



# CARI'S GUIDE

*to working with*

# RINCKER *Law* PLLC



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LinkedIn:  
[/caririncker](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rinckerlaw)



Email:  
[cari@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:cari@rinckerlaw.com)



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# RINCKER *Law* PLLC

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# OUR HISTORY

## *Where it All Began...*

Rincker Law, PLLC started with a girl and a dream. After working for a law firm in Cheyenne, Wyoming, Cari decided to take the plunge and start her own law practice in New York City, where she went to law school. At the infancy of Rincker Law, it aimed to serve different segments of the food and agriculture industry. Cari knew that if she wanted to practice agriculture law in the most densely populated city in the country then she needed to pave her to path and do it on her own.



## *A Passion for Family Law*

Rincker Law, founded by Cari in 2009 in a small Manhattan apartment, was fueled by inspiration. To support her dream, she worked as a contract attorney for 1.5 years until her practice became self-sustaining. In its early days, Cari courageously took on various cases, including her first divorce, guided by a mentor. This experience ignited her passion for assisting clients through life transitions, leading her to focus on family law, reflecting the belief that a lawyer's practice finds them.

## *Food & Agriculture Law*

Cari's innovative approach to food and agriculture law, particularly in New York City, exemplifies how technology empowers legal services to transcend geographical boundaries. Rincker Law, PLLC, operates on a national scale while fully embracing virtual tools. Raised on a multi-generational family farm in Shelbyville, Cari's roots in agriculture run deep. She holds both an undergraduate and an advanced degree in animal science. Currently residing near her family's Simmental farm, she also raises goats, chickens, and rabbits, alongside her two kids. Additionally, Cari takes pleasure in judging cattle through 4-H and FFA programs.

## *Connected to Community*

Rincker Law, PLLC, focuses on Food, Farm, and Family law. While in New York City, 95% of cases were in the New York City boroughs, with a small percentage in New Jersey and Connecticut. Cari Rincker emphasizes the importance of New York City's proximity to clients and courthouses in family law. We prioritize efficiency, customer care, teamwork, and continuous learning, committed to helping clients navigate challenges in the areas of family law, business law, estate planning, trademarks, and aspects of food and agriculture law.



# OUR CORE VALUES

***1. Offering excellent, detail-oriented, consistent service.***

We focus on all the details to make sure you are given the best service possible.

***2. Being communicative and responsive.***

We know timely communication with you is important, and we want you to feel updated on what is happening with your matter.

***3. Being lifelong learners and investing in education.***

We have a hunger for knowledge and are lifelong learners, so we can better serve you.

***4. Having accountability and ownership over responsibilities.***

We don't play the blame game. We own our responsibilities with your case.

***5. Having impeccable ethics and integrity.***

"He who cannot be trusted with a little cannot be trusted with a lot."



***6. Having respect and appreciation for others.***

Respect and appreciation are a two-way street here, and we aim to show it each day.

***7. Rolling up sleeves to work hard and to go above and beyond.***

We have a farm girl work ethic and will push to better serve you.

***8. Offering services in a productive, efficient manner to decrease costs.***

We are cognizant of efficiencies, and we aim to use each team member at their highest and best use to better serve you and decrease costs.

***9. Taking responsibility and learning from mistakes.***

We fail forward at Rincker Law and learn from errors.

***10. Having a positive and supportive attitude.***

Positive attitudes are contagious.

***11. Having timeliness and professionalism.***

Life is crazed, but your lawyer doesn't have to be. We aim to be on time and professional in everything that we do.



# QUICK TIPS FOR WORKING WITH US

Tips for keeping the bill down and helping the process go more smoothly and efficiently.

