



The following is a current list LCA matters within the identified Categories.

To learn more about any of the matters on our Case List, please contact our Associate Director of Legal Services, Christopher Johnson, at (312) 837-3521 or [cjohnson@law-arts.org](mailto:cjohnson@law-arts.org).

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Thank you very much for your interest in helping LCA clients!

Legal Category

Arts Category



Case #	Legal Category	Arts Category	Description
<a href="#">25-0511</a> Pro Bono		Literature	<b>Start-up: Literature</b> 25-0511 Client would like to form a NFP book store, and would like assistance in filing for 501c(3) status, including articles of incorporation, By-laws and IRS filings.
<a href="#">25-0508</a> Pro Bono		Visual Art	<b>Dispute: Breach of Contract, Real Estate</b> 25-0508 Client is a NFP art gallery which purchased and owns space in Springfield. The previous owners have not performed remodeling and maintenance work at the property, as required by the purchase and sale agreement. Client needs assistance to enforce the terms of the agreement.
<a href="#">25-0507</a> Pro Bono		Music	<b>Dispute: Breach of Contract: Tax Services</b> 25-0507 Client is a career professional musician, and recently discovered that the accountant he hired has not filed his taxes for several years. Client would like assistance to evaluate legal action against this accountant for return of personal documents, and damages for breach of contract.
<a href="#">25-0502</a> Pro Bono		Music	<b>Trademark Infringement: Music</b> 25-0502 Client is a member of a regional touring band, and owns the trademark in the band's name. Another band has infringed this trademark and refused to comply with a cease and desist letter. Client needs assistance to evaluate and file a lawsuit for trademark infringement.
<a href="#">25-0501</a> Pro Bono		Acting/Modeling, Arts Education, Dance, Music, Non-Profit	<b>Start-up: NFP Performing Arts</b> 25-0501 Client is a start-up arts education organization, and would like assistance filing for 501c(3) status with Illinois and the IRS.
<a href="#">25-0491</a> Pro Bono		Visual Art	<b>Collection of Federal Court Judgment</b> 25-0491 Client is a graphic and visual artist, and successfully sued her former employer for discrimination in federal court. Client obtained a judgment over \$150,000, and needs assistance to enforce the judgment and collect.

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<a href="#">25-0470</a> Paying		Film/TV	<b>Dispute: Video Production Nonpayment</b> 25-0470 Client is filmmaker and photographer who creates multimedia content for corporate clients. Client completed several videos under an agreement for services, and then was terminated in violation of the agreement. Client needs assistance to evaluate a claim for the remaining balance, and to send a demand letter for payment. Client is just over the pro-bono threshold and is seeking a reduced rate representation.
<a href="#">25-0042</a> Pro Bono		Visual Art	<b>Disputes: Sculpture, Visual Arts</b> 25-0042 Client is a NFP cultural center which hosted a group of artists for an exhibition in 2022. Client paid to purchase the works created for this exhibition. One of the artists claims that the engagement was only for a loan of the works, and is now demanding their return. Client needs assistance to evaluate and respond to the artist attorney's demand letter and negotiate a resolution.
<a href="#">25-0039</a> Pro Bono		Visual Art	<b>Dispute: Copyright Infringement: Visual Arts</b> 25-0039 Client is a local artist and painter who conducted a revenue sharing exhibition with a successful local gallery. The gallery refused to pay certain amounts in breach of the agreement. Client filed a small claims court action against gallery. Gallery is threatening client, and continues to display client's works as marketing for their business. Client needs assistance to evaluate and take legal action to enforce contract and infringement issues.
<a href="#">25-0018</a> Pro Bono		Visual Art	<b>Copyright Infringement: Visual Art</b> 25-0018 Client is a graphic and textile artist, who discovered through a friend that a Chicago Property Development company was using client's work on physical banners around a new development. Client reached out to negotiate a license, but has not received a response since November.
<a href="#">25-0008</a> Pro Bono		Film/TV	<b>Dispute: Trademark Infringement</b> 25-0008 Client is a musician, chef and media producer, and has registered trademarks in variations of "Rock and Roll Kitchen" under classes for media production and a physical bar and restaurant. Client identified an infringing business in New Orleans, Louisiana, and contacted them with no adequate response. Client would like assistance to evaluate a cause of action and draft a cease and desist letter.
<a href="#">25-0007</a> Pro Bono		Theater	<b>Disputes: Defamation</b> 25-0007 Client is a local theater actor with several lead role credits. In a recent role, client developed a personal relationship with the co-star, and then the relationship ended poorly. The co-star and another actor have spread rumors among the theater community and one company in particular, alleging inappropriate behavior and improper stage protocols. These rumors have directly lead to lost work and relationships. Client would like assistance to evaluate a cause of action and draft a demand letter.

