

Your First Appointment With a Real Estate Attorney

Real estate lawyers deal with a wide range of legal issues related to land and structures. Topics include real estate purchases and sales; leases; landlord and tenant issues; conflict resolution, including negotiation, arbitration, mediation and litigation; transfers and gifting; fiduciary duty; condemnation; construction issues; environmental issues; zoning and land use; taxation and assessments; valuation; title problems; condominiums and cooperatives; time shares; easements; insurance; deed, contract and other document drafting; farm and other rural land matters; mortgages and other financial issues; representation before government agencies; compliance with anti-discrimination and accessibility laws; and many more.

As you prepare to meet with your attorney, you will want to gather relevant documentation in your possession to bring with you. Examples of important real estate documents include:

- Deeds
- Abstracts
- Title and homeowner insurance policies
- Plats
- Leases
- Licenses
- Liens
- Purchase and sales agreements
- Realtor or broker agreements
- Offers to buy
- Construction and service contracts
- Mortgage notes and contracts
- Court or agency documents
- Documents related to zoning and variances
- Wills and trusts related to real property
- Guardianship or conservatorship documents related to real property
- Correspondence from government agencies, officials and any other relevant parties
- Assessments, appraisals, inspections and surveys
- Property tax statements
- Photographs

It can also be a good idea to jot some notes in preparation for your meeting at the law office. Subjects should include:

- Outline of important events and facts, including dates
- Your goals and objectives
- Upcoming deadlines
- Names and contact information for all involved parties, including realtors, attorneys, inspectors, appraisers, sellers, buyers, landlords, tenants and lenders
- Names and contact information for possible witnesses or sources of information, such as co-owners, family members, neighbors or business associates
- Questions for the attorney