

Ask a Lawyer[Ask a Question](#)[Today's Q&A](#)[Question & Answer Archive](#)[Topic Schedule](#)**Research Areas of Law**[Bankruptcy](#)[Family Law](#)[Labor and Employment Law](#)[Personal Injury](#)[Real Estate](#)**Related Links****Articles:**

- [Do I Really Need a Lawyer?](#)
- [Selecting a Lawyer](#)
- [Lawyers' & Clients' Responsibilities to Each Other](#)

[Ask a Lawyer](#) > [Question & Answer Archive](#)**Ask a Lawyer Archive**

Notice Regarding Downloading Of Music
[Kristie Prinz](#)

Q.

My daughter is a college student and has received a letter that she must meet with the school judicial officer for downloading music. Her school records are on hold. Does she need a lawyer? This sounds serious.

-- *Phylis***A.**

Based on the facts you have provided, it sounds as though your daughter has been accused of copyright infringement by the music industry.

As you may be aware, the recording industry has been active the past few years in filing lawsuits against past copyright infringers. On the whole these copyright infringers are people who downloaded music off the Internet without paying the requisite royalty to the artist and/or recording studios for the right to use that music. Typically, when this infringement occurred, the downloads were made from a website that didn't charge for downloading the music. The recording industry filed lawsuits first against these websites for copyright infringement, and once the industry won and had the websites shut down, the industry started filing suit against individual copyright infringers. There were obviously a large number of people downloading music from these websites, including many teenagers and students, so it has likely taken the industry a while to get around to filing lawsuits against everyone.

I actually just represented a client who was served in one of these cases. The allegations were that he had committed various acts of copyright infringement about six or seven years ago. He hired me to assist him with settling the case out of court, which we were ultimately able to do. I don't know that my assistance on the matter was absolutely critical, as the music industry refuses to negotiate all of these cases and simply assigns a settlement payment price to each matter, but I know my client felt more comfortable with a lawyer there to interpret everything for him and to speak on his behalf.

Browse for a Lawyer

- [Find Lawyers & Law Firms by State or Province](#)
- [Find Lawyers & Law Firms by Area of Law](#)

Find a Lawyer

Type in an area of law or a lawyer/firm name:

City:

State:

Country:

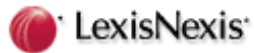
[Advanced Search](#)[Search Help](#)

In the current situation, it sounds as if the recording industry has just made allegations against your daughter and perhaps even filed a complaint against her. Copyright infringement claims are absolutely a serious matter; however, court can likely be avoided if the claims are promptly settled. I would definitely recommend addressing the issue as soon as possible.

Retaining a lawyer to advise and explain everything would no doubt be best, but it may not be absolutely critical, provided that you are able to resolve the matter right away before an answer has to be filed in court. In the event your daughter decides to handle the matter herself, however, she definitely needs to keep that date when the answer is due in mind. If the matter is not resolved by the date the answer is due, then an attorney will need to file an answer on your behalf, in order to avoid having a default judgment entered against her. Since she will need time to find and retain an attorney, I definitely do not recommend waiting until the last minute to address the issue.

-- Kristie Prinz

[Find a Lawyer](#) | [Research Legal Information](#) | [Ask a Lawyer](#) | [Blogs](#) | [Contact Lawyers at attorneys.com](#) | [Community](#)



LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell is the most complete, trusted source for identifying qualified legal counsel.

Disclaimer: The information provided on Lawyers.com is not legal advice, Lawyers.com is not a lawyer referral service, and no attorney-client or confidential relationship is or should be formed by use of the site. The attorney listings on Lawyers.com are paid attorney advertisements and do not in any way constitute a referral or endorsement by Lawyers.com or any approved or authorized lawyer referral service. Your access to and use of this site is subject to additional [Terms and Conditions](#).

[Martindale.com](#) | [Canada](#) | [attorneys.com](#) | [LawyerLocator.co.uk](#) | [www.findalawyer.cn](#) (China) | [www.law24.co.za](#) (South Africa) | [www.martindale.jp](#) (Japan) | [anwalt24.de](#) (German) | [martindale.co.il](#) (Israel) | [Lexis Nexis](#) | [lexisONE Free Case Law](#)

[Help](#) | [Site Map](#) | [About Us](#) | [Press Room](#) | [Info for Lawyers](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Home](#) | [Index Map](#)

©2008 LexisNexis, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.