PARENT PLAYBOOK

STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES

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DEAR PARENT OF AN OHIO STATE FRESHMAN,

Your baby is going to college! No doubt, this is an exciting time. But, also it’s a little daunting. The good news is that your student has access to STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES, a law office that supports student success by providing legal advice, representation, education, and resources to Ohio State Students. We look forward to helping your student!

Sincerely,

THE SLS TEAM

DO STUDENTS NEED LAWYERS?
Yes! SLS assists thousands of students each year. At 18, your student is considered legally an adult. Most students, however, are relatively inexperienced and have few resources available to handle legal issues that can significantly impact their future lives and careers. Timely legal assistance can minimize long-term ramifications and reduce distractions from a student’s academic career.

DO REAL LAWYERS WORK AT SLS?
Yes! SLS employs licensed Ohio lawyers, with a combined 60+ years of law practice.

DO SLS LAWYERS REPRESENT IN COURT?
Yes! SLS lawyers are in court every weekday representing Ohio State students with criminal and traffic charges. SLS also represents students involved in civil litigation in Franklin County.

WHAT IS THE SLS FEE?
The annual $40 participation fee provides legal services to your student from August 1 - July 31. Students can opt out of the program, but cannot re-enroll later in the year when a legal issue arises, no exceptions.

WHAT ARE THE AREAS OF LAW COVERED?
- Landlord-Tenant
- Criminal misdemeanors
- Traffic offenses
- Consumer
- Credit & Debt
- Contracts
- Employment
- Will & Living Will
- Power of Attorney
- Victims of crime
- Notary & much more

614.247.5853
studentlegal.osu.edu
The reality is... college students make mistakes. SLS is here to help. Here's what SLS wants parents to know...

**BIG CITY, BIG PROBLEMS**

Ohio State is sometimes called “a city within a city.” In and around OSU, there are several different law enforcement agencies, including Ohio State Police, Columbus Police, Franklin County Sheriff, Ohio State Highway Patrol, and Ohio Liquor Control. Sometimes they’re in uniform, sometimes they’re undercover. What they all have in common is that each year, they encounter thousands of Ohio State students and will charge those engaged in unlawful behavior.

**FAKE ID, REAL CONSEQUENCES**

Possession of a Fake ID is a serious criminal charge with serious penalties. The mere possession of a fake ID can result in charges, even if a student is not using it to purchase alcohol at that time. The Prosecutor’s office deals with these cases harshly and, some employers see a fake ID charge on your record as a sign of dishonesty.

Drug convictions can cost your student federal financial aid, as well as carry potential license suspension. Also, some employers will not hire a candidate with a drug conviction. Each year, SLS represents student cited with drug charges. We work to reduce the charges and will seek a resolution that protects your student’s future.

**DONT'T SMOKE 'EM IF YOU GOT 'EM**

In Ohio, anyone driving a car must have a license and car insurance. While Freshmen generally cannot have cars on campus, many will still drive at some point whether it is a friend’s car here in Columbus, or their own back home. SLS commonly advises and represents students who are buying and selling cars, have problems with car repairs, have been involved in auto accidents, been cited for moving and non-moving violations, or have issues with car insurance or drivers licensure.

Some criminal records can be sealed. We regularly assist students with sealing criminal records. The sealing doesn’t mean that the record is completely gone. Certain career routes and graduate programs require background checks that can access sealed criminal records. We also advise students who are required to disclose a criminal charge in order to minimize their impact on the job search, licensure, and graduate applications.

**GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

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Ohio State requires students to complete a special form to give parents access to their education records. Without the release, OSU cannot give you academic, account, or financial information.

A General Power of Attorney gives you authority to sign documents on your student’s behalf and gives you access to your student’s financial accounts.

A Living Will documents a student’s wishes regarding life-sustaining treatment and other choices such as organ donation.

Outside of situations covered by the Healthcare Power of Attorney, this form authorizes medical providers to release medical information about your student to you.

The last thing you want in an emergency is to be kept out of the loop because you aren’t authorized to discuss your student’s medical situation. A Healthcare Power of Attorney allows you to make medical decisions for your student if your student cannot.

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Your student can schedule by calling 614-247-5853 or online at studentlegal.osu.edu. Freshmen are not generally eligible for SLS services until August 1st, However, SLS will draft these documents before August 1st for Freshmen. To schedule before August 1st, call our office.
Students start looking for off-campus housing at the start of Autumn Semester in their Sophomore year. You as their parents, and we as their lawyers, want them to be well-educated consumers. Freshmen should schedule a PRE-LEASE appointment before leaving for summer break. During the appointment, SLS will review budgeting, finding housing, evaluating potential properties and landlords, and more. Parents can be conferenced in by phone or attend the appointment.

Some students want to stay in Columbus the summer between Freshman and Sophomore year. They’re looking for housing and many choose to SUBLEASE. Students should schedule a sublease appointment to discuss the student’s rights and to create a sublease agreement.

