

Kim Meador



From: Kavya Penneru <spenneru@advocatesmessage.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2026 10:51 AM
To: appellatecourtclerk
Subject: Authorize Nonlawyer Legal Help in Tennessee: Comments on No. ADM2025-01403

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Dear Clerk Hivner and Honorable Justices of the Tennessee Supreme Court,

I am writing in response to the Court's request for comments on the regulation of the legal profession and the access-to-justice crisis. I strongly support the Tennessee Supreme Court allowing people without law degrees—like legal helpers or community justice workers—to deliver legal services and help with basic civil legal needs.

Across our state, many people cannot obtain the legal help they need. Lawyers are simply too expensive for most families, and in many counties there are not enough attorneys available.

I encourage the Court to prioritize low-barrier solutions that make basic legal help available right away. Legal helpers could complete short, practical training focused on specific subjects and provide assistance through trusted institutions such as nonprofits, libraries, faith groups, and businesses. Requiring lengthy training or expensive credentials risks recreating the same lawyer-only bottleneck under a new label.

The Court should also recognize that certain forms of basic legal assistance—like helping someone navigate court procedures or complete standard paperwork—are low-risk activities that should fall outside Unauthorized Practice of Law restrictions. Creating clear carveouts for this type of help would expand access without sacrificing consumer protection. Tennesseans already benefit from existing consumer protection laws that safeguard against misconduct.

I'm grateful that the Tennessee Supreme Court is leading this effort to reform and modernize our legal system. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Kavya Penneru
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