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<a href="#">24-1196</a> Pro Bono		Music	<p><b>Dispute: Music Royalties</b></p> <p>24-1196 Client is a well known Gospel singer and songwriter. In early 2024, a contemporary artist released a cover of a well known song written by client in the 1970s, but named the song with a slightly different name, and did not credit client as the writer. After being notified, the Artist acknowledged the mistake, but Artist's label has not taken all steps necessary to correct royalty distributions.</p>
<a href="#">24-1193</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Evaluation: Copyright Protection</b></p> <p>24-1193 Client is a Literary &amp; Arts Magazine LLC, interested in obtaining NFP status. Client has been commissioned to create works for a financial for profit organization, and needs assistance to review and evaluate the rights implications from this arrangement and to review any paperwork.</p>
<a href="#">24-1190</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Evaluation: Copyright Infringement: Music</b></p> <p>24-1190 Client is a producer who has posted some works on Youtube, and believes one of his beats was used by a major label producer and artist. Client would like to evaluate a claim for infringement.</p>
<a href="#">24-1168</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Trademark Infringement</b></p> <p>24-1168 Client NFP publishes the New Art Examiner. Client needs assistance to enforce a trademark use agreement against a foreign publisher using their marks, as well as help to recover domain control from a former board member.</p>
<a href="#">24-1155</a> Pro Bono		Performance Art	<p><b>Contract Drafting: Investment Agreement: Performance Art</b></p> <p>24-1155 Client is a Live performance group which is in the process of obtaining a permanent space, and needs assistance to evaluate a fundraising plan, and draft necessary investment documents.</p>
<a href="#">24-1136</a> Pro Bono		Music	<p><b>Contract Drafting: Publishing Agreements: Music</b></p> <p>24-1136 Client needs assistance creating template contracts to print and publish the sheet music for composers' musical compositions.</p>
<a href="#">24-1129</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Breach of Contract: Theater</b></p> <p>24-1129 Client is a musician who was hired to perform sound design for a suburban theater production of The Christmas Carol in 2023. Client's agreement had a specific right of first refusal to perform the same services in 2024. The Producing entity did not engage client for 2024, and when asked, claimed a termination of client's agreement for cause, without any explanation of the specific cause.</p>
<a href="#">24-1096</a> Pro Bono		Visual Art	<p><b>Dispute: improper charge for service</b></p> <p>24-1096 Client produces content on fashion, film and television. Client paid a content distributor for access to streaming platforms, which was not provided. Distributor admitted the charge was improper, but refuses to refund the full amount. LCA sent a demand email to distributor legal, with no response. Client would like to evaluate further action.</p>

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<a href="#">24-1078</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Evaluation: Accounting: Music</b></p> <p>24-1078 Client represents the estate of a well known deceased gospel artist. Client needs assistance to determine what rights and royalties are controlled by the estate, and the extent to which compositions can be licensed to third parties.</p>
<a href="#">24-1071</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Nonprofit Governance</b></p> <p>24-1071 Client is a Nonprofit print studio. The founder and former board member obtained an SBA loan on behalf of the organization. Client needs assistance to compel cooperation with SBA to manage and pay the loan.</p>
<a href="#">24-1065</a> Pro Bono		Music	<p><b>Dispute: Collection: Music</b></p> <p>24-1065 Client is a NFP choral society which conducts choral performances. They have existing agreements with ASCAP and BMI, and were charged fees for periods during COVID when no performances were conducted. Client has attempted to negotiate reduced fees, with only minor success. Client would like assistance from an attorney to send a demand letter for elimination or reduction of these fees.</p>
<a href="#">24-1059</a> Pro Bono		Product Design	<p><b>Litigation: Real Estate: Zoning</b></p> <p>24-1059 Artist's iconic property of 27 years, a Bucktown worker cottage with an historic front setback of 66', is threatened by a pending adjacent development of an intrusive single-family home spread across the breadth of 2 lots. The development sought significant front setback relief that would lay ruin to artist's property value, quality of life and long-established, community-facing gardens. These gardens and home are a routine part of neighborhood tours, which plays host to musicians and visual artists during the Bucktown Garden Walk, an annual event that raises short-funds for area public schools and civic engagement. Due process of a variation with a public hearing was denied the artist and the community when the 3rd developer was excused from the front yard average ordinance despite concerted community and adjacent opposition. The artist was successful in reaching a compromise with developer number 2 and has been defending against this insensitive development for 4 years against 3 developers when the zoning administrator bypassed due process in an egregious administrative overreach. The Zoning administrator abused his discretion despite prolific evidence supplied by the artist and her zoning attorney illustrating that none of the legal standards and approval criteria had been met. The zoning board of appeals upheld the zoning administrator's decision during a recent appeal of the zoning administrator's decision. Artist now needs to file in circuit court for an administrative review to reverse what is largely seen as a bad decision. The artist has a seasoned zoning attorney on board (Amy Kurson) who will work in tandem with needed litigator. This matter has received notable press in the past.</p>
<a href="#">24-1047</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Contract Drafting: Music</b></p> <p>24-1047 Musician client needs assistance to determine rightsholder, and if necessary draft a content license to record a song based on a poem by a deceased author/ poet. He has had positive discussions with the wife of the deceased poet.</p>

