MetLife | Legal Plans

MetLife Legal Plans Fact Sheet

Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)

How To Get Legal Services

To use your Legal Plan, create an account online at www.members.legalplans.com or call MetLife Legal Plans' Client Service Center at 1-800-821-6400.

Employees enrolled in the plan must remain in the plan for the benefit plan year.

If you call the Client Service Center, the Client Service Representative will:

- Verify your eligibility
- Make an initial determination of whether and to what extent your case is covered (the Plan Attorney will make the final determination of coverage)
- Give you the telephone number of the Plan Attorney most convenient to you OR schedule an appointment for you with an attorney; and
- Answer any questions you have about your Legal Plan.

Then you can call the Plan Attorney and identify yourself as a legal Plan Member referred to them by MetLife Legal Plans. You should request an appointment for a consultation. You should be prepared to provide the name of the legal plan you belong to and the type of legal matter you are calling about. You may choose to work with an out-of-network attorney. In a few areas, where there are no Participating Law Firms, you will be asked to select your own attorney. In both circumstances, MetLife Legal Plans will reimburse you for these non-Plan attorneys' fees based on a set fee schedule. To obtain a fee schedule, call our Client Service Center.

What Services Are Covered

You and your eligible dependents are entitled to receive certain personal legal services. The available benefits are very comprehensive, but there are limitations and other conditions that must be met. Please take time to read the description of benefits carefully. All benefits are available to you and your spouse and dependents, who are referred to below as Participant(s), unless otherwise noted or you are enrolled in a Single or Employee Only plan.

Advice And Consultation

Office Consultation And Telephone Advice

This service provides the opportunity to discuss with an attorney any personal legal problems that are not specifically excluded. The Plan Attorney will explain the Participant's rights, point out his or her options and recommend a course of action. The Plan Attorney will identify any further coverage available under the Plan, and will undertake representation if the Participant so requests. If representation is covered by the Plan, the Participant will not be charged for the Plan Attorney's services. If representation is recommended, but is not covered by the Plan, the Plan Attorney will provide a written fee statement in advance. The Participant may choose whether to retain the Plan Attorney at his or her own expense, seek outside counsel, or do nothing. There are no restrictions on the number of times per year a Participant may use this service; however, for a non-covered matter, this service is not intended to provide the Participant with continuing access to a Plan Attorney in order to seek advice that would allow the Participant to undertake his or her own representation.

Consumer Protection

Consumer Protection Matters
This service covers the Participant as a plaintiff, for representation, including trial, in disputes over consumer goods and services where the amount being contested exceeds the small claims court limit in that jurisdiction and is documented in writing. This service does not include disputes over real estate, construction, insurance or collection activities after a judgment.

Small Claims Assistance
This service covers counseling the Participant on prosecuting a small claims action; helping the Participant prepare documents; advising the Participant on evidence, documentation and witnesses; and preparing the Participant for trial. The service does not include the Plan Attorney's attendance or representation at the small claims trial, collection activities after a judgment or any services relating to post-judgment actions.

Personal Property Protection
This service covers counseling the Participant over the phone or in the office on any personal property issue such as consumer credit reports, contracts for the purchase of personal property, consumer credit agreements or installment sales agreements. Counseling on pursuing or defending small claims actions is also included. The service also includes reviewing any personal legal documents and preparing promissory notes, affidavits and demand letters.

Debt Matters

Debt Collection Defense
This service provides Participants with an attorney's services for negotiation with creditors for a repayment schedule and to limit creditor harassment, and representation in defense of any action for personal debt collection, tax agency debt collection, foreclosure, repossession or garnishment, up to and including trial if necessary. It includes a motion to vacate a default judgment. It does not include counter, cross or third party claims; bankruptcy; any action arising out of family law matters, including support and post-decree issues; or any matter where the creditor is affiliated with the Sponsor or Employer.

Tax Audits
This service covers reviewing tax returns and answering questions the IRS or a state or local taxing authority has concerning the Participant's tax return; negotiating with the agency; advising the Participant on necessary documentation; and attending an IRS or a state or local taxing authority audit. The service does not include prosecuting a claim for the return of overpaid taxes or the preparation of any tax returns.

