PRO BONO

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAW STUDENTS IN THE CHICAGO AREA

Law students can help meet the needs of low-income and other vulnerable people in our community through pro bono service. Pro bono not only helps people in need, but also allows students to develop legal skills, create a network within the legal community and gain the emotional satisfaction that comes with helping people in need. Law students at all levels can get involved, and additional opportunities are available for students with 711 licenses.

Law students can get involved in any of the ongoing pro bono opportunities listed below. Law students interested in internships, externships or clinical experience should start with their schools for more information about their programs. Law students may also contact any of the organizations listed in the CBF Guide to Pro Bono Opportunities; information about additional organizations is available on the CBF’s website under grants. Law students with questions should contact Angela Inzano at ainzano@chicagobar.org or 312-554-4952 or visit www.illinoislegalaid.org for more information.

ILLINOIS LEGAL AID ONLINE

LiveHelp is a chat service that allows people looking for legal information and self-help resources on IllinoisLegalAid.org to ask a remotely located LiveHelp Operator for assistance in navigating the websites. LiveHelp volunteers provide direct person-to-person online help so that people in need of legal assistance can obtain the information they need to achieve more positive outcomes to their legal problems. Volunteers can participate from any computer with internet access.

Practice areas: All areas
Opportunity type: Non-representation, Educating the Public about the Law, Technology
Skills acquired: Basic legal knowledge
Skills required: Basic legal knowledge
Time commitment: Completion of the required 2-hour training and two hours per week
Training and Supervision: Volunteers must attend a two hour orientation and conduct a 30-minute practice chat with the LiveHelp Coordinator prior to volunteering. Staff members provide volunteers with ongoing support.
Contact: Fasharra Branagan, 312.977.9047 ext 26, fbranagan@illinoislegalaid.org

CGLA CLIENT INTAKE PROGRAM

Volunteer attorneys and law students interview potential clients at the CGLA office and satellite offices on the south side of Chicago. Volunteers receive training and observe intakes before interviewing clients alone. Following intake interviews, volunteers attend the weekly intake meeting at CGLA’s office to present the potential client’s information to staff, volunteers and interns. At the intake meeting, all staff and volunteers vote on which cases to accept, refer to other sources, or provide advice.

Organization: Cabrini Green Legal Aid (www.cgla.net)
Practice areas: Criminal Law, Criminal Records, Family Law, Housing
Opportunity type: Non-representation, Client Intake/Interviewing
Skills acquired: Client/Witness Interviewing
Skills required: Basic legal knowledge
Time commitment: Approximately 4 hours over one week (intake and intake meeting)
Training and Supervision: 1.5 hour orientations are held at CGLA’s office for all volunteer opportunities. New volunteers in the client intake interview process are also expected to observe three intake sessions before conducting intake interviews independently. In addition, CGLA’s volunteer coordinator and staff attorneys also support volunteers.
Contact: Eve Kleinerman, 312.374.6191, volunteer@cgla.net
**FDLA Hotline Attorney**

First Defense Legal Aid seeks volunteers to provide high quality pro bono legal representation to low-income adults and children arrested at Chicago police stations. Hotline volunteers answer a 24-hour hotline and represent people at the police station. Volunteers may help clients assert their Fifth Amendment right to remain silent and Sixth Amendment right to counsel, interview witnesses, view line-ups, and protect clients from police misconduct. No criminal defense experience is required. Law students and graduates that are eligible for a 711 license may volunteer.

**Organization:** First Defense Legal Aid  
(www.first-defense.org)

**Practice areas:** Civil Rights, Criminal Law

**Opportunity type:** Legal Hotline

**Skills acquired:** Client Counseling, Client/Witness Interviewing

**Skills required:** Basic legal knowledge

**Time commitment:** Completion of the required 90-minute training. Volunteers are then asked to commit to one 6-hour on-call shift per month of their choosing.

**Training and supervision:** Volunteers are required to attend a 90-minute training about the rights of detained individuals. In-person trainings are offered at least once month. Supervising staff attorneys are available to answer questions during all volunteer shifts.

**Contact:** volunteer@first-defense.org

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**CGLA Expungement Help Desk**

Volunteers provide brief advice and service to individuals seeking to clear their criminal record through expungement, sealing, or executive clemency. Volunteers meet with clients, read their criminal history or rap sheets, determine their eligibility for expungement, sealing, or executive clemency, and help them file the necessary paperwork. The desk is open Monday through Friday from 9 am – 12 pm and is located in the Daley Center. The Markham Help Desk is open on Wednesday and Fridays from 10 am – 1 pm and is located at the Markham Courthouse.

**Organization:** Cabrini Green Legal Aid  
(www.cgla.net)

**Practice areas:** Criminal Law/Criminal Records

**Opportunity type:** Non-litigation, Self-help Desk

**Skills acquired:** Client Counseling, Client/Witness Interviewing

**Skills required:** Basic legal knowledge

**Time commitment:** After completing the training, volunteers are asked to commit to completing a minimum of three 3-hour sessions working at the Help Desk, which can be scheduled at the volunteer’s convenience.

**Training and Supervision:** Volunteers participate in a 1-hour training program. In addition, CGLA’s volunteer coordinator and staff attorneys also support volunteers.

**Contact:** Eve Kleinerman, 312.374.6191, volunteer@cgla.net