Don’t let your student sign a lease until SLS has met with your student and reviewed the lease. Leases in Ohio are not standard, and one lease may be very different than another. SLS staff will review the lease with your student line by line, explain rights and responsibilities, point out unenforceable clauses, suggest potential negotiable terms, and answer your student’s questions. Again, you can be conferenced in by phone or attend this LEASE REVIEW appointment.

Most leases in Columbus contain a “joint and several liability” clause which means that everyone signing the lease shares the responsibility. If there is unpaid rent or damages to the property, the landlord can seek to recover from all the tenants, or any one of them. Everyone is liable separately and/or together. Co-signors are also liable. To be sure all the roommates understand their rights and responsibilities, SLS suggests that they complete a ROOMMATE AGREEMENT. We provide a sample agreement during your student’s lease review.

SLS is also here to support students after they move off-campus. If your student is having trouble getting repairs made, needs to terminate a lease, has questions about a security deposit, or other leasing issues. Student Legal Services lawyers can help.

What Students Are Saying About SLS

“"The attorney listened to my concerns and went over the document (a lease contract) with me, clarifying the passages that were somehow more difficult or obscure, suggesting ways to prevent the other part from taking advantage, and encouraging me to check back with the Legal Services office in case anything emerged.”

“"My attorney went through my lease thoroughly, and clearly explained what I was and wasn’t held to according to Ohio law. She also provided insight for move-in, repair requests, and subleasing that may save me a lot of money in the future.”
DO YOUR HOMEWORK. While OSU makes every effort to ensure only legitimate opportunities are posted on their job boards, it’s up to the student to research the job. DO KNOW WHAT TYPE OF EMPLOYEE YOUR STUDENT IS. Many students, especially early in their college career, will consider taking an unpaid internship to gain experience. When the training students receive are provided for educational benefit, rather than to benefit the workplace, an unpaid internship is warranted. However, if students are simply acting as another employee of the business, according to the law, students should be paid as such.

DO GET PAID. If you are an employee (and not an unpaid intern) of a company, you must be paid wages. Generally, you must be paid at least minimum wage, although some positions and industries can pay below the minimum wage if you are also earning tips. Unfortunately, this is another area where students are taken advantage of and underpaid. Before taking a job, you should know what you will be paid and whether that amount is what the

DON’T PAY TO INTERN. Your student should not have to pay a company to do work for them. SLS generally advises against paying for an internship experience. Many of these companies require exorbitant upfront fees with no real guarantee of a successful internship experience. Even worse, some turn out to be a scam or require students to pay them if the student does not fulfill certain quotas. DON’T GET SCAMMED. If an opportunity sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Most Freshmen are not highly skilled employees. So, if an employer is promising a salary that seems really high for the type of work to be done, or if the employer wants to run money through your bank account, this may be a scam.

STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES

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614.247.5853
20 E. 11th Ave
Let’s face it, health insurance can be confusing for even the most seasoned among us. For a student who is encountering the health insurance process and paperwork for the first time, it’s downright daunting. Student Legal Services is here to help. We’re happy to sit down with your student and go through health insurance claims and file appeals for denial of coverage.

Out-of-state parents should check their policies carefully. Educate your student about in versus “out-of-network” providers. Need help wading through the jargon? We’ve got your student covered.

College students, on their own for the first time are easy targets for scammers. Students are required to give out their personal information for many legitimate reasons. So, they may be less likely to spot when someone is trying to scam them by asking for personal information. Remember – Ohio State will never ask students via email or the phone for their usernames and passwords. SLS is available to assist students to determine whether a situation is a scam, and to help if students are afraid they’ve been scammed.

Crime—including theft, assault, sexual violence, harassment, and stalking—can happen anywhere. And, it happens to college students.

SLS is here to help. SLS attorneys assist students who have been the victim of crimes. We assist students through the criminal filing process and with protection orders.

SLS is a confidential resource with no reporting requirements to Ohio State.
My legal situation was making it nearly impossible for me to do well in school... My attorney was extremely attentive and helpful, and we felt he really cared about us and our case. He could not have done a better job and it is truly amazing that all of this was done for only $40/year.

I had an amazing experience with SLS. I already struggle with mental health issues, so being able to receive prompt and very competent and knowledgeable representation...helped reduce the stress and anxiety I felt. I was able to make an appointment the same day and was met by welcoming staff. My attorney was understanding and reassuring. Her confidence helped me feel more confident...I would completely recommend SLS to any other student...

This is an amazing resource.

I have a better understanding of my legal issue. Before, I felt very vulnerable and taken advantage of. Now, I feel that I have tools to use to protect myself from this point going forward. It’s great peace of mind.

WE ARE THE LAWYERS FOR OHIO STATE STUDENTS

99% OF STUDENTS WOULD recommend STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES to a friend

76% OF STUDENTS SAY their legal issue was distracting them from their studies prior to coming to SLS

79% OF STUDENTS SAY their legal issue was causing them stress