



AEA LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

For AEA Members Only



arizonaaea.org/helpdesk



Employment Protection

If you face dismissal from your job, or suspension of your fingerprint clearance card, or an investigation your certificate from the State Board of Education, the AEA Legal Defense Fund – supported by AEA and NEA member dues – will help you through the crisis. An AEA assigned attorney will defend you before your school district, the Arizona Board of Fingerprinting, or the State Board of Education. If your district has falsely accused you of abusing a student, has not renewed your contract for an unlawful reason, or has illegally discriminated against you, an AEA-assigned attorney will help you understand your legal rights and options. AEA retains attorneys throughout the state to help inform and defend members.¹

In addition to that protection, when the conditions guaranteed in your contract are not met, your local association, with help from AEA experts, will work to resolve your problems. AEA has trained staff to assist you and your local association to resolve employment disputes through grievances and disciplinary appeals.

AEA staff also will refer you to government agencies that provide free help for employment problems, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Department of Labor.

AEA also assists local associations with grievance training, arbitrations, bargaining strategies, and a variety of other employment matters.

Attorney Referral for Personal Legal Problems

Your membership in the Association entitles you to two free 30-minute legal consultations each year for personal legal problems in the areas of family law, consumer protection, traffic violations, wills and estates, and real estate. Many members resolve problems on their own after obtaining preliminary legal advice. If you need additional legal help, you may have legal work performed at a 30% reduction of the attorney's normal fee.

Your AEA Organizational Consultant has a list of attorneys throughout Arizona who are part of this program. You can also contact arizonaaea.org/helpdesk.

Liability Protection

Your active Association membership provides you with a \$1 million professional liability insurance policy. You are covered if a parent or student sues you for something that occurs while you are “on-the-job.”² You can be sued in your employment capacity for a variety of reasons, including student injury, property damage, or discrimination based on race, religion, sex, or disability. Your AEA liability policy covers all legal defense expenses and court-ordered judgments, up to \$1 million for most claims and up to \$300,000 for civil rights claims.

You also could face criminal charges related to your employment, such as false accusations that you abused a student or stole school property. Your AEA insurance will reimburse you for criminal legal defense expenses up to \$35,000 if the proceeding is dismissed or you are exonerated. You also can be reimbursed for up to \$1,000 for a bail bond premium.

If you are assaulted at work, your clothing or glasses could be damaged. Your AEA insurance will reimburse you up to \$500 for personal property damage caused by the assault.

This coverage supplements your employer's insurance and helps protect members faced with frivolous lawsuits and false accusations. The power of your Association is the foundation for this remarkable protection.

Training Opportunities

Conferences, seminars, and workshops sponsored by AEA enhance your professional expertise. AEA provides training programs at local, regional, and state levels in grievance processing, bargaining, advocacy, public relations, communications, leadership development, political action, professional development, quality education, community organizing, and more. Programs can be customized to meet local needs.

AEA staff have expertise in a wide variety of employment subjects. They can provide information to you and your local association on basic school law, grievance procedures, evaluation procedures, performance-based pay, employee rights, employment discrimination, sexual harassment, and many more employment topics.

Member Advocacy and Legal Resources

As an AEA member, you have access to valuable legal information. Go to your Organizational Consultant or arizonaaea.org/helpdesk and ask for any of our booklets on a wide variety of topics, including reporting misconduct, free speech, employment discrimination, employee rights for teachers, interpreting policies, child abuse, and requesting public records. You also can ask for legal assistance and answers via arizonaaea.org/helpdesk

The AEA Staff

To help you in your important work, AEA has a skilled staff of professionals. AEA's staff give local leaders the boost they need to reach their goals and increase the effectiveness of their leadership and association. AEA's Organizational Consultants provide (1) assistance to local leaders, (2) training in association activities, (3) advice to members experiencing employment difficulties, (4) assistance to locals during the bargaining process, and (5) resources in a wide variety of education and workplace issues.

At the state level, AEA has staff who provide support through their professional expertise in political action, lobbying, bargaining, membership, professional development, employee rights, public relations, quality education, and community organizing.

Specific Problems

If you or your local association has a specific problem, please contact your local leader, your assigned AEA Organizational Consultant, or arizonaaea.org/helpdesk.

¹ Go to arizonaaea.org/helpdesk to request Legal Defense Fund assistance. AEA's General Counsel must approve all requests, and funding is limited for court actions.

² Look through your Certificate of Insurance brochure for more detailed coverage information. For example, the policy does not cover vehicle operation. A helpful brochure containing answers to common insurance questions also is available through arizonaaea.org/helpdesk.

A Final Note

For more information and assistance, contact your local association, arizonaaea.org/helpdesk, or your AEA Organizational Consultant.

arizonaaea.org/helpdesk

(877) 828-1983



This booklet is a general guide for AEA members and is not intended to provide complete information or legal advice on specific problems. Changes in laws and cases may modify the information provided. To find Arizona statutes on the Internet, go to www.azleg.gov.



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11/97 (Rev. 5/10/23)