- **E-mail**
  - You are billed for each, so please consolidate when possible.
  - Phone calls may be quicker.
- **Phone**
  - Leave your name and best callback number in voicemails.
  - Emergencies only via text/call to Cari's cell at (646) 717-2659.
- **Meeting in Office**
  - No client meetings on Mondays or Fridays unless an emergency.
  - Please give a 24-hour notice for cancellations.
  - Cari can meet at 8am, at 5pm, or over the weekend, but only in special circumstances.
  - We have parking validation tickets for the Champaign office.
- **Payment**
  - Pay bills and replenish retainers promptly to avoid service interruptions.
- **Discovery and Sending Documents**
  - Avoid screenshots, Google Docs, or Dropbox.
  - Send documents in hard copy, e-mail, USB, or via the Cosmolex Portal.
- **Respect & Attitude**
  - We value your input, but legal strategy decisions rest with Rincker Law. Please be patient and respectful.
- **Complaints**
  - Direct any concerns about billing or service to Cari personally or to our bookkeeper.
- **Efficiency Tips**
  - Consolidate questions, organize documents, and avoid sending multiple short emails.



# OUR PROCESS

*Thank you for retaining Rincker Law, PLLC. We have a teammate spirit at Rincker Law, PLLC - we are all working together to better fulfill your legal needs. This guide has a few quick tips on what you can do to help us work together more effectively.*

## *Intake Form*

Be sure to send back the intake form for your particular matter. If we are handling more than one matter for you, then we will likely have separate intake forms. It is okay if you cannot fill in every detail, but we would appreciate it if you would complete it/them to the best of your ability and then return the completed forms to our office either in electronic or hard copy form.

## *CosmoLex Client Portal and Document Delivery*

Rincker Law, PLLC uses CosmoLex billing software, and each client is able to use his/her own portal where they have access to the final copy of certain files, which are also typically sent via email and/or regular mail. Keeping clients up-to-date on their matters is a high priority for Rincker Law, PLLC. Instructions on setting up your account will be sent to you under separate cover.

## *Correspondence with Cari*

I spend a lot of my days in court, in meetings, and on conference calls. Because of that, I sometimes fall behind on email and cannot respond to your email right away. Thank you in advance for your patience on this issue. A sure way to make this problem worse is to re-forward the same email if I do not respond in a few hours - I try my best to be organized with my email. Occasionally, emails do fall through, so please alert me if I have missed correspondence that needs to be addressed.

If you need an immediate answer to your question, then please call and ask someone on my team. I do my best to keep everyone up-to-date on your matter(s). This is one of the key reasons why I bring Associate Attorneys into each matter.

That said, in most cases, I prefer in-person meetings or telephone calls. I find this to be a more efficient use of our time, so that I can ensure you understand my response, as sometimes emails can be misconstrued. I will respond to emails, so please feel welcome to email me, but understand that, depending on the questions, I may prefer to set up a meeting or telephone call.

Sometimes your matter may be complex enough that it is best to schedule calls or meetings on a regular basis with me, ensuring both of us that we have enough time together to get all questions answered; after all, we are on the same team working together on your matter(s).



## *Cari's Personal Cellphone*

I give you my cell phone number in the Retainer Agreement, and I may call you from my cellular phone while I am at home or driving, but please do not call or text me on my cellular phone unless there is a true emergency or it is about court attendance. I want all my clients to have my personal cellular number in case something urgent arises and you need my attention immediately.

I know that texting is the way of the world, but I cannot have all my clients texting me on my personal phone. Not only does this complicate the way that I manage your case, but I also struggle with the separation of work and my personal life. If work calls are constantly coming in on my personal phone, then it makes it more difficult for me to relax in my personal time.

To better manage communication, we have text messaging capabilities via TextRequest at **217-531-2179** and Lawmatics. Importantly, the whole team can see these messages for vision.

## *Attorney-Client Privilege*

Your Retainer has an Addendum noting this but it is worth reiterating here: forwarding correspondence (including emails and letters), copying others on email correspondence, or bringing third parties to meetings breaks attorney-client privilege. This means that a subpoena can be sent to that friend, family member, romantic partner, or anyone who has been privy to correspondence or meetings, forcing the disclosure of my correspondence or they could be deposed and asked questions about our meetings. This can have negative implications on your matter.

