

Legal Aid Services of Oregon

Volunteer Lawyers Project Pro Bono Project Descriptions

Thank you for your interest in Volunteer Lawyer Project (VLP) opportunities with Legal Aid Services of Oregon (LASO). This is a list of statewide and area-specific opportunities.

Training materials are available on LASO's advocate website at: www.oregonadvocates.org. Mentorship and support is provided by legal aid attorneys and private attorneys.

New – Disaster Assistance

The recent wildfires have been described by Oregon authorities and experts as unprecedented; more than 1 million acres of land has burned, hundreds of homes lost, and entire communities destroyed. As of October 19th, approximately 20,000 FEMA disaster assistance applications have been filed and thousands have been determined ineligible. Your help is needed to provide critical legal assistance to disaster survivors. The Disaster Assistance Panel assists wildfire survivors with FEMA disaster benefit appeals. Trainings and materials are available. This is a statewide virtual opportunity.

Bankruptcy Clinic

The Oregon State Bar Debtor-Creditor Section and LASO sponsor the Bankruptcy Clinic. The project consists of two components, a 45-minute bankruptcy class and a legal clinic. During the clinic, volunteer attorneys meet with clients for 30-minute appointments to help them assess whether bankruptcy is appropriate, and if so, provide ongoing representation in a Chapter 7 bankruptcy. Attorneys may also sign up for direct client referrals. This is a virtual clinic.

Domestic Violence Project

Oregon has seen a rise in domestic violence cases during the pandemic and as stay-at-home orders were issued. Organizations that assist survivors have also seen an increased need for services. This project provides critical legal assistance to survivors of abuse and stalking. Attorneys represent survivors in contested restraining order hearings in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties. These cases tend to have short timelines, involve limited issues and require a court appearance. DVP is an excellent opportunity for new lawyers, lawyers seeking litigation experience, and attorneys who cannot commit to long-term cases. Most volunteers are not family law lawyers and are not expected to assist clients with family law issues. Training and materials are available.

Expungement Clinic

Help reduce barriers to safe housing, employment and education caused by criminal records. Attorneys determine whether clients qualify for an expungement and complete all necessary court paperwork for those eligible. In partnership with Intel, we are now offering virtual opportunities for expungement in Multnomah and Clackamas counties. Training and materials are available.

Family Law Forms Project

In Oregon, 67 to 86 percent of family law cases involve at least one person representing themselves; the majority of whom cannot afford a lawyer. Attorneys with little (or no) family law experience can assist clients in completing their forms. Experienced family law attorneys can provide limited assistance to clients requiring discrete legal advice or document review. Attorneys are NOT expected to provide ongoing representation and clients sign a retainer agreement detailing the limited scope of the attorney-client relationship. Training and materials are available. This is a virtual project.

Housing Notice Clinic

Oregon is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. In eviction cases, the vast majority of landlords are represented by an attorney or agent while very few tenants have any representation. While Legal Aid represents thousands of tenants a year, demand for assistance exceeds our limited resources. Attorneys provide self-represented litigants with advice and legal assistance on their rental termination notice. Trainings and materials are available. This is a virtual clinic.

Senior Law Project

The Senior Law Project consists of twenty monthly legal clinics scheduled through eight senior centers in Multnomah County. Attorneys provide a 30-minute consultation on a variety of civil legal issues to clients 60 or older (or who are married to someone 60 or older), regardless of their income. SLP volunteers provide continuing pro bono services for clients who meet LASO's financial eligibility. Training and materials are available. This is a virtual clinic.

UI Benefits Panel

Unemployment insurance (UI) is the sole means of temporary wage replacement for workers and is critical in preventing individuals and families from spiraling into poverty. As unemployment claims continue to hit unprecedented levels, LASO is expanding its pro bono attorney panel for low-income Oregonians with controversies involving UI benefits. Attorneys provide legal advice and possible representation at an administrative hearing. This is an excellent opportunity for those seeking litigation experience and introduction to administrative law. Training and materials are available. Most hearings are conducted by phone.

Legal Aid Night Clinic

Volunteer attorneys screen cases and provide legal representation on a range of civil legal issues, including: consumer law, small claims advice, landlord/tenant, and estate planning. This opportunity is limited to attorneys from Stoel Rives LLP and Dunn Carney LLP in partnership with LASO.

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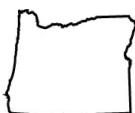
Legal aid offices around the state post pro bono opportunities on our website Oregon Advocates. Listings include the area of law, type of case, assistance expected and a brief description of the issue. To view current opportunities, register at: www.oregonadvocates.org.

NAPOLS Project

The 2018 Barriers to Justice noted that Native Americans are 1.9 times more likely to experience an elder law or disability-related issue, such as homelessness. In 14 of the 17 categories surveyed, Native Americans experience problems at higher rates than non-Native people. Native American Program Legal Aid Services (NAPOLS) represents Native clients in tribal, state, and federal courts, as well as in administrative proceedings, on issues specific to an individual's Native status. Pro bono attorneys provide assistance to Native clients around the state on a diverse range of matters, including consumer law and fair debt collection issues, family law, landlord/tenant, public benefits, elder law, and estate planning for clients with assets involving federal or tribal jurisdiction. Contact Fabio Apolito at Fabio.Apolito@lasoregon.org

Statewide Tax Clinic

This clinic provides advice and representation to low-income clients who have a tax controversy with the IRS and related cases with Oregon Department of Revenue. Cases cover a range of state and federal personal income tax issues including collections, examinations (audits), innocent spouse claims, and tax court cases. Please contact Guillermo Ramos at guillermo.ramos@lasoregon.org.



For more information or to volunteer, please contact:

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Tiffany Smith, Pro Bono Coordinator: tiffany.smith@lasoregon.org

Jill Mallery, Statewide Pro Bono Coordinator: jill.mallery@lasoregon.org

Thank you to the Multnomah Bar Association for their continued support of the VLP.



**Legal Aid
Services of Oregon**

Servicios Legales de Oregon

Portland Regional Office • Serving Clackamas, Hood River, Multnomah, Sherman, and Wasco Counties

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