

Dr. Marta Pérez, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: FREE LEGAL SERVICES FOR EMPLOYEES

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL SERVICES AND STUDENT AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED, AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Florida Free Legal Answers is a newly-launched non-profit organization that is the result of a cooperative effort between The Florida Bar and the American Bar Association. It offers low-income Floridians access to information that they would otherwise not be able to afford.

The service is available to participants who meet the following criteria:

- Annual household income below 250 percent of Federal Poverty Guidelines (for example, an individual annual income of less than \$29,700 or less than \$60,750 for a family of four);
- Less than \$6,000 in total assets;
- At least 18 years old; and
- Not incarcerated.

The service is accessible online 24/7, matching qualifying participants with a licensed attorney who can **answer questions** related to civil law. Topics may include matters such as divorce, child support, adoption and name changes, as well as domestic violence, bankruptcy, consumer issues, education, employment, housing, workers' compensation, wills and estate planning.

According to The Florida Bar, more than 500 attorneys have already signed up to participate in the program and volunteer their time on a pro-bono basis.

Many of our employees, especially those that are part-time and do not have access to board-sponsored legal services plans, may qualify for this valuable service that is completely free of charge.

This item seeks to request that information about this service be made available to all our employees, with special emphasis on part-time employees and those who are in the lower salary bands. These individuals may qualify for this service.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTA PÉREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, request the Superintendent to explore the feasibility of disseminating information to all our employees on the services provided by Florida Free Legal Answers.