I hope that you have come to Rincker Law, PLLC for our legal advice, but experience the by-product of outstanding client service. Let's keep that legal advice private from court proceedings and others by protecting that attorney-client privilege. All good relationships are built on trust—you need to trust me and I, similarly, need to trust you. If you have confidants with whom you desire to share information, please let my office know so we can talk through this together.

## *Billing*

Billing includes emailing me, as well as every touch on your case. Here are my tips to help reduce fees:

### **Consolidate questions in one email or one teleconference.**

I know, I know - this is hard to do. I am notorious for sending popcorn emails with random thoughts and requests to my staff, so just use your best judgment here. The truth is that it takes more time (and billable hours) to sort and read through five to ten short emails than one well-organized, concise email. It is easier to respond, as well as easier to read, in preparation for a meeting or a telephone call.



**Deliver documents in an organized fashion.**

Depending on what we are helping you with, your matter may be very document-intensive. It would help a lot if you organize the documents in chronological order or some other type of logical fashion.

**Consider using other professionals.**

We offer legal services at Rincker Law, PLLC. I went to law school because I wanted to help people, but my talents only go so far. I am not a licensed therapist, an accountant, business/life coach, forensic evaluator, real estate broker, financial advisor, etc., but those professionals can be hired.

Rincker Law, PLLC aims to be a resource for our clients and can provide referrals for these professionals or others that may assist you in your matter. Let us look out for your legal needs and leave other needs in the hands of those qualified professionals in those other areas.

**Please do not use the camera on your phone to copy and send documents.**

As mentioned earlier, please avoid sending photos of documents. It slows down processing and may result in unreadable files.

## *Your Social Media Use*

Your Retainer Agreement has a social media acknowledgement, but I want to reiterate how important it is not to post information about your case online. Along these same lines, pay attention to posts you are tagged in too, as social media posts can come out in court.

## *Referrals and Feedback*

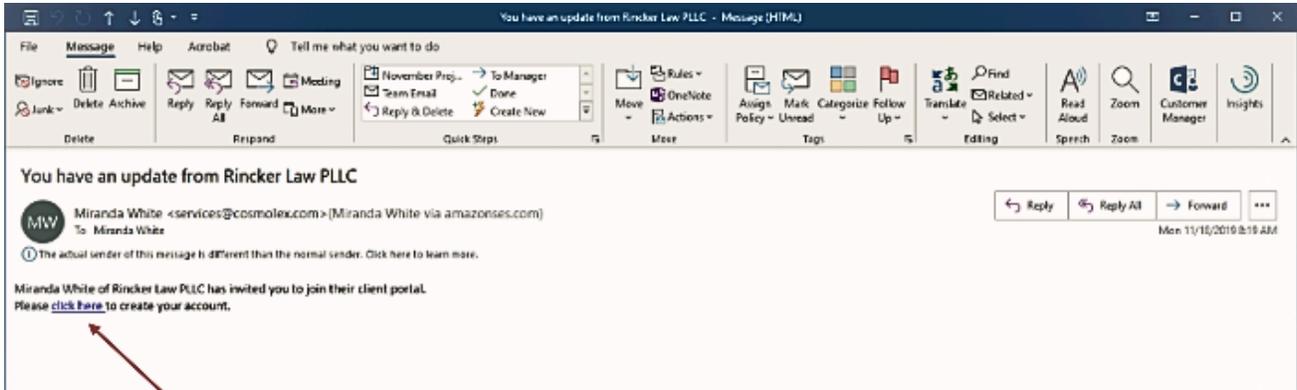
To me, referring Rincker Law, PLLC to someone you know is the biggest compliment that you can give. I know it is a lot to put your trust in the hands of others when you refer family and friends in the direction of any professional, much less a lawyer. As you know, Rincker Law, PLLC charges consultation fees; however, we offer free consultations to those referred by existing clients. Please make sure this person gives my office your name when they call to set up a consultation.

My goal is to make sure you have all your legal needs addressed in a service-oriented package. I welcome candid feedback to me personally about service that you appreciate or suggestions to improve. If you ever want to give Rincker Law, PLLC anonymous feedback, a questionnaire is available at [rinckerlaw.com/services](http://rinckerlaw.com/services).

