



Canvas Legal, PLC

Accessible legal counsel for established businesses, startups, and nonprofits.

SMALL BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

May 30, 2017

BUSINESS PROFILE

I. Overview.

Canvas Legal, PLC is a Michigan professional limited liability company. It is headquartered in Detroit, Michigan, with its principal place of business located at 440 Burroughs Street, Suite 301 in Midtown.

Canvas Legal is a Detroit-based legal practice founded by Erin R. Bonahoom.

Erin graduated *summa cum laude* from Western Michigan University Law School and licensed in the State in 2008. She began her career as an attorney with Plunkett Cooney as a summer associate in 2006. While at Plunkett Cooney, Erin had the opportunity to advise clients from a variety of industries on commercial contracts and negotiations, employment matters, liability and risk management, and general governance.

In 2014, inspired by the energy and her love for the City of Detroit, Erin left Plunkett Cooney to pursue her passion of helping emerging and established companies achieve their goals. Excited to work with smaller-sized businesses where she could make a significant impact and work closely with her clients in planning their operations, she has not looked back.

Erin has had the opportunity to represent and counsel every kind of entity from national corporations, small businesses, and nonprofits to governmental agencies in a variety of legal areas including construction, corporate governance, employment, commercial leases, intellectual property, contracts, products liability, insurance, indemnity, hospitality and food and beverage. She served on the national organization, Groundbreaking Women in Construction board, and was a keynote speaker on professional liability issues in the context of construction projects. Erin has extensive experience in the construction industry, representing owners in owner representative negotiations and contracts, as well as engineers, architects, and contractors.



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Erin has also served as an adjunct professor at Western Michigan University Law School, teaching third year law students about client intake and counseling. She has partnered with several local organizations including Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation/Grand River Work Place, DC3, Hatch Detroit, TechTown and the South East Michigan Entrepreneur Association, to provide free legal clinics to burgeoning businesses on a variety of topics including, but not limited to, protecting intellectual property rights and brands, basic business law principles, hiring first employees and key commercial lease issues. Erin is also a Build Institute Facilitator, teaching Motor City Match participants, among others, the basics of planning for a business and preparing a business plan.

II. Core Mission and Competencies

Canvas Legal's core mission is to promote Detroit's economic recovery by providing affordable legal services to emerging and established businesses. Canvas Legal was established specifically to change the way legal services are provided by educating and counseling clients throughout the course of their business to ensure that they employ best practices and manage risks.

Canvas Legal is unique in that it offers a number of legal services on a flat-fee basis, allowing clients to properly budget for their legal needs. Canvas Legal also offers a monthly installment plan that is designed to encourage businesses to access and utilize their attorneys, ensuring that clients get the counsel they need without concerns about high legal bills. These innovative changes and core mission were the basis of the firm being named "Best of MichBusiness" by the Michigan Business & Professional Association in 2014 and one of "15 Disruptive Startups in Southeast Michigan" by Michipreneur in 2015.

Consistent with its core mission, Canvas Legal routinely partners with local organizations to provide free and low-cost seminars on topics relevant to business owners including business formation, protecting intellectual property, hiring employees and contract negotiation. These partnership organizations include the Build Institute, the Detroit Creative Corridor Center, Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, the University of Michigan, SPARK-Ann Arbor, Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation, Bamboo, TechTown, and Hatch.

Canvas Legal also holds free open office hour clinics for entrepreneurs who are not yet in a position to afford legal counsel, but have questions about their business. Canvas Legal remains true to its vision that supporting other small businesses in the region only serves to benefit the community as a whole and that sound legal practices are a critical component of any successful business, but is often out of reach for emerging and established small businesses.

As an entrepreneur herself, Erin understands the importance of collaboration among service providers supporting a small business and strives to make connections and build a supportive, collaborative atmosphere for all of her clients. Canvas Legal collaborates and works with clients' consultants to ensure that there is cohesiveness in all that the clients do.

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Canvas Legal offers a wide range of legal services to companies of all sizes, from startups to well established businesses. The firm has a variety of types of clients, from high-growth tech to retail to food manufacturers to the creative industries. Below is a general summary of the types of services Canvas Legal provides:

Governance:

- Operating agreements and bylaws, which are the rules that govern the business
- Partnership agreements, which are the rules that govern your relationships with your business partners
- Buy/sell agreements, which determine if and how business partners can sell their ownership interests to others
- Converting a limited liability company to a corporation (or vice versa)

Real Estate, Contracts and Other General Business Matters:

- Commercial Leases
- Supplier/vendor contracts
- Independent contractor agreements
- Client agreements
- Non-disclosure agreements, which protect your confidential information, trade secrets, and private data
- Releases/waivers of liability to lower your liability
- Construction contracts including requests for proposals, professional service agreements and owner's representative agreements
- Safety procedures and policies
- Indemnity agreements
- Document retention policies, which protect your interests in the event of litigation
- Negotiation of contracts or other deals
- Risk management

Employment Law:

- Employment agreements
- Non-competition and non-solicitation agreements, which protect your business from unfair competition
- Employee handbooks and policies
- Social media and internet use policies

Intellectual Property:

- Advising and counseling on the best strategy to protect your intellectual property
- State or federal trademarks registration, whichever is best suited for your purpose
- Copyright registration



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- Trade secrets, including ensuring that you are protecting your trade secrets and preventing others from stealing them

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