



PHILADELPHIA
BAR ASSOCIATION

PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES IN PHILADELPHIA



photo by B. Krist for GPTMC

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PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES IN PHILADELPHIA

INTRODUCTION

This directory contains a brief description of public interest law centers and *pro bono* referral programs that routinely use volunteer attorneys and paralegals in the delivery of legal services in Philadelphia. For a detailed description of these organizations, please review the [*The Directory of Public Interest Organizations*](#), which is posted on the Public Interest Section's home page on the Philadelphia Bar Association Web site at www.philadelphiabar.org. Additional information about *pro bono* opportunities in Philadelphia may be found at www.paprobono.net, an on-line legal resource providing information and resources to legal advocates interested in expanding access to justice in Pennsylvania, and at www.PALawHELP.org, an online guide to legal information and legal services in Pennsylvania.

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PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES IN PHILADELPHIA

AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania

1211 Chestnut Street, Suite 600, Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-587-9377 (phone) 215-587-9902 (fax)

www.aidslawpa.org

Ronda Goldfein, Executive Director; goldfein@aidslawpa.org

Mission: to provide free legal services to Pennsylvanians with HIV/AIDS and others affected by the epidemic; educate the public about HIV/AIDS-related legal issues; and work at local, state and national levels to achieve fair laws and policies.

Description: provides direct legal representation and advice on: HIV/AIDS discrimination; access to healthcare; HIV/AIDS confidentiality, privacy and testing; Wills, living wills, powers of attorney; public benefits, including social security disability, Medicaid, Medicare, cash welfare, and food stamps; private insurance coverage, including health, disability and life; housing, including landlord/tenant, utility terminations and mortgage foreclosures; and debt management.

American Civil Liberties Union of PA

P.O. Box 60173, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-592-1513 (phone) 215-592-1343 (fax)

www.aclupa.org

Reginald Shuford, Executive Director; rshuford@aclupa.org

Mission: to defend individual civil liberties and constitutional rights in Pennsylvania through impact litigation, advocacy, and public education.

Description: ACLU-PA is the Pennsylvania affiliate of the national American Civil Liberties Union. ACLU-PA's legal department regularly partners with other legal service providers and the private bar in Philadelphia to litigate select cases that have the potential to protect the rights of many Pennsylvanians. Current priority areas for litigation include criminal justice reform, immigrants' rights, LGBT rights, and freedom of speech. The ACLU-PA also uses volunteer attorneys in Philadelphia to help review requests for legal assistance.

Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

Center City Office:

1424 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-981-3700 (phone) 215-981-0434 (fax)

North Philadelphia Law Center:

1410 West Erie Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19140

215-227-2400 (phone) 215-599-1711 (fax)

www.clsphila.org

Deborah L. Freedman, Executive Director; DFreedman@clsphila.org

Mission: to help low income Philadelphia residents obtain equal access to justice by providing them with advice and representation in civil legal matters, advocating for their legal rights, and conducting community education about the legal issues that affect them.

Description: provides direct legal representation; training and technical assistance to *pro bono* attorneys; and referrals on a limited basis for *pro bono* legal representation of low income Philadelphia residents in cases involving nine areas of law, including: aging and disabilities; consumer law; employment; energy & utilities; housing; language access; public benefits and welfare; community economic development; and family advocacy. Individual cases appropriate for *pro bono* representation are generally referred from CLS to VIP for assignment, but CLS often seeks *pro bono* assistance for co-counseling in large or class litigation or in other special cases.

Consumer Bankruptcy Assistance Project

718 Arch St., Suite 200N, Philadelphia, PA 19106

215-523-9511 (phone) 215-981-3866 (fax)

CBAP-phl.org

Mary Anne Lucey, Executive Director; malluce@gmail.com

Mission: to provide free legal advice and representation to low-income persons seeking relief from consumer debts.

Description: provides direct *pro bono* debt counseling and referrals for *pro bono* legal representation to low-income clients in Chapter 7 bankruptcy matters.

Education Law Center

1315 Walnut Street, Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-238-6970 (phone) 215-772-3125 (fax)

www.elc-pa.org

Deborah Gordon Klehr, Executive Director; dklehr@elc-pa.org

Mission: to ensure access to quality public education for all children in Pennsylvania, including poor children, children of color, children with disabilities, children in the foster care and juvenile justice systems, LGBTQ youth, English Language learners, children experiencing homelessness, and other vulnerable children.

Description: ELC provides direct services and referrals for *pro bono* legal assistance to families in matters involving access to school, access to specialized services and programs, student rights, and school improvement. ELC's work includes not only traditional representation but also legislative and policy advocacy aimed at ensuring fair treatment of students, the provision of adequate resources to schools, and other public education reform goals.

Elder Justice & Civil Resource Center (EJCRC)

Room 278, City Hall, Philadelphia

215-686-7027, 7028, 7029

elderresource@courts.phila.gov

www.courts.phila.gov/ejc/.

Mission: To provide assistance to self-represented litigants who need help navigating the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas' Civil Trial Division.

Description: Help may involve initiating a legal action or responding to civil case filed against them within the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. The office assists litigants by offering procedural information, legal resources and referrals, and offers free legal advice from volunteer attorneys and law students by appointment or on a walk-in basis if available. The Elder Justice & Civil Resource Center is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The EJCRC does not provide in-court representation.