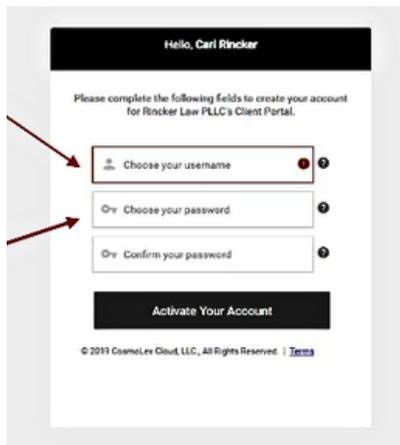


# HOW TO ACCESS THE COSMOLEX CLIENT PORTAL

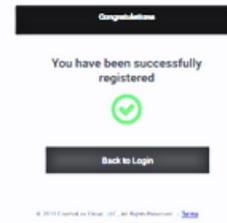
1. Each client will receive an email from Principal Attorney Cari Rincker or a legal assistant, inviting them to join their client portal. Please click on the link to create your account.



2. Once you click on the link, you will be directed to **create a username and password for your CosmoLex client portal**. Please be sure to store your username and password for future use. Our office will have a record of your username, but we will not have a record of your password.

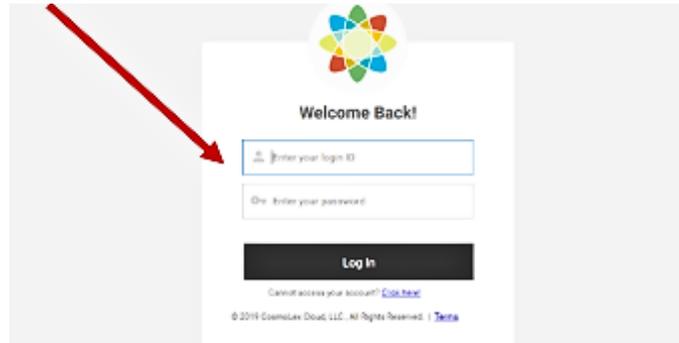


3. After you create your account, you will be prompted to go back to the **login screen**.

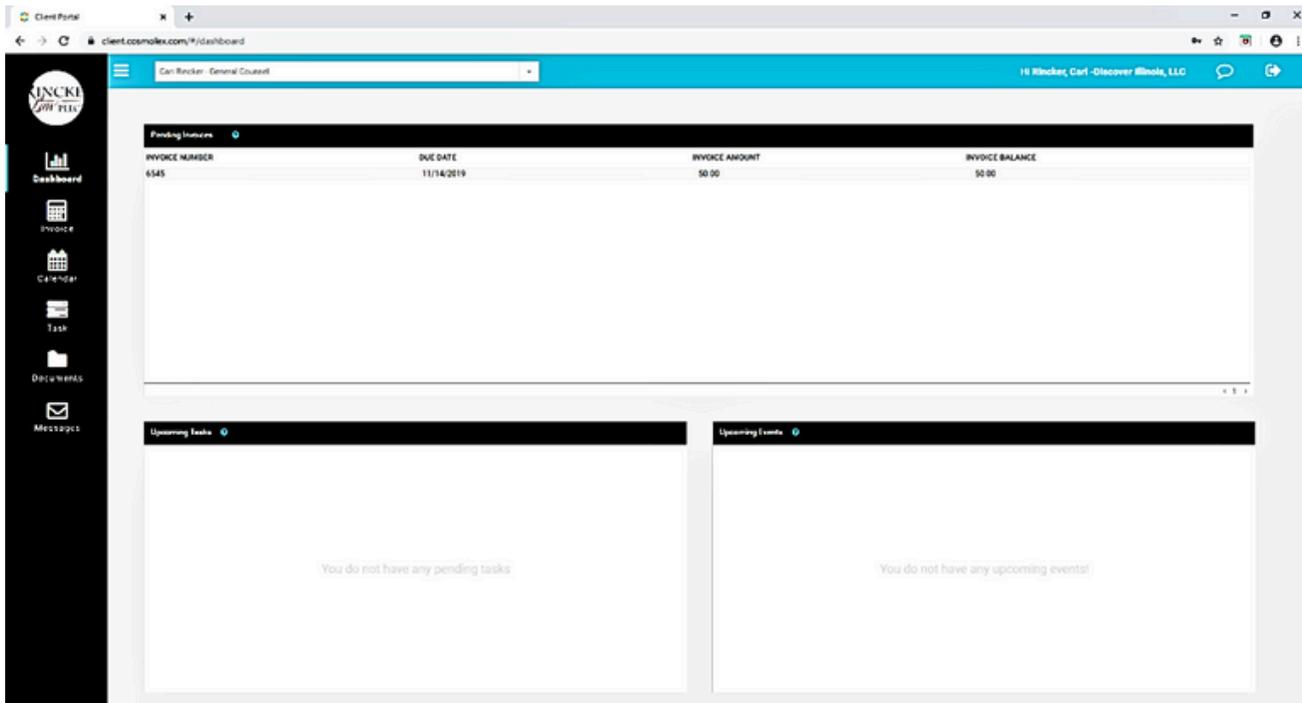


4. Please login with your new username and password. Let us know if you have any issues.

This should also be the same username and password that allow you to log into the app you can download on your phone.



5. Once logged in, you will be presented with a similar screen to the one below. From here, you will be able to access your invoices, documents, upcoming calendared events, and shared tasks. You will also have access to the messaging feature.



# BILLING CHEAT SHEET

## *Money Matters*

Money is an important topic at Rincker Law, PLLC. Cari has a great support team helping you with your matters, but those people also must be paid on time (twice a month, to be precise). We take payment and retainer replenishment seriously. If you are unable to pay your bill or replenish your retainer in a timely manner, then we may cease work and withdraw as counsel.

## *Consultation Fee*

The consultation fee is refunded once retained. For example, if the first bill is \$1500, then the \$400 consultation fee will be credited back, making the first bill \$1100. This does not come off the retainer if you have an hourly matter. If you have a flat fee matter, then your flat fee takes into account the consultation refund.

