

UNITED STATES  
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



# **USPTO Resources for Independent Inventors, Small Business Owners, and Entrepreneurs**

Invention-Con 2019

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UNITED STATES  
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



# Visit us at [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)



The screenshot shows the USPTO website homepage. At the top left is the 'uspto' logo and the text 'UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE'. To the right are links for 'About Us', 'Jobs', 'Contact Us', and 'MyUSPTO'. A search bar contains the text 'Search uspto.gov' and a magnifying glass icon. Below the header is a navigation menu with four items: 'Patents', 'Trademarks', 'IP Policy', and 'Learning and Resources'. The main content area features a large image of Temple Grandin, a woman in a red shirt, sitting in a field with several black cows. Below the image is a blue banner with the text 'Thinking like the herd' and a link 'A trip to the farm changed Temple Grandin's life forever [FULL STORY >](#)'. To the right of the image is a blue sidebar with the heading 'Find It Fast' and the text 'Quick links to applications and tools.' Below this are two buttons: 'Patents' and 'Trademarks', both with dropdown arrows. Further down is a white section with the heading 'New to IP?' and the text 'Learn the basics of intellectual property.' Below this is a large question mark icon and three links: 'Patent basics >', 'Trademark basics >', and 'Find help in your area >'.

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Patents Trademarks IP Policy Learning and Resources

**Thinking like the herd**  
A trip to the farm changed Temple Grandin's life forever [FULL STORY >](#)

**Find It Fast**  
Quick links to applications and tools.

Patents Trademarks

**New to IP?**  
Learn the basics of intellectual property.

Patent basics >  
Trademark basics >  
Find help in your area >



# Inventor and entrepreneur resources

- USPTO's hub for resources and information for inventors, entrepreneurs, and small businesses.
- Webpage: [www.uspto.gov/inventors](http://www.uspto.gov/inventors)



## Inventor and entrepreneur resources

The image shows the main content area of the USPTO website, organized into four columns. Each column has a title, a brief description, and a list of links. The columns are: 1. "Patents for startups" with links to "Patent process overview", "Inventors Assistance Center", "Patents FAQs", "Patents homepage", "Search for patents", and "Official Gazette for patents". 2. "Trademarks for inventors and entrepreneurs" with links to "Trademark Basics", "Trademark Electronic Search System (TESS)", "Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS)", "Trademark Status and Document Retrieval (TSDB)", "Electronic Trademark Assignment System (ETAS)", "Assignments on the Web (AOTW)", "Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB)", and "Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure (TMPEP)". 3. "Inventor and entrepreneur assistance" with links to "Inventors Assistance Center", "Patents Ombudsman Office", "BusinessUSA", "Trademark Assistance Center", and "University Outreach Program". 4. "Education and information" with links to "Scam prevention", "Provisional Application for Patent", "General Information", "A Guide to Filing a Nonprovisional Utility Patent Application", "A Guide to Filing a Design Patent Application", "Basic Facts About Trademarks", "Financial Manager", "U.S. map of state resources", and "IP Awareness Assessment". There are also sections for "Scam Prevention", "Pro Se and Pro Bono", "Current Events", and "Other federal resources".



# Inventor and entrepreneur resources by state

Resources and assistance in your state for filing for a patent or registering a trademark

- Free patent and trademark legal assistance
- Learn to search inventions and trademarks
- Attend events in your region
- Network with inventor and entrepreneur organizations in your state
- Accessible via [uspto.gov](https://www.uspto.gov) homepage

There are lots of resources and assistance to make filing for a patent or registering a trademark easier, more affordable, and ultimately result in strong legal protection for your invention or brand. For example, if you can't afford an attorney, there are several programs that provide free legal representation. Use the map below to find out what is available in your state.

And remember, our [Inventor and entrepreneur resources page](#) is the USPTO hub for resources and information for inventors, entrepreneurs, and small businesses.