Identity Theft Defense
This service provides the Participant with consultations with an attorney regarding potential creditor actions resulting from identity theft and attorney services as needed to contact creditors, credit bureaus and financial institutions. It also provides defense services for specific creditor actions over disputed accounts. The defense services include limiting creditor harassment and representation in defense of any action that arises out of the identity theft such as foreclosure, repossession or garnishment, up to and including trial if necessary. The service also provides the Participant with online help and information about identity theft and prevention. It does not include counter, cross or third party claims; bankruptcy; any action arising out of family law matters, including support and post-decree issues; or any matter where the creditor is affiliated with the Sponsor or Employer.

Identity Restoration Services
Identity restoration services from U.S. - based Restoration Specialists are available via click or call to support you and your family. If you are a victim of fraud, White Glove Resolution Specialists will work with you to navigate bureaus and government institutions and to resolve your fraud incident quickly. Whether you lose your wallet or learn your personal information has been breached, experienced agents will take care of all the heavy lifting to make sure your identity is restored and your information is secure.

Bankruptcy - Chapter 7
This service covers the Plan Member and spouse in pre-bankruptcy planning, the preparation and filing of a personal bankruptcy or Wage Earner petition, and representation at all court hearings and trials. This service is not available if a creditor is affiliated with the Sponsor or Employer, even if the Plan Member or spouse chooses to reaffirm that specific debt.

Bankruptcy - Chapter 13
This service covers the Plan Member and spouse in pre-bankruptcy planning, the preparation and filing of a personal bankruptcy or Wage Earner petition, and representation at all court hearings and trials. This service is not available if a creditor is affiliated with the Sponsor or Employer, even if the Plan Member or spouse chooses to reaffirm that specific debt.

Defense Of Civil Lawsuits

Administrative Hearing Representation
This service covers Participants in defense of civil proceedings before a municipal, county, state or federal administrative board, agency or commission. It includes the hearing before an administrative board or agency over an adverse governmental action. It does not apply where services are available or are being provided by virtue of an insurance policy. It does not include family law matters, post judgment matters or litigation of a job-related incident.

Incompetency Defense
This service covers the Participant in the defense of any incompetency action, including court hearings when there is a proceeding to find the Participant incompetent.

Civil Litigation Defense
This service covers the Participant in defense of an arbitration proceeding or civil proceeding before a municipal, county, state or federal administrative board, agency or commission, or in a trial court of general jurisdiction. It does not apply where services are available or are being provided by virtue of an insurance policy. It does not include family law matters, post judgment matters, matters with criminal penalties or litigation of a job-related incident. Services do not include bringing counterclaims, third party or cross claims.

Document Preparation

Affidavits
This service covers preparation of any affidavit in which the Participant is the person making the statement.

Deeds
This service covers the preparation of any deed for which the Participant is either the grantor or grantee.

Demand Letters
This service covers the preparation of letters that demand money, property or some other property interest of the Participant, except an interest that is an excluded service. It also covers mailing them to the addressee and forwarding and explaining any response to the Participant. Negotiations and representation in litigation are not included.

Document Review
This service covers the review of any personal legal document of the Participant, such as letters, leases or purchase agreements.

Elder Law Matters
This service covers counseling the Participant over the phone or in the office on any personal issues relating to the Participant's parents as they affect the Participant. The service includes reviewing documents of the parents to advise the Participant of the effect on the Participant. The documents include Medicare or Medicaid materials, prescription plans, leases, nursing home agreements, powers of attorney, living wills and wills. The service also includes preparing deeds involving the parents when the Participant is either the grantor or grantee; and preparing promissory notes involving the parents when the Participant is the payor or payee.

Mortgages
This service covers the preparation of any mortgage or deed of trust for which the Participant is the mortgagor. This service does not include documents pertaining to business, commercial or rental property.

Promissory Notes
This service covers the preparation of any promissory note for which the Participant is the payor or payee.

Family Law

Adoption And Legitimization (Contested And Uncontested)
This service covers all legal services and court work in a state or federal court for an adoption for the Plan Member and spouse. Legitimization of a child for the Plan Member and spouse, including reformation of a birth certificate, is also covered.