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<a href="#">24-1000</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Visa/Immigration: Literature</b></p> <p>24-1000 Writer, music journalist, and stand-up comedian needs counsel to assist her in obtaining a EB-1 Visa.</p>
<a href="#">24-0976</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Real Estate: Visual Art</b></p> <p>24-0976 Ceramic Artist formerly held permanent easement over the roof of a building adjacent to her property for use as emergency exit from her 3rd floor apartments. In an agreement with a developer signed in October 2023, Ceramic Artist relinquished the easement on the condition that the developer construct a code compliant steel fire escape and stairwell system that would be accessible for all units of her building. Developer submitted code compliant drawings for fire escape system several months ago, but the building's power utility moved Ceramic Artist's gas meters without her consent, rendering the original, agreed upon design impossible. Developer then submitted secondary plans for a spiral staircase, which Ceramic Artist opposes, citing safety concerns for daily use for anyone with mobility or balance issues. Ceramic Artist needs counsel to help evaluate their rights and, if appropriate, compel the Developer to construct a more appropriate fire escape.</p>
<a href="#">24-0955</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Evaluation: Chain of Title: Film</b></p> <p>24-0955 Filmmaker has been producing a film for the past 13 years and is currently completing the finishing touches. He needs counsel to evaluate, and help perfect, chain of title.</p>
<a href="#">24-0903</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Nonprofit: Planned Giving: Music</b></p> <p>24-0903 Non-profit recording studio is developing a new planned giving program and need counsel to develop standard language for prospective donors' estate planning documents and assistance preparing to accept non-cash gifts.</p>
<a href="#">24-0884</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Collection: Visual Arts</b></p> <p>24-0884 Visual artist was the victim of a scam perpetrated by a commercial landlord. Previous LCA counsel was able to obtain a judgment in her favor for the full amount of damages. She now needs counsel to help enforce the judgment.</p>
<a href="#">24-0841</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Real Estate: Zoning Variation: Theater</b></p> <p>24-0841 Nonprofit theater company is building out a new space and is currently applying for a Public Place of Amusement License. They worked with the alderman to have the zoning changed to B-3-1, allowing them to open a theater with a PPA license. However, as there are residences located within 125ft of the space, the City of Chicago has requested that we apply for a zoning variation before they can move forward.</p>