## *Billing Frequency*

Rincker Law runs bills once a month usually but if you have a lot of activity on your matter, you may receive two bills in a month. This is a general rule, so there may be times, depending on what is going on with your case, that Rincker Law, PLLC will bill you more or less frequently, but we aim to minimally bill every two months unless the balance due is less than \$200. You may at any time ask for a bill to be sent to you, or you may request your trust account balance by emailing Cari. Billing summary reports are also available upon request by emailing the bookkeeper at [accountsreceivable@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:accountsreceivable@rinckerlaw.com).

## *Evergreen Retainer*

Lawyers vary on how they run retainers. Some use it as prepayment for legal services, and a person or entity does not have to replenish it until the retainer is used. Others use it simply as payment security for the end, so payment is due each month while 100% of the retainer is kept in the trust account. Rincker Law, PLLC uses an **“evergreen retainer” for security** which means that we will transfer funds from the trust account after each billing period, and then you have the obligation to “fill the cup” back to the retainer minimum.

Generally speaking, the “retainer minimum” is the amount required when you retained Rincker Law, PLLC, this figure may increase based on what is happening in your matter. However, if your case is winding down or there is less involved in your case, then Rincker Law, PLLC may ask for a smaller minimum retainer; conversely, if we are gearing up for trial, then Rincker Law, PLLC reserves the right to ask for a trial retainer above the normal retainer. Regardless, we will be in communication about this.

The minimum retainer should show up on your bill. If it does not, then please let either Cari or the bookkeeper know at [accountsreceivable@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:accountsreceivable@rinckerlaw.com). You are required to pay your balance and or replenish your retainer within thirty days.