Enforcement Or Modification Of Support Order
This service is available to the Plan Member and spouse, and covers representation after a judgment has been entered to enforce or modify a court's award of support or alimony, whether the Plan Member or spouse is a plaintiff or a defendant. This service does not cover transfer of a divorce decree from one state to another, the division of property, or collection activities after a judgment.

Guardianship Or Conservatorship (Contested And Uncontested)
This service covers establishing a guardianship or conservatorship over a person and his or her estate when the Plan Member or spouse is being appointed as guardian or conservator. It includes obtaining a permanent and/or temporary guardianship or conservatorship, gathering any necessary medical evidence, preparing the paperwork, attending the hearing and preparing the initial accounting. This service does not include representation of the person over whom guardianship or conservatorship is sought, any annual accountings after the initial accounting, or terminating the guardianship or conservatorship once it has been established.

Name Change
This service covers the Participant for all necessary pleadings and court hearings for a legal name change.

Prenuptial Agreement
This service covers representation of the Plan Member and includes the negotiation, preparation, review and execution of a Prenuptial Agreement between the Plan Member and his or her fiance/partner prior to their marriage or legal union (where allowed by law). It does not include subsequent litigation arising out of a prenuptial agreement. The fiance/partner must either have separate counsel or waive his/her right to representation.

Protection From Domestic Violence
This service covers the Plan Member only, not the spouse or dependents, as the victim of domestic violence. It provides the Plan Member with representation to obtain a protective order, including all required paperwork and attendance at all court appearances. The service does not include representation in suits for damages, defense of any action, or representation for the offender.

Uncontested Change Or Establishment Of Custody Order
This service is available to the Plan Member and spouse, and covers preparation of petitions, consent forms and waivers, and representation at any court hearings provided all parties are in agreement to establish or modify a child custody order.

Divorce, Dissolution And Annulment (Contested And Uncontested) - Twenty Hour Maximum
This service is available to the Plan Member only, not to a spouse or dependents, for the first twenty hours of service. This service includes preparing and filing all necessary pleadings, motions and affidavits, drafting settlement agreements, and representation at the hearing or trial, whether the Plan Member is a plaintiff or a defendant. This service does not include disputes that arise after a decree is issued. It is the Plan Member's responsibility to pay fees beyond the first twenty hours.

Change Or Establishment Of Custody Order
This service is available to the Plan Member and/or Spouse, and covers preparation of petitions, consent forms, and waivers and representation at any court hearings to establish or modify a child custody order.

Immigration

Immigration Assistance
This service covers advice and consultation, preparation of affidavits and powers of attorney, review of any immigration documents and helping the Participant prepare for hearings.

Insurance Matters

Insurance Claims
This service provides the Participant with assistance in making insurance claims with the Participant's own carrier, provided the carrier is not affiliated with the Participant's Sponsor or Employer. Litigation of coverage issues is included. Litigation of damages is not included.

Personal Injury

Personal Injury (25% Network Maximum)
Subject to applicable law and court rules, Plan Attorneys will handle personal injury matters (where the Participant is the plaintiff) at a maximum fee of 25% of the gross award. It is the Participant's responsibility to pay this fee and all costs.

Real Estate Matters

Boundary Or Title Disputes
This service covers negotiations and litigation arising from boundary or real property title disputes involving a Participant's residence, where coverage is not available under the Participant's homeowner or title insurance policies. The service includes filing to remove a mechanic's lien.

Eviction And Tenant Problems (Tenant Only)
This service covers the Participant as a tenant for matters involving leases, security deposits or disputes with a residential landlord. The service includes eviction defense, up to and including trial. It does not include representation in disputes with other tenants or as a plaintiff in a lawsuit against the landlord, including an action for return of a security deposit.

Home Equity Loans
This service covers the review or preparation of a home equity loan on the Participant's residence.

Property Tax Assessment
This service covers the Participant for review and advice on a property tax assessment on the Participant's residence. It also includes filing the paperwork; gathering the evidence; negotiating a settlement; and attending the hearing necessary to seek a reduction of the assessment.

Refinancing Of Residence
This service covers the review or preparation, by an attorney representing the Participant, of all relevant documents (including the refinance agreement, mortgage and deed, and documents pertaining to title, insurance, recordation and taxation), which are involved in the refinancing of or obtaining a home equity loan on a Participant's residence. The benefit also includes attendance of an attorney at closing. This benefit includes obtaining a permanent mortgage on a newly constructed home. It does not include services provided by any attorney representing a lending institution or title company. The benefit does not include the refinancing of a property that is held for any rental, business, investment or income purpose.

