ordinary people about legal issues and ways in which they can more effectively access the legal system.

Advocacy

Life's important decisions—such as those involving people's homes, health care, credit and critically needed support—often have hidden pitfalls. Not reviewing these issues and securing assistance from a qualified legal professional can have disastrous consequences.

The problem: The legal needs of most ordinary people and organizations of limited means go largely unmet, because they rarely can afford quality legal assistance.

The solution: [Access Justice](#).

Whenever possible, [Access Justice](#) fights for the rights of—and solves legal issues for—ordinary people without resorting to costly litigation.

Public Interest Litigation

Some matters simply can't be resolved without formal court or agency involvement...so we're ready to fight for clients' rights. Where appropriate and necessary, [Access Justice](#) will work collaboratively with other public interest organizations, private law firms and area law schools on a *Pro Bono* basis to engage in significant public interest litigation at the state and federal levels.

Eligibility for Services and Fees

While law firms typically charge \$200-\$800 per hour, or even more, [Access Justice](#) respects the realities of our clients and recognizes their financial circumstances, especially in times of economic stress.

For people whose family income falls in the range of 125%-300% of the federal poverty guidelines, we often will charge no fees at all

(*Pro Bono*). If fees are charged, our *Low Bono*, sliding scale reduced rates are never more than \$99 per hour (or an agreed-upon flat fee).

Rates are never more than \$99 per hour