

Circular 1b

Limitations on the Information Furnished by the Copyright Office

Among its other functions, the Copyright Office serves as an office of record, a place where claims to copyright are registered when the claimant has complied with the requirements of the copyright law. We are glad to furnish information about the provisions of the copyright law and the procedures for making registration, to explain the operations and practices of the Copyright Office, and to report on facts found in the public records of the Office. However, the Regulations of the Copyright Office (*Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 37, Chapter II) prohibit employees from giving specific legal advice on the rights of persons, whether in connection with particular uses of copyrighted works, cases of alleged foreign or domestic copyright infringement, contracts between authors and publishers, or other matters of a similar nature.

The Copyright Office cannot:

- Compare for similarities copies of works deposited for registration;
- Advise on questions of possible copyright infringement or prosecution of copyright violations;
- Draft or interpret contract terms;
- Enforce contracts or recover manuscripts;
- Recommend particular publishers, agents, lawyers, “song services,” and the like;
- Help in getting a work published, recorded, or performed;
- Grant permission to use a copyrighted work. However, you may request a copy of M-10, “How to Obtain Permissions,” for information on getting permission to use a copyrighted work.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To speak to an information specialist, call (202) 707-3000 [TTY: (202) 707-6737], Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. eastern time, excluding federal holidays. Recorded information is available 24 hours a day. Order forms and other publications from:

Library of Congress
Copyright Office—PUB
Publications Section, LM-455
101 Independence Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20559-6304

or call the Forms and Publications Hotline 24 hours a day at (202) 707-9100. Most circulars (but not forms) are available via fax. Call (202) 707-2600 from a touchtone phone and follow the prompts. Access and download circulars, forms, and other information from the Copyright Office website at www.copyright.gov.

Many requests for assistance require professional legal advice, frequently that of a copyright attorney. Your local bar association may be able to recommend a copyright attorney. Even though the Copyright Office cannot furnish services of this kind, our policy is to be helpful in supplying authorized information and services.

NOTE: The limitation on specific legal advice does not apply to the Office’s authority to interpret the Copyright Act through regulations and practices in order to carry out its statutory responsibility to administer the Copyright Act.