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<a href="#">24-0833</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Condominium Association: Theater</b></p> <p>24-0833 Theater professional owns a condo that he uses as a rental property. He recently was forced to terminate the lease of the long-term tenant for a number of reasons. After receiving the eviction notice, the tenant and his daughter began acting erratically, in some cases harassing the other residents in the building. The Condominium Association hired an attorney and filed for a TRO against the tenant's daughter due to allegedly harassing behavior, and the theater professional was billed by the Condominium Association for these costs. He needs counsel to assess his liability for these legal fees. He is also interested in obtaining an evaluation as to his rights to sue his former tenants for significant damage to the unit.</p>
<a href="#">24-0825</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Real Estate: Commercial Lease: Music</b></p> <p>24-0825 Start-up recording studio/production company recently entered into a commercial lease for a studio/production space. The lease included insurance requirements, and the start-up obtained coverage as advised by their broker. They submitted the insurance policy to the landlord, and took possession of the space. The landlord later contacted them to inform them that the insurance policy does not comply with the terms of the lease. The lease requires Workers' Compensation, Property Coverage, Commercial General Liability, Business Automobile Liability insurance, and 10 million dollars worth of Umbrella/Excess Liability, despite the fact that some of these policies are not related to the actual business done by the start-up. The start-up approached several different brokers to try to obtain the 10 million Umbrella/Excess coverage, and were informed that this coverage would be impossible to obtain for a business of their size. They informed the landlord, who has been unyielding and has begun to threaten eviction. Start-up needs counsel to help evaluate their rights and, if possible, negotiate with the landlord.</p>
<a href="#">24-0819</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Evaluation: Copyright Reversion: Film/TV</b></p> <p>24-0819 Playwright and screenwriter wrote a play that was adapted into a TV series that was broadcast in the 80s. She no longer has access to the original agreements and needs counsel to help evaluate the status of her rights in the play.</p>
<a href="#">24-0789</a> Pro Bono		Literature	<p><b>Dispute: Publishing Account Access: Literature</b></p> <p>24-0789 Children's book author set up a self-publishing account with a large online book distributor more than 10 years ago. They are no longer able to access the account, as they no longer have access to the original phone number on file. They need counsel to communicate with the distributor and regain access to the account.</p>
<a href="#">24-0652</a> Pro Bono		Film/TV	<p><b>Contract Drafting/Negotiation: Film</b></p> <p>24-0652 Client is a filmmaker who co-produced a film with a nonprofit production company. Client terminated the co-production agreement, and the organization has threatened legal action. Client needs assistance to evaluate rights in the film and defend against legal action for breach of contract.</p>

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<a href="#">24-0637</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Visual Artists Rights Act: Mosaic</b></p> <p>24-0637 Nonprofit visual arts school specializing in mosaic art rents operates a physical location with a back patio/parking lot. This area shares a fence with the restaurant next door. The school and restaurant are tenants of the same landlord, and the shared fence is a common feature owned and maintained by the landlord. The school installed three mosaic works on their side of the fence with the permission of the landlord. Recently, the restaurant decided to expand portions of their back patio area, and, without permission from the school or landlord, instructed contractors to cut portions of the fence as part of this expansion, including portions of the fence where the mosaics were hung. The contractors cut off sections of two of the three mosaics. The school needs counsel to help evaluate a claim under the Visual Artists Rights Act, or any other form of appropriate recourse, and, if appropriate, assist with recovery of damages.</p>
<a href="#">24-0617</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Content Clearance: Attorney Opinion Letter: Film</b></p> <p>24-0617 Producer of a documentary about a local martial artist needs an Attorney Opinion Letter to support their application for errors and omissions insurance.</p>
<a href="#">23-1115</a> Pro Bono		Music	<p><b>Dispute: Enforcement of Judgement: Music</b></p> <p>23-1115 Musician hired a contractor to insulate her attic. She paid a deposit up front. Contractor never completed the work. Musician sued contractor in small claims court. An agreed order to dismiss, subject to an installment payment plan, was entered. Contractor has not paid Musician as agreed. Musician needs counsel to help enforce her right to payment.</p>
<a href="#">24-0483</a> Pro Bono		Theater	<p><b>Contract Drafting: Theater</b></p> <p>24-0483 Theater Director needs a production agreement drafted for a musical based on a popular novel. Client wrote the book for a similar musical theater project in Scotland based on the same novel, and retained rights in his work. Prior agreements for the first musical have expired, but must be evaluated and accounted for to avoid risk.</p>
<a href="#">24-0269</a> Pro Bono			<p><b>Dispute: Breach of Contract Defense: Performance Art</b></p> <p>24-0269 Artist used to volunteer for a nonprofit organization that celebrates Mongolian heritage. In 2022, she signed a contract with a performance venue on behalf of the nonprofit for a holiday celebration organized by the nonprofit and several other individuals. After disputes amongst the organizers, the event ended and the cash proceeds were split amongst the individual organizers. The nonprofit failed to pay the amount owed to the venue. The venue filed suit against the nonprofit and the Artist for breach of contract. The Artist was never served, all notices were sent to the registered address of the nonprofit. A default judgement was entered in February 2023. Artist was not notified of the situation until February 2024. They need counsel to help defend against this suit.</p>

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<a href="#">24-0308</a> Pro Bono		Theater	<b>Content Clearance: Grand Rights: Theater</b> 24-0308 Playwright has created a jukebox musical featuring music written by a Cuban punk band. She had an agreement with their band manager covering a workshop performance, and she is now interested in entering into a full grand rights license. She needs counsel to draft a grand rights license to acquire the rights to produce the musical more broadly. The license would likely need to be in Spanish.