## Payment Options

We accept payment in a myriad of ways:

- **Credit Card:** We accept Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and American Express. It does not matter if it is a debit card or a credit card. We have a form that can be used for automatic, one-time, or recurring credit card payments. Alternatively, you can pay via Law Pay online at <https://rinckerlaw.com/pay-a-bill/>. If you are replenishing a retainer, then you need to select the trust account in your state.
- **PayPal:** Payments can be made via PayPal to [cari@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:cari@rinckerlaw.com).
- **Venmo:** Payments can be made to Cari Rincker at [cari@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:cari@rinckerlaw.com) or [cari.rincker@gmail.com](mailto:cari.rincker@gmail.com).
- **Chase QuickPay:** Payments may be made via Chase QuickPay by searching for [cari@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:cari@rinckerlaw.com).
- **Check or Money Orders:** Checks or money orders should be payable to “Rincker Law, PLLC.”
- **Cash:** Payments via cash may be made at either Illinois office by appointment only. We currently do not accept cash payments at the New York office unless arrangements are made with Cari during a meeting.
- **Wire Transfer:** Payment via wire transfer is available. Wire transfer instructions can be emailed upon request.

## Contesting Charges

Rincker Law, PLLC is comprised of people, and people make mistakes. You may find an error on your bill that needs to be corrected. The Retainer Agreement requires that you contest charges within 30 days of receipt. If you contest a charge, you must do so in writing, including the date and details of the itemized charge you are contesting and the reasoning why you are challenging the charge. One way to do this would be to highlight the charges on your bill and send it with an email explaining why you are making the various billing contests.

You can find specific instructions on this in your Retainer Agreement itself.

If there is a billing dispute, Rincker Law, PLLC is obligated to put the disputed monies into the trust account, but you are still obligated to pay the full amount due. Cari will try to resolve this swiftly and amicably.

If you have questions generally about your bill, Cari is available to speak on this issue at no charge to you. Please email Cari directly or her assistant at [assistant@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:assistant@rinckerlaw.com) to set up a time to speak.

# PAY LATER - AFFIRM

## *What is Pay Later?*

Pay Later by Affirm is a legal fee lending solution that allows consumers to pay legal fees in manageable and scheduled installments online. It offers customers the ability to pay over time, giving them control, convenience, and increased purchasing power.

## *Why you'll love it*

- **It's convenient** - applying is quick and easy, and it won't impact your credit score.
- **It's transparent** - you'll know exactly what you'll pay upfront - no hidden fees or surprises.
- **It's flexible** - choose from easy monthly payment options that work best for your budget.

## *How it works*

### **Select the "Pay Later" tab as your payment method.**

Enter a few pieces of information for a real-time decision. This check doesn't affect your credit score.

### **Choose a payment plan**

See what payment plans are available for you. There are no hidden fees.

### **Pay over time**

Make payments at [affirm.com](https://affirm.com) or in the Affirm app. Watch for text and email reminders when a payment is coming up.

## *Remember!*

- Your first payment is due approximately one month after the payment is processed.
- If you are not approved, you will need to discuss this with your lawyer to see if they are open to a separate payment plan or an alternative arrangement.

## *More information*

### **Interest Rates**

Interest rates go from 10% to 36% APR, depending on your eligibility.

### **Payment Terms**

The term options are 3, 6, 12, 18, or 24 months.

### **Transaction Size Limits**

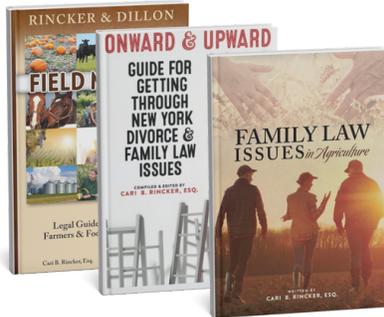
Affirm financing via Pay Later currently supports transactions from \$150 to \$25,000, but a client's credit limit will depend on their eligibility.