Select your state below to find resources

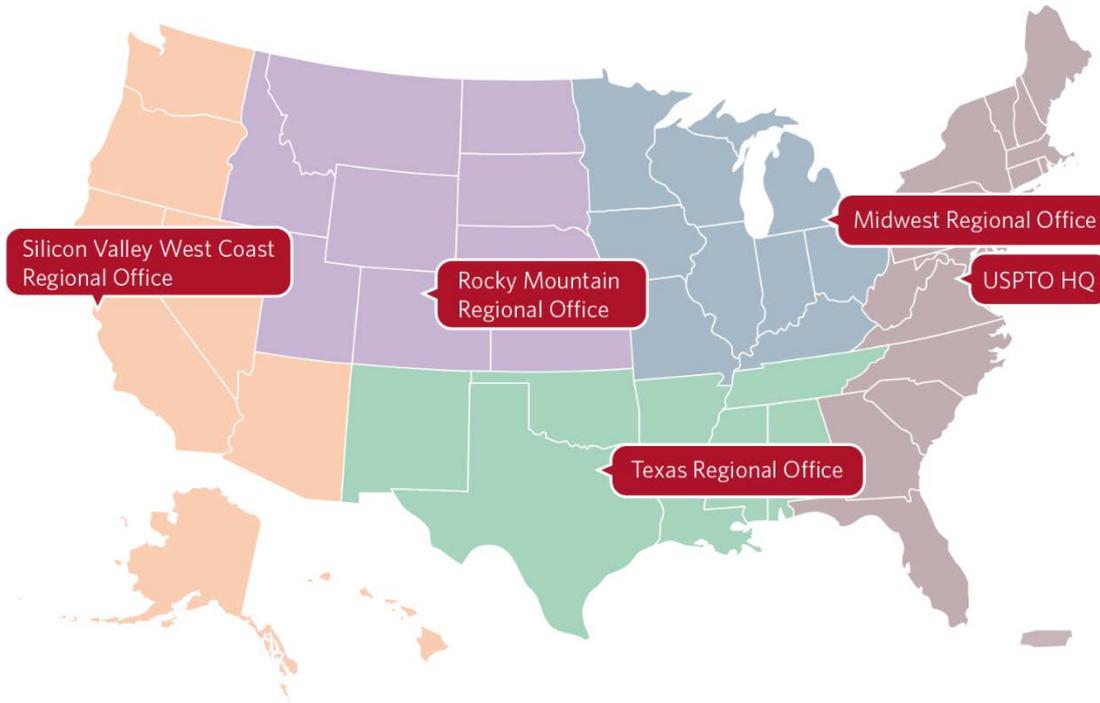


This map derived from [commons.wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org)

Alabama	Georgia	Maryland	New Jersey	Rhode Island	Wisconsin
Alaska	Hawaii	Massachusetts	New Mexico	South Carolina	Wyoming
Arizona	Idaho	Michigan	New York	South Dakota	
Arkansas	Illinois	Minnesota	North Carolina	Tennessee	
California	Indiana	Mississippi	North Dakota	Texas	
Colorado	Iowa	Missouri	Ohio	Utah	
Connecticut	Kansas	Montana	Oklahoma	Vermont	
Delaware	Kentucky	Nebraska	Oregon	Virginia	
District of Columbia	Louisiana	Nevada	Pennsylvania	Washington	
Florida	Maine	New Hampshire	Puerto Rico	West Virginia	



# USPTO offices



## **Detroit**

- Operational since July 2012

## **Denver**

- Byron G. Rogers Federal Building
- Operational since July 2014

## **Silicon Valley**

- San Jose City Hall Building
- Operational since October 2015

## **Dallas**

- Terminal Annex Federal Building
- Operational since November 2015



# Trademark Assistance Center (TAC)

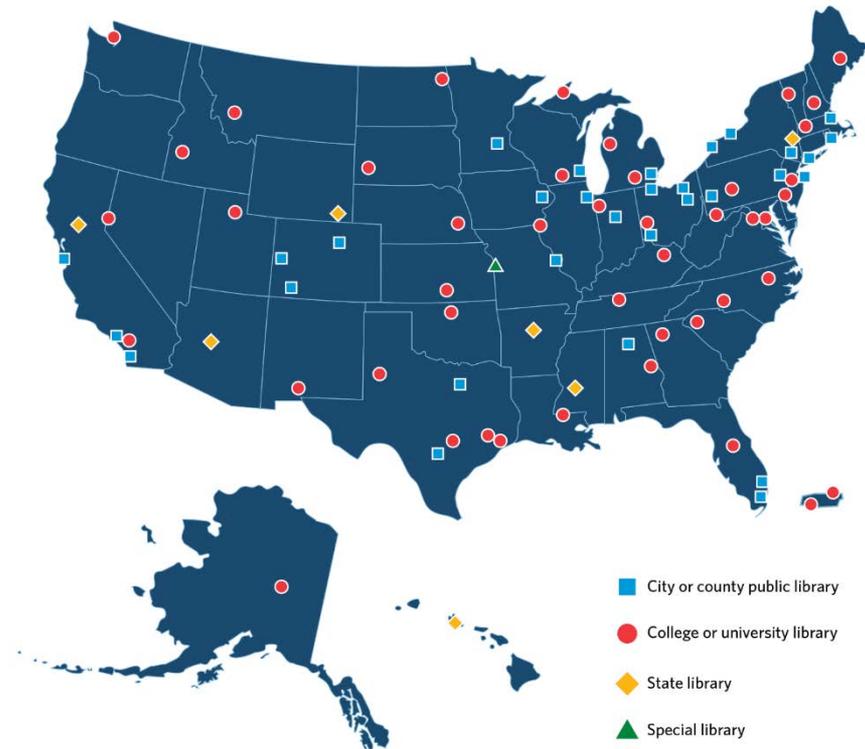
- Provides general information about the registration process
- Responds to status inquiries
- Hours of Operation
  - 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. (ET), Monday through Friday
- Phone
  - (571) 272-9250 or (800) 786-9199
- Email
  - TrademarkAssistanceCenter@uspto.gov
- Webpage: [www.uspto.gov/TrademarkAssistance](http://www.uspto.gov/TrademarkAssistance)



