

# Tips for Choosing a DV Attorney

“A lawyer who doesn’t show concern about your situation, mentally, physically, or financially won’t do you any good. Try to open up to your lawyer and see how he/she responds. If his/her reaction does not inspire confidence, then look for someone else.” <https://attorneyatlawmagazine.com/how-to-choose-a-domestic-violence-attorney>

- You want someone who will not only listen to you but who believes your side of the story.
- It is highly advisable to interview several attorneys before selecting one to represent you.
- An attorney who specializes in traffic injuries, as an example, is probably not experienced working with domestic violence cases.
- And not all attorneys understand domestic violence, even if they advertise that they handle domestic violence cases. And some have their own bias.
- Ask people you know who recently divorced about their attorney; do they recommend this person and why.
- Ask for a 30-minute free initial meet-and-greet.
- Have a list of questions prepared beforehand.
- Be clear and concise about what you present to the attorney at your meetings. Use your time with the attorney wisely as you are “on the clock”.
- Ask the attorney if he/she has ever worked with a domestic violence survivor.
- Make sure you feel comfortable working with the attorney.
- Listen and pay heed to any “still small voice” within you that is trying to tell you something about the attorney.
- Ask about the cost of the retainer. Ask if there is a payment plan.
- Do not make your decision immediately. Think about it. Continue to interview if necessary.
- Make your decision carefully. Attorneys are not impressed if they know that a client has hired and fired several attorneys.
- When available, check an attorney’s AVVO rating (<https://www.avvo.com>). AVVO, founded in Seattle, is a free website that rates and profiles licensed attorneys. Rating includes client reviews, lawyer disciplinary histories and peer recommendations. AVVO is not conclusive as some attorney’s do not complete the AVVO profile. However, when available it does provide additional information about an attorney.\*

## Other Helps:

### A. Legal Help Resources from the Washington State Bar Association:

- <http://www.wsba.org/Resources-and-Services/Find-Legal-Help>

### B. Moderate Means Program

“A free referral panel designed to connect clients whose income is within 200-400% of the federal poverty level with lawyers who offer legal assistance at a reduced fee.”

- For more information, go to: <http://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Volunteer-Opportunities/Public-Service-Opportunities/Moderate-Means-Program>

### C. Lawyer Referral Service at Snohomish County Bar Association (\$35 fee) –(425) 388-3018

- For more information, go to: <http://snobar.org/referral.htm>

### D. Martindale Hubbell Lawyer Database:

- <http://www.martindale.com/find-lawyers-and-law-firms.aspx>

*\*Excerpted from Christian Coalition for Safe Families, August 2020 Newsletter*

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# Attorney List

## IMPORTANT:

This list of attorneys consists of local lawyers whom clients have recommended and/or have demonstrated some ability to represent DV clients well in protection order and/or family law cases.

Whether they are able to represent you, and/or whether your experience with them is positive, is beyond DVS's ability to control. Please consider this a place to start your search for an attorney and refer to the additional resources about finding appropriate counsel, if needed.

(Listed in alphabetical order by last name, not by preference)

### Attorneys:

- Jack Berner, Everett; (425) 259-6533
- Jennifer Gogert, Everett; (425) 259-2222
- Jeanette "Jenny" Heard, Everett; (425) 252-7449 – Prominent Guardian ad Litem (GAL)
- Renee Lee, Everett; (425) 276-6878
- Roberta Madow, Everett; (425) 312-1870
- Breanne Martin, Arlington; (360) 435-2168 or 866-379-5474
- Shayla McKee, Greater Seattle Metro Area; (206) 926-9848
- Steven Phillips, Arlington; (425) 435-5705
- Ruth Spalter, Everett; (425) 257-2027

### Firms *(Note – Client experience with individual attorneys at the same firm may vary considerably):*

- Anderson, York & Stratton, Seattle, 206-728-2244
  - Serve King & Snohomish Counties
  - Sliding scale fees
- Chin Legal Group, Lynnwood (425) 598-0761
- Cogdill Nichols Rein Wartelle Andrews Law Firm (CNRWA), Everett (425) 247-3984
- Denomillikan Law Firm, Everett (425) 259-2222
- Family Law Solutions, Redmond (425) 615-6304
- Law for All, Seattle (206) 631-9610 – Non-profit firm
  - Unbundled legal services, sliding scale fees
- Law Office of April L. Thomas, Lacey (206) 319-5874
- McKinley Irvin Family Law Firm, Everett (425) 276-6878
  - Offices also in Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Portland, Puyallup, Seattle, Tacoma, and Vancouver
- Nunn, Vhan, & Lang Law Firm, Everett (425) 258-6860
  - Offices also in Bellevue and Mt. Vernon
- \*Peaceful Separations, Everett (425) 259-1602
  - Unbundled legal services, court document preparation and review
- Skantze Skeen Law Firm, Everett (425) 312-6340
- Sound Family Law Firm, Seattle (425) 686-9795
  - Serve King & Snohomish Counties