

The
Legal Aid Society
— of Cleveland
Since 1905

Volunteer Lawyers Program



Where Need Meets Opportunity

Legal assistance is the critical factor that enables a family to fight homelessness, receive earned wages, or protect at-risk children. The need for free legal assistance to low-income and vulnerable people has never been greater.

The demand for Legal Aid's services continues to grow as does the need for quality *pro bono* legal assistance. In 2008, Legal Aid's 55 staff attorneys and 800 volunteer attorneys served 9,400 low-income clients - a 17% increase from 2007. Still, more than half of eligible people seeking assistance were turned away; Legal Aid can only serve a fraction of those eligible for services.

A debt of gratitude is owed to volunteers who serve Legal Aid's clients: thank you for your continued effort. If you have not yet participated in one of Legal Aid's programs, you are invited to begin. Together, we can fight poverty and secure justice by providing high-quality legal services to those most in need.

Opportunities range from a two-hour commitment at a Brief Advice and Referral Clinic to extended representation. Mentor attorneys and support are available to volunteers on any case. Support provided by Legal Aid includes litigation costs and resource materials.

Brief Advice & Referral Clinics

Volunteer attorneys staff drop-in clinics held at neighborhood sites on Saturday mornings and weekday evenings. Attorneys give general advice, assist in completing *pro se* materials and make referrals. Brief Advice & Referral Clinics are an ideal limited commitment and a great introduction to the many issues faced by Legal Aid clients.

Evening Clinics

Volunteer attorneys from a law firm or specialty practice area staff weeknight clinics. The attorneys conduct an initial interview with pre-screened clients. After assessment of the clients' issues, attorneys either 1) take the case for extended representation, or 2) advise the client and refer.

One-to-One Match

Volunteer attorneys meet with clients individually, not in a clinic setting. After the initial meeting, attorneys determine if they will take the case for extended representation.

Specialty Projects

Legal Aid, along with its community partners, has developed specialty projects focused on specific legal issues. Clients are pre-screened for project eligibility. Unless otherwise noted, no specialized legal experience is necessary. Legal Aid provides training opportunities including complimentary Continuing Legal Education sessions.



Specialty Projects

Bankruptcy By-Pass Program

Volunteer attorneys assist elderly and disabled clients that have income and assets which are judgment-proof. Attorneys provide assistance in communicating with creditors.

Pro Bono Bankruptcy Project

Bankruptcy attorneys advise and assist clients in filing for bankruptcy.

Civil Protection Order Project

Attorneys assist victims of domestic violence in obtaining civil protection orders against their abusers.

Community Advocacy Program *Pro Bono* Project

Volunteer attorneys assist Legal Aid and MetroHealth's Medical-Legal Partnership, which focuses on removing legal barriers to health and educating healthcare providers about patients' legal rights.

Disability Law Project

Volunteer attorneys represent disabled individuals, including children, to obtain and maintain SSI disability benefits.

Elder Law

Attorneys participate in educational presentations on specific elder law issues and/or attend a Brief Advice & Referral Clinic to complete important documents such as advance directives.

Specialty Projects

Foreclosure Project (“Save the Dream”)

Volunteers are involved in a statewide initiative to help clients facing foreclosure. Attorneys can elect either to provide extended representation or limit their involvement in various ways.

Immigration Project

Immigration attorneys assist with adjustment of status clinics for refugees, an annual Citizenship Day clinic and individual *pro bono* cases. The attorneys work with the C. Lyonel Jones Immigration *Pro Bono* Committee.

Low-Income Tax Clinic

Volunteer attorneys advise and represent clients regarding federal tax matters including, but not limited to, audits, examinations, levies against wages, innocent spouse relief, and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) issues.

Private Tenant-Landlord Project

Volunteer attorneys represent tenants in housing matters, including eviction, lockout and conditions cases.

Other projects are in development, and focus on juvenile custody, pro se child support matters and helping individuals remove barriers to employment.



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www.lasclev.org

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland Volunteer Lawyers Program

Attorneys participating in a Volunteer Lawyers Program *pro bono* opportunity are covered by The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland's malpractice insurance policy.

Volunteer opportunities are available in Legal Aid's five-county service area.

To volunteer, contact:

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Ashtabula County

**121 East Walnut Street
Jefferson, Ohio 44047**

Cuyahoga County /Administrative Offices

**1223 West Sixth Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44113**

Lake & Geauga Counties

**8 North State Street
Painesville, Ohio 44077**

Lorain County

**538 West Broad Street
Elyria, Ohio 44035**