

# #11 Legal ProTips

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## Submitted

The authors still have [time](#) to make changes.

 **Submission**

🕒 10 Apr 2020 10:40:41pm EDT · 📄 c778fdbbc

► **Abstract**  
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Lieber (dk550) Mike Dwyer (md200) Kaitlyn Chabida

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*Hidden for blind review*

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Elise Kronbichler 

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**Review #11A**

[Elise Kronbichler]  12 Apr 2020

## (P02) Goal and use cases

This application could be very useful, especially as many laws have been changing recently due to the pandemic. This application would be helpful for people who are uncertain of regulations that may have changed recently, including business owners, essential employees, and the recently unemployed. A similar service is provided by searching for topics at [coronavirus.health.ny.gov](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov).

### **(P02) Feasibility**

I am glad to hear that the project has been narrowed down from information on all of the United States to just New York, as this seems much more feasible than trying to get information on all 50 states' differing laws, as well as all of their counties. One major issue that I see, however, is that laws relating to coronavirus and its impact have been changing rapidly, especially in New York, the epicenter of the outbreak. It may be difficult for the application to continually gain new information as circumstances change, and to know what cases, laws, and precedents have become outdated.

### **(P02) Information retrieval component**

Perhaps a feature can be added to the input to specify if the user is looking for legal advice as opposed to just the relevant laws in place. It also may be a bit inconvenient for the user to select their county from a dropdown menu, as there are 62 counties in NY.

### **(P02) Social information component**

The use of reddit threads seems like a useful component to the proposed data.

### **(P02) Quality of data**

As mentioned in the feasibility section, it may be difficult for the application to guarantee it provides up to date outputs. Additionally, it may be useful to narrow down the reddit threads being used to only ones that seem reliable, perhaps based on the percentage of upvotes the threads receive.

### **(P02) Input/output examples**

The example of input/output provided is accurate to the goal of the app and seem accurate. One thing that may be useful to add is an excerpt from each of the top ranked documents that has a key phrase related to the input for a better overview of why that document would be useful to the user.

### **(P02) Overall feedback**

Again, I am concerned about the application having up to date information as laws rapidly change and new precedents are set. If the application is able to do this, I believe it could be very useful during the given times.

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## **Review #11B**

[Nancy Engel]  14 Apr 2020

### **(P02) Goal and use cases**

Yes, I really like this idea. If my friend is worried about their rights as a tenant, they could use this application to learn more.

As the group noted, the most similar application that comes to mind is Google (or similar search engines).

### **(P02) Feasibility**

I really like that you scaled your scope down to NY state only. The only worry that comes to mind is just that it seems like you'll end up using quite a few sources of data. Given that we have such a short time to complete this project, I would just be careful about how many sources you end up using in your final product.

### **(P02) Information retrieval component**

I like that you are using a text box for user input. In terms of output, but I'm concerned about legal jargon making your results hard to read for the user. I'm not exactly sure how much text you're providing in the output to the user, or how long your ranked list will be. I would be careful to not overwhelm the user with legal jargon or too many links!

### **(P02) Social information component**

Yes. The use of Reddit data fulfills the social information requirement.

### **(P02) Machine learning component**

Yes, their use of ML seems to make their results more relevant to the user. I don't have much ML knowledge!

### **(P02) Quality of data**

I'm really curious as to what the "Other" category is in your pie chart!

I would like to know more about what the references to "virus" and "influenza" referred to in the law documents, and whether those references overlap. I think it would be helpful to go through the documents where those words pop up and see how they are used to inform your next steps. If those keywords are not used in relevant ways, you may need to adjust the scope of your project regarding COVID-19.

### **(P02) Input/output examples**

Yes, the input/outputs reflect the stated goal. I will say I am having trouble thinking of examples where this would be better to use than Google, so I would be careful about that. Again, I think you should consider how the output will be displayed as to not overwhelm users with legal jargon/too many technical results.

### **(P02) Overall feedback**

Great idea! I find it really interesting that you are trying to incorporate the pandemic into your project, but am wondering about how the impact of this on your result. I would consider that many of the issues caused by the pandemic already existed and are just becoming more extreme due to the pandemic (e.g. tenant's rights, labor rights, homelessness, etc.). People already had disabilities, cannot

come into work due to severe illnesses, lose family members tragically, etc...so how did the law take care of them before the pandemic?

I'd be a lot more convinced if I learned about how the law already addresses pandemic or large-scale social emergencies like this one!

[HotCRP](#)