
OPEN LEGAL SERVICES

2974 West 3500 South
West Valley City, UT 84119
Phone: (801) 413-3917
www.openlegalservices.com

Shantelle L. Argyle
A. Daniel Spencer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nonprofit Law Firm To Target Low To Middle Income Utahns

First-of-its-kind law firm in Utah aims to make lawyers affordable

November 6, 2013 --- West Valley City, Utah. Every year, thousands of Utahns go to court without a lawyer because they can't afford one. That's about to change thanks to a new nonprofit law firm that just opened its doors in West Valley City. Called Open Legal Services, the firm is the first of a new breed of nonprofit aimed at providing affordable legal representation to Utah's many middle and lower income residents.

A. Daniel Spencer, one of the two attorneys who founded the firm, says this type of service is long overdue. "For years, the legal community has been focused on serving the very poor and the very rich, but nobody has focused on all the people in between," says Spencer. "The problem is, the people in between make up most of the population." he adds.

Traditionally, retaining an attorney meant paying a fixed amount of several hundreds or even thousands of dollars, and hoping that the money didn't run out before your case was resolved. Clients didn't really know how much their case was going to cost them until the final bill arrived.

"As a nonprofit, we can't really operate that way, nor would we want to," explains co-founder Shantelle Argyle. "We put a cap on how much any case can cost, and if someone qualifies for free services from one of the other nonprofits like Legal Aid or Utah Legal Services, we let the client know that."

Open Legal Services is one of only a handful of nonprofit law firms nationwide that don't rely on public grant money. Because the firm doesn't take federal or state funding, attorneys are not restricted in what types of cases they can take or who is eligible for services.

“If we have a client come in that needs help with a case in an area of law none of our attorneys specialize in, we can refer them directly to another attorney in town who will help them for a price the client can afford,” explains Spencer. “If we start seeing a lot of people coming in for help with the same area of law, we can always hire another attorney who specializes in that area, without having to write a grant or hold a fundraiser.”

Here’s what Open Legal Services provides:

- Income-based prices. A client who is single who makes \$20,000 per year would pay \$50 per hour; if that same client made \$35,000 per year, they would pay \$95 per hour. Household size also gets taken into account to lower prices, and consultations are always free.
- “Unbundled” services. A client who is filing a divorce can retain the firm for the entire divorce, or just choose from a list of different parts of the divorce the client needs help with.
- Flexible Representation. Open Legal Services attorneys will consult with clients on a limited basis anywhere in the state. For example, for help drafting a motion, attorneys will consult over the phone or internet.
- Representation in Family Law, Criminal Defense, and Landlord-Tenant Law. The firm plans to expand into other types of law in the future.

The firm’s office is open from 9am to 5pm Monday through Friday, and is located at **2974 West 3500 South**, behind the Larsen Nash building. The firm’s website contains detailed information on pricing and services, and can be accessed at www.openlegalservices.org. Appointments can be scheduled by calling (801) 413-3917.

###