

Networking luncheons to raise awareness of free civil legal services

May 23, 2017

Organizers of free civil legal clinics are working to increase public awareness of the services available to assist poor people. Informational program luncheons for community leaders are scheduled across north Mississippi starting May 24 at noon at the Union County Chancery Court, 109 East Main Street in New Albany.

The Mississippi Access to Justice Commission and Chancellor Jacqueline Mask of Tupelo, Commission co-chair, will host community luncheon meetings throughout the First Chancery District to increase awareness about Mississippi's nonprofit legal organizations, highlight current access to justice initiatives and resources, and promote upcoming free legal clinics.

Local government officials, law enforcement, school officials, social workers, medical professionals, clergy and non-profits such as food pantries are invited so that they may learn about free legal clinics. The goal is to make people who come into contact with needy people aware of the free legal resources so that they may direct those in need of civil legal services to the clinics.

Civil legal assistance is not provided at the luncheons.

The schedule for informational luncheons is:

June 1, Alcorn County, Corinth;
June 9, Monroe County, Aberdeen;
June 15, Lee County, Tupelo;
June 23, Itawamba County, Fulton;
Sept. 1, Pontotoc County, Pontotoc;
Sept. 11, Tishomingo County, Iuka;
Sept. 19, Prentiss County, Booneville.

All luncheons are at noon. Attendance is free. Locations will be announced soon. For more information, contact Access to Justice Commission Executive Director Tiffany Graves at tgraves@msbar.org or 601-960-9581.

Judge Mask said, "There are so many people in northeast Mississippi that need help. There are so many people out there that are not getting the word" about free legal clinics. "What we are trying to do with these community meeting is get the information into the correct hands so that we can ensure that individuals who can benefit from the clinics learn of their existence."

The schedule of free civil legal clinics is:

July 6, 4-7 p.m., Lee County Justice Center, 200 West Jefferson Street, Third Floor, Tupelo;
July 19, 4-7 p.m., Union County Chancery Building; 109 East Main Street, New Albany;
July 20, 3-5 p.m., Itawamba County Courthouse, 201 West Main Street, Fulton;
July 25, 4-7 p.m., Alcorn County Chancery Building, 501 East Waldron Street, Corinth;
Aug. 1, 4-7 p.m., Monroe County Chancery Building, 201 West Commerce Street, Aberdeen;
Sept. 26, 4-7 p.m., Pontotoc County Chancery Courthouse, 34 South Liberty Street, Pontotoc;
Oct. 10, 4-7 p.m., Tishomingo County Courthouse, 1008 Battleground Drive, Iuka;
Oct. 31, 4-7 p.m., Prentiss County Courthouse, 100 North Main Street, Booneville;
Nov. 8, 4-7 p.m., Lee County Justice Center, 200 West Jefferson Street, Third Floor, Tupelo.

People seeking free legal services must be screened in advance to determine eligibility to attend a legal clinic. Contact the Family Resource Center at 662-844-0013.

Another source of free legal assistance is the website ms.freelegalanswers.org, provided by the Access to Justice Commission and the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project.