# Patent and Trademark Resource Centers (PTRC)

Nationwide network of public, state, and academic libraries that are designated by the USPTO to disseminate patent and trademark information and to support intellectual property needs of the public.

[www.uspto.gov/ptrc](http://www.uspto.gov/ptrc)



# Patent and Trademark Resource Centers (PTRCs)

- Assist in identifying relevant USPTO search tools and related resources
- Demonstrate how to use search tools to conduct a preliminary patent search
- Demonstrate how to use search tools to conduct a preliminary trademark search
- Provide access to the PubEAST and PubWEST examiner-based search systems



# Inventors Assistance Center

- Provides general information about the patent examination policy and procedure
- Staffed by former Supervisory Patent Examiners
- 8:30am-8:00pm EST, Monday through Friday
- **Phone:**
  - (571) 272-1000 or (800) 877-8339



## Inventors Assistance Center

The Inventors Assistance Center (IAC) provides patent information and services to the public. The IAC is staffed by former supervisory patent examiners, experienced primary patent examiners, various intellectual property specialists, and attorneys who can answer general questions concerning patent examining policy and procedure.

### What IAC can do for you

- Answer general questions regarding patent examining policy.
- Answer questions concerning necessary formats and items needed for your patent application.
- Assist you with forms needed and with filling out the forms.
- Direct your calls to appropriate USPTO personnel or [www.USPTO.gov](http://www.USPTO.gov) web pages, as necessary.
- Provide you with general information concerning patent examining rules, procedures, and fees.
- Send you patenting information and forms via USPS mail or facsimile.



# Pro Se Assistance Program

- Hours of Operation
  - 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. (ET),  
Monday through Friday
- Email
  - [innovationdevelopment@uspto.gov](mailto:innovationdevelopment@uspto.gov)
- Phone
  - (866) 757-3848
  - Webpage  
[www.uspto.gov/ProSePatents](http://www.uspto.gov/ProSePatents)



Home / Patents/Getting Started / Using legal services / Pro Se Assistance Program

## Pro Se Assistance Program

The Pro Se Assistance Program is the United States Patent and Trademark Office's comprehensive pilot to expand outreach to inventors who file patent applications without the assistance of a registered patent attorney or agent (also known as "pro se" filings). On this page, you will find information about the program and how it works, and guides and resources for some of the most common issues that pro se applicants encounter.

If you've got a great idea for an invention but you're not sure what a patent is or why you might need one, watch the animated video below.



- [Getting started with pro se assistance](#)
- [Application checklist](#)
- [Nonprovisional Utility Patent Application Checklist](#)



# Free legal assistance\*

- Patent Pro Bono Program
- Law School Clinic Certification Program

*\*Applicant(s) must pay for all USPTO fees*



# Reduced patent fees

## Small Entity

- 50% reduction in most patent fees
- Must be an individual or
- A small business (less than 500 employees) or a non-profit organization

## Micro-Entity

- 75% reduction in most patent fees
- Meet small entity requirement
- Filed no more than 4 previous applications
- Income not greater than 3x median income
- Not assigned to other than a micro-entity
- Inventions assigned to employer don't count against you

For more information on Micro Entity: [www.uspto.gov/MicroEntity](http://www.uspto.gov/MicroEntity)



# Patents Ombudsman Office

- Assists applicants throughout the application process including initial filing, patent examination, and post examination
- Helps applicants get their applications back on track.
- Hours of Operation: 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. (ET), Monday through Friday
  - Telephone: (571) 272-5555 or (855) 559-8589
  - Email: PatentsOmbudsmanProgram@uspto.gov
- Website:
  - [www.uspto.gov/Ombudsman](http://www.uspto.gov/Ombudsman)





# Thank you!

**NaThanya Ferguson**

Supervisory Innovation  
Development Program Manager

[Nathanya.Ferguson@uspto.gov](mailto:Nathanya.Ferguson@uspto.gov)

571-272-8033

[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)