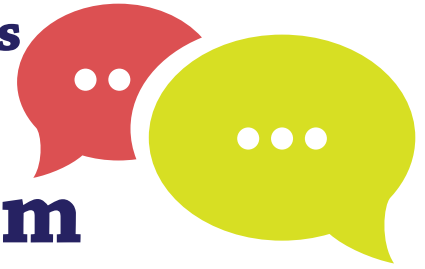




State Bar of New Mexico  
Young Lawyers Division

# The History of the State Bar of New Mexico's Young Lawyers Division's Ask-a-Lawyer Call-in Program



## 1. When did the Young Lawyers Division's Ask-a-Lawyer Call-in Program first launch?

The Young Lawyers Division's Ask-a-Lawyer Call-In Program was first introduced in the late 1990s, following the events of the Dome Fire in 1996. Shortly after the wildfires took place near Los Alamos, the State Bar of New Mexico and the Young Lawyers Division facilitated the first-ever Ask-a-Lawyer Call-In Day, which was held at Channel 4 in Albuquerque. During the event, which took place in the early evening, a televised broadcast would display volunteer attorneys answering incoming calls from New Mexican residents. This would prompt additional calls from viewers of the event, and this format would maintain its structure until it later became housed at the State Bar Center.

## 2. How has the Ask-a-Lawyer Call-In Program evolved since it was established?

Since the Ask-a-Lawyer Call-In Program's inception in the late 1990s, it has gone through multiple transitions and formats. Over the years, the Call-In Program evolved from a special event held at Channel 4 to an annual event at the State Bar Center. For a time, it was regularly held at KOB and supported by both the Young Lawyers Division and Senior Lawyers Division. For the past several years, it has been held at the State Bar Center, where attorneys can either register to volunteer in person or virtually. The Call-In Program's current format enables attorneys to effectively serve New Mexicans across the state, both enabling volunteer attorneys to provide free legal consultation from the comfort of their home or from the State Bar Center and giving New Mexican residents access to additional legal resources and services.

## 3. Does participation in the Ask-a-Lawyer Call-in Program contribute to pro bono requirements?

Yes, it does. Most clinics are about 3 hours long, giving attorneys a good opportunity to conduct multiple hours of pro bono work.

## 4. How does the Ask-a-Lawyer Call-in Program align with the mission and values of the Young Lawyers Division?

The mission of the Young Lawyers Division is to uphold the integrity and respect of the legal profession, deliver meaningful services to its members and foster a strong commitment to public service. This program directly supports that mission by offering members an accessible and collaborative opportunity for community outreach—whether by joining fellow attorneys at the State Bar of New Mexico to field calls and confer on legal questions or by participating remotely from the comfort of their own homes. Having the ability to confer with other attorneys while fielding calls is a great way for young attorneys to dip their toes into areas of law that they are just learning and want to feel more comfortable. It is also a great way to network while providing public service.

## 5. What are some other pro bono/volunteer opportunities offered or supported by the Young Lawyers Division?

- The Young Lawyers Division hosts the **Wills for Heroes** program at which volunteer attorneys provide wills, advance healthcare directives and powers of attorney free of charge to New Mexico first responders. Events are held approximately four times per year in various regions of the state. Our next event will be in the **Fall of 2025** in Bernalillo.