



## A2J Series: What's new with allied legal professionals?

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In a historic event, the [Oregon State Bar](#) licensed 10 paralegals to perform certain legal services in “an attempt to alleviate the large percentage of people going to court without legal representation.” Most of the paralegals work for law firms and may represent clients in family law and eviction cases. According to the news report, 84% of court users in family law and eviction cases have no legal representation.

Similarly, Colorado recently inaugurated the [Colorado Licensed Legal Paraprofessional](#) program that allows licensed individuals to help with family cases for those who are not able to pay for a lawyer but also do not qualify for a free one. Recently, the [Colorado Supreme Court ruled](#) to allow licensed individuals to perform certain types of legal services under the conditions set forth by the court.

Alaska's [Justice for All](#) initiative includes allied legal professionals to perform limited legal functions. [The Community Justice Workers](#) is a program of the Alaska Legal Services Corporation (ALSC) in partnership with the Alaska Pacific University and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, which provides training to those interested in helping ALSC clients with specific legal issues. The courses are free. The Community Justice Workers are supervised and trained by ALSC and provide legal help in areas such as public benefits applications and appeals.

In August 2024, the Supreme Court of Texas issued [preliminary rules allowing licensed paraprofessionals and court-access assistants to provide limited legal services](#) that will help bridge the gap between the civil legal needs of low-income Texans and the resources currently available to fill those needs. The rules are expected to take effect on December 1, 2024.

The Washington State Bar Association and the law practice board proposed a [pilot program to ease the restrictions to practice law](#) in August 2024 to allow entities that provide legal services online and through nontraditional business models. They will also collect data to determine if the changes can be made permanently.

In 2020 the Trending Topic “[Roles beyond lawyers](#)” covered licensed legal professionals (LLPs) who provide a range of legal help services to SRLs. These services include advising clients and

helping complete and file court documents, assisting in certain types of hearings, and participating in ADR. States that were experimenting with allowing individuals to practice in some ways to help self-represented litigants included Washington, New York, Colorado, Illinois, Oregon, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Minnesota, and California.

In 2022 “[The key role of non-lawyer practitioners](#)” explored a new evolution of non-lawyer practitioners and a preliminary report approved by Colorado, which recommended allowing LLPs. It also discussed recent efforts in Utah and the sunset of the Washington program.

How is your state helping SRLs? Share your experiences with us. Email us at [Knowledge@ncsc.org](mailto:Knowledge@ncsc.org) or call 800-616-6164 and let us know. Follow the National Center for State Courts on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Vimeo](#). For more Trending Topics posts, visit [ncsc.org/trendingtopics](https://ncsc.org/trendingtopics) and subscribe to the [LinkedIn newsletter](#).