Sale Or Purchase Of Residence
This service covers the review or preparation, by an attorney representing the Participant, of all relevant documents (including the construction documents for a new home, the purchase agreement, mortgage and deed, and documents pertaining to title, insurance, recordation and taxation), which are involved in the purchase or sale of a Participant's residence or of a vacant property to be used for building a residence. The benefit also includes attendance of an attorney at closing. It does not include services provided by any attorney representing a lending institution or title company. The benefit does not include the sale or purchase of a rental property, property held for business or investment or leases with an option to buy.

Zoning Applications
This service provides the Participant with the services of a lawyer to help get a zoning change or variance for the Participant's residence. Services include reviewing the law, reviewing the surveys, advising the Participant, preparing applications, and preparing for and attending the hearing to change zoning.

Security Deposit Assistance (Tenant Only)
This service covers counseling the Participant as a tenant in recovering a security deposit from the Participant's residential landlord; reviewing the lease and other relevant documents; and preparing a demand letter to the landlord for the return of the deposit. It also covers assisting the Participant in prosecuting a small claims action; helping prepare documents; advising on evidence, documentation and witnesses; and preparing the Participant for the small claims trial. This service does not include the Plan Attorney's attendance or representation at the small claims trial, collection activities after a judgment or any services relating to post-judgment actions.

Traffic And Criminal Matters

Juvenile Court Defense
This service covers the defense of Plan Member and/or Spouse and their dependent child in any juvenile court matter, provided there is no conflict of interest between the Plan Member and the dependent child. When a conflict exists, or where the court requires separate counsel for the child, this service provides an attorney for the Plan Member only, including services for Parental Responsibility.

Restoration Of Driving Privileges
This service covers the Participant with representation in proceedings to restore the Participant's driving license.

Traffic Ticket Defense (No Dui)
This service covers representation of the Participant in defense of any traffic ticket including traffic misdemeanor offenses, except driving under influence or vehicular homicide, including court hearings, negotiation with the prosecutor and trial.

Will And Estate Matters

Trusts
This service covers the preparation of revocable and irrevocable living trusts for the Participant. It does not include tax planning or services associated with funding the trust after it is created.

Advanced Healthcare Directive
This service covers the preparation of a living will for the Participant.

Powers Of Attorney
This service covers the preparation of any power of attorney when the Participant is granting the power.

Probate Proceedings
This service provides representation for the Plan Member or spouse when the Plan Member or spouse is probating an estate and has been appointed executor or administrator. The service includes all of the court proceedings to transfer probate assets from the decedent to the heirs; the correspondence necessary to transfer non-probate assets such as proceeds from insurance policies, joint bank accounts, stock accounts or a house; and any tax filings. This service does not include prosecuting or defending any litigation including a will contest.

Wills And Codicils
This service covers the preparation of a simple or complex will for the Participant. The creation of any testamentary trust is covered. The benefit includes the preparation of codicils and will amendments. It does not include tax planning.

Miscellaneous

Attorney Services For Non-Covered Matters- 4 Hours
For non-covered matters that are not otherwise excluded, this benefit provides four hours of attorney time and services per year. The Participant is responsible to pay fees beyond the 4 hours. No more than a combined maximum total of four hours of attorney time and service are provided for the member.

Exclusions

Excluded services are those legal services that are not provided under the plan. No services, not even a consultation, can be provided for the following matters:

- Employment-related matters, including company or statutory benefits
- Matters involving the company, MetLife and affiliates, and Plan Attorneys
- Matters in which there is a conflict of interest between the employee and spouse or dependents in which case services are excluded for the spouse and dependents
- Appeals and class actions
- Farm matters, business or investment matters, matters involving property held for investment or rental, or issues when the Participant is the landlord
- Patent, trademark and copyright matters
- Costs or fines
- Frivolous or unethical matters
- Matters for which an attorney-client relationship exists prior to the Participant becoming eligible for plan benefits

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.LEGALPLANS.COM OR CALL METLIFE LEGAL PLANS AT 1-800-821-6400.