

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Baker Donelson Announces Major Financial, Technology Reinvestment in ABA Free Legal Answers Platform

January 19, 2024

**The law firm of Baker Donelson has announced a renewed commitment to the American Bar Association's (ABA) Free Legal Answers (FLA), a virtual legal advice clinic, with a major investment of financial and technology resources that will ensure the tool continues to increase access to advice and information about non-criminal legal matters for those who cannot afford a lawyer. This major reinvestment marks ABA's continuing partnership with Baker Donelson, which originally created the FLA platform in 2010 and has provided ongoing financial and technological support.**

Through this renewed partnership, three Baker Donelson technicians will work over a period of six months to rewrite and update the code for FLA while also improving the data security of the website. The Firm is also making a \$250,000 donation to ensure the ABA has the resources to further develop and maintain this next-generation version of FLA.

"The ABA is dedicated to expanding access to justice and is proud to partner with Baker Donelson to provide the ABA Free Legal Answers platform to the public and to lawyers seeking to provide pro bono legal services," said ABA President Mary Smith. "This partnership is a key piece of our multifaceted approach to democratize legal services and champion diverse programs aimed at narrowing the justice gap. Since launching the platform in 2016, more than 13,000 attorneys have joined the site, and more than 330,000 questions have been posted by people seeking help with legal issues."

The FLA platform is designed to address the justice gap, where it is estimated that low-income Americans do not get any or enough legal help for 92 percent of their substantial civil legal problems.

Baker Donelson shareholder [Buck Lewis](#) began leading the development of a virtual legal advice clinic while serving as president of the Tennessee Bar Association, working with Baker Donelson's IT staff – including Paul Davis, Patrick Zanone, and Scott Osborne – to create and curate the technology to develop code for the platform. Baker Donelson then shared the code with other states, and after several states and local jurisdictions adopted the program, the Firm worked with the ABA to grow FLA into a national program, licensing the code to the ABA and every single individual jurisdiction for free.

Crucial ongoing financial support for FLA has been made possible through the sponsorship of leading organizations, including the American Arbitration Association, AT&T, Entergy, FedEx Ground, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Pilot Company, and State Farm.