

Maine Patent Program Guidelines for New or Potential Clients

Thank you for contacting the Maine Patent Program. Please review the following if you are a Maine inventor interested in obtaining our services.

Services Provided by the Maine Patent Program

The Maine Patent Program is a division of the Center for Law & Innovation at the University of Maine School of Law. Our licensed patent agents and intellectual property attorneys provide free education and legal services to Maine inventors and entrepreneurs. In addition to holding public seminars and workshops, the Program provides limited intellectual property services to selected clients throughout the state. Typically, such services include patent searching, patentability analysis, and strategic discussions related to patent and licensing issues. Limited copyright and trademark assistance may also be provided in coordination with the Center for Law & Innovation.

The Program and Center are affiliated with the Intellectual Property Law Clinic at the University of Maine School of Law. Law students are commonly assigned to work directly with clients accepted by the Program to help resolve their intellectual property matters.

How Do I Apply for Assistance from the Program?

Follow these steps to apply for intellectual property assistance:

1. **Fill out the appropriate form.** There are separate forms for patent, trademark, and copyright issues. A separate form needs to be filled out for each issue to be addressed. If you have any questions about which form to fill out or how to answer any of the questions asked, please call our office: 228-8430. Forms may be downloaded off of our website or mailed to you. Please note that there is currently a limit of four (4) files per client per rolling calendar year.
2. Your application will be reviewed by our director. We will send you a Limited Representation Agreement that outlines the services we are offering you.
3. **Review, complete and return your Limited Representation Agreement.**

NOTE: We reserve the right to accept or reject applicants for any reason. Reasons for denying services include but are not limited to:

- a) You are not a Maine resident.
- b) The invention described resembles a perpetual motion machine.
- c) The invention described appears to be associated with a looming bar date which may require action in a time frame which is too short for the Patent Program to consider your invention.
- d) The invention described is outside of the Patent Program's current technical competency.
- e) Professionals at the Patent Program foresee a potential conflict of interest or a conflict of interest exists.

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- f) Your application indicates that you or your company have adequate financial means and would be better served by procuring legal services from private attorneys.
- g) The Patent Program has previously evaluated several of your other inventions, none of which have been significantly commercialized.

4. Once we have received the signed Limited Representation Agreement, the file will be assigned to one of our staff members. Files are assigned in a first-come-first-served manner.

What Happens Next?

If you are accepted as a client of the Program, a preliminary search may begin at this time. You may be contacted for more information about your idea or invention. The conclusion of our work will vary with each client and their specific needs. In general, the patent staff will ultimately discuss your issues with you by phone or in person, or you may receive a letter providing guidance or an opinion on your issues.

Our staff will make every effort to assist you with this process. Requests for services are handled in the order they are received and our turnaround time varies considerably, depending on the volume of service requests our office has pending. We appreciate your patience and encourage you to assist the timely processing of your matter by quickly responding to our communications as needed.

For More Information

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