

During its two days of debate at its 2010 Annual Meeting, the American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates approved fundamental requirements for effectively providing representation to persons who cannot afford a lawyer in adversarial civil proceedings involving such basic human needs as shelter, sustenance, safety, health and child custody, that are embodied in *ABA Basic Principles of a Right to Counsel in Civil Legal Proceedings*. The policy was brought to the House by the ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants with support from 12 other ABA entities and bar associations. In a companion proposal, the House of Delegates adopted the *ABA Model Access Act*, a model statute for use by implementing jurisdictions to establish and administer a civil right to counsel.



The goal of the *ABA Basic Principles for a Right to Counsel in Civil Legal Proceedings* (Principles) is to aid in implementing ABA policy that “urges federal, state, and territorial governments to provide legal counsel as a matter of right at public expense to low-income persons in those categories of adversarial proceedings where basic human needs are at stake, such as those involving shelter, sustenance, safety, health or child custody, as determined by each jurisdiction.”

To download a copy of the *Principles*, click [here](#). For more on the policies adopted at the 2010 Annual Meeting, [click here](#).