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

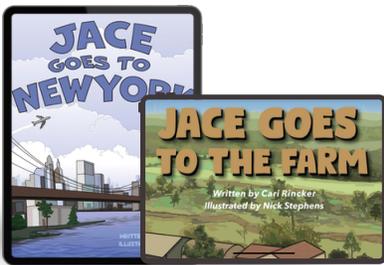
## Books & Collaborations

We recommend the following books to our clients, both of which were authored by Cari and contain important information:



- **“Field Manual: Guide for New York Farmers and Food Entrepreneurs,”** co-authored with other experts in the field.
- **“Onward and Upward: Guide to New York Divorce and Family Law Issues,”** organized as a collaborative effort with various professionals in family law.
- **“Family Law Issues in Agriculture,”** providing a comprehensive overview of how family law intersects with the agricultural industry, addressing unique challenges faced by farming families.

In addition, Cari has created the following books for kids, seen through the eyes of her son, Jace:



- **“Jace Goes to New York”:** Follow Jace as he explores the bustling streets of New York City, discovering iconic landmarks and experiencing the vibrant culture.
- **“Jace Goes to the Farm”:** Join Jace on an exciting adventure to the countryside, where he learns about farm life and meets a variety of friendly animals.

## Podcasts for the Community



Cari hosts a podcast and blog titled **“The Billable Mom®”**, where she shares her experiences and insights as both a lawyer and a mom. She offers valuable advice on navigating the dual challenges of her legal career and motherhood. You can find her podcast at:

- Website and blog: [thebillablemom.com](http://thebillablemom.com)
- Instagram, TikTok, and X: [@thebillablemom](https://www.instagram.com/thebillablemom)
- Facebook, YouTube and Pinterest: The Billable Mom



In addition, Cari hosts **“Ag Law Today Podcast®”**, produced in collaboration with Purdue University Extension, where she shares insights and interviews with industry experts.

- Website: [aglawtodaypodcast.com](http://aglawtodaypodcast.com)
- Youtube: [AgLawToday](https://www.youtube.com/AgLawToday)
- Facebook page: [Ag Law Today](https://www.facebook.com/AgLawToday)

## *Rincker Law Blog*

Rincker Law, PLLC is committed to being a resource for both clients and the broader community. We invite you to explore our award-winning Food, Farm & Family Law Blog, which covers timely legal topics in agriculture and family law. You can follow us at [www.rinckerlaw.com/blog](http://www.rinckerlaw.com/blog).

## *Rincker Law's Newsletter*

You can be added automatically as a client, if you want to unsubscribe please let us know.

## *Calendly*

15 minute, 30 minute or 60 minute slots are available with Cari or email [assistant@rinckerlaw.com](mailto:assistant@rinckerlaw.com).

<https://calendly.com/caririncker/meeting-with-cbr-15-min>  
<https://calendly.com/caririncker/meeting-with-cbr-30-min>  
<https://calendly.com/caririncker/meeting-with-cbr-60-min>

# OUR LOCATIONS



**Shelbyville Office**  
229 E. Main Street  
Shelbyville, IL 62565  
Office: (217) 774-1373



**Champaign Office**  
301 North Neil Street  
M2 on Neil Street  
Suite 400  
Champaign, IL 61820  
Office: (217) 531-2179



**New York Office**  
535 Fifth Avenue  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Office: (212) 427-2049  
Fax: (212) 202-6077



**Houston Office**  
1000 Main Street  
Suite 2300  
Houston, TX 77002  
Office: (713) 230-8264



**Stamford Office**  
6 Landmark Square,  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Stamford, CT 06901  
Office: (475) 400-9130



**Austin Office**  
14425 Falcon Head  
Blvd, Building E  
Suite 100  
Austin, TX 78738  
Office: (512) 772-2726



**New Jersey Office**  
111 Town Square Place  
Suite 1201  
Jersey City, NJ 07310  
Office: (201) 839-3500



**Lexington Office**  
1795 Alysheba Way  
Suite 7203  
Lexington, KY 40509  
Office: (859) 514-2325

## Questions

I hope we can have a long-lasting relationship. If you have any questions about my guide or general questions about procedures with Rincker Law, please feel free to reach out to me. We can discuss this at our next meeting or telephone call.

I look forward to working with you,

*Cari*

