



State of Wisconsin  
2011 - 2012 LEGISLATURE



LRB-1323/P1  
MES:kjf:jf

DOA:.....Steinmetz, BB0321 – Allow counties to create, and assess fees for,  
court self-help centers

**FOR 2011-13 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION**

**AN ACT ...; relating to:** authorizing a county to operate a courthouse self-help center and to impose and collect a fee for providing such services.

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*Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

This bill authorizes a county board to direct its clerk of courts to operate a self-help center in the county courthouse to provide individuals with information regarding the court system. The information provided may include guidance on small claims and family law proceedings, where to obtain legal advice and forms, and how to represent oneself in court. A self-help center may be staffed by county employees or volunteers, although no staff member may provide legal advice to self-help center patrons. The bill also authorizes a county to impose a fee on individuals who use the services provided by a self-help center.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

**SECTION 1.** 59.40 (6) of the statutes is created to read:

59.40 (6) SELF-HELP CENTERS. (a) A board may direct its clerk of courts to operate a self-help center in the county courthouse to provide individuals with information regarding the court system, including all of the following:

1. How to represent oneself in circuit court.
2. How to obtain legal assistance or legal information.
3. Information regarding legal proceedings such as small claims actions, family law, and foreclosure.
4. How to file an appeal.
5. Information about people and offices in the courthouse.
6. Where to obtain, and how to fill out, legal forms.
7. Answers to frequently asked questions concerning the legal system.

(b) The clerk of courts may staff a self-help center with county employees or volunteers, although no one who works or volunteers at a self-help center may provide legal advice to a patron of the self-help center.

(c) The board may impose on, and collect a fee from, individuals who use the services of a self-help center described under par. (a).

**(END)**