Face to Face Legal Center

109 E. Price Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144

215-438-1390 (phone) 215-843-8040 (fax)

www.facetofacegermantown.org

Mission: to help support and stabilize Germantown by providing free legal services to the community.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* legal assistance to participants in Face to Face programs and low income neighbors in cases involving legal identification, credit problems, public benefits, utilities, landlord/tenant and boarding home disputes, social security and veterans' benefits. Clinics conducted by staff and volunteer attorneys, paralegals, and law students during the organization's program activities and dining room hours.

Friends of Farmworkers

699 Ranstead St., 4th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106
215-733-0878 or 1-800-729-1607 (phone) 215-733-0876 (fax)

www.friendsfw.org

Meredith Rapkin, Executive Director; mrappkin@friendsfw.org

Mission: to provide free legal services and education on legal rights to migrant and seasonal agricultural workers in Pennsylvania and, to a limited extent, to other low wage immigrant and migrant workers with employment related legal matters.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* legal assistance in cases involving minimum wage and wage payment problems; violations of workers' rights under federal and state protective statutes; discrimination or retaliation against workers for exercising their legal rights; eligibility for public benefits; and discrimination in employment or housing on the basis of race, national origin, sex, disability, or familial status.

HIAS Pennsylvania

2100 Arch Street, 3rd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-832-0900 (phone) 215-832-0919 (fax)

www.hiaspa.org

Cathryn Miller-Wilson, Esq., Executive Director; cmillerwilson@hiaspa.org

Mission: to provide refugee resettlement, technical assistance, and legal aid and social services to immigrants and refugees.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* representation to clients seeking refugee status, asylum, family unification, protection from domestic abuse, permanent legal status and citizenship.

Legal representation provided before federal courts and administrative bodies of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice.

Homeless Advocacy Project

1429 Walnut St., 15th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-523-9595 or 800-837-2672 (phone) 215-523-9599 (fax)

www.homelessadvocacyproject.org

Marsha Cohen, Executive Director; marsha@philalegal.org

Mission: to provide free civil legal services to homeless individuals and families in Philadelphia.

Description: provides direct legal representation and referrals for *pro bono* representation for homeless individuals and families in cases involving family law, public benefits, veteran's benefits, shelter advocacy, and housing matters, among others; recruits and trains volunteer attorneys, paralegals and law students to conduct legal clinics at shelters and soup kitchens throughout Philadelphia.

Legal Clinic for the Disabled

1513 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-587-3158 (Phone) 215-587-3166 (fax)

www.lcdphila.org

Linda Peyton, Executive Director; lpeyton@lcdphila.org

Mission: Increasing access to our courts and community by providing free legal services to low-income people with physical disabilities and deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the five-county Philadelphia region.

Description: provides direct representation in civil matters that fall within five main areas: Consumer Protection, Advanced Planning Documents, Family Law, Housing and Benefits. LCD also provides free legal advice and referral services on a variety of issues. LCD's team of in-house attorneys and dedicated core of volunteer attorneys provide advice and advocacy, helping clients overcome legal obstacles that would otherwise affect their independence, health and quality of life. LCD offers direct services in a community-based setting at Associated Services for the Blind, Inglis House, and the Jewish Family and Children's Services of Greater Philadelphia, and has medical legal partnerships at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, Magee Rehabilitation Hospital, and nurse managed health centers through Family Practice and Counseling Network in Philadelphia.

Mazzoni Center Legal Services

1348 Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147

866-LGBT-LAW (toll free) 215-563-0657 (phone) 215-563-0664 (fax)

www.mazzonicenter.org

Thomas W. Ude, Jr., Legal and Public Policy Director; tude@mazzonicenter.org

Mission: to provide legal services, as part of our comprehensive health and wellness services, in an LGBT-focused environment, while preserving the dignity and improving the quality of life of the individuals we serve.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* legal assistance to low and lower-income persons with legal problems relating to their LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer) identity in more than 30 distinct practice areas, including LGBTQ discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations; school bullying and harassment; second-parent adoption; custody; civil union dissolutions and same-sex divorces; legal name changes; police misconduct; prisoners' rights; and First Amendment claims.

Nationalities Service Center

1216 Arch Street, 4th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-893-8400 (phone) 215-735-9718 (fax)

www.nationalitiesservice.org

Steve Larin, Legal Director; slarin@nationalitiesservice.org

Mission: to provide legal, education, senior and social services to immigrants and refugees.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* representation in cases involving asylum, family immigration; domestic violence; and nationalization claims.

Pennsylvania Immigration Resource Center

P.O. Box 20339, York, PA 17402

717-600-8099 (phone) 717-600-8044 (fax)

www.pirclaw.org

Mary Studzinski, Executive Director; mstudzinski@pirclaw.org

Mission: to provide access to justice for vulnerable immigrants, both adults and family members, who are held in civil immigration detention and who are victims of violence in the community. PIRC advances this mission through education, advocacy, and legal services.

Description: provides direct legal services, pro se assistance, education, and referrals for *pro bono* representation in two major program areas: Detained Programs - removal/deportation proceedings with an emphasis on immigrants who have fled torture or fear being returned to their home country, have mental health challenges, and other vulnerable populations; and Community Programs - victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other crimes.

Pennsylvania Innocence Project

1515 Market Street, Suite 300, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-204-4255 (phone)

www.innocenceprojectpa.org

Marissa Boyers Bluestine, Executive Director; innocenceprojectpa@temple.edu

Mission: to secure the exoneration, release from imprisonment, and restoration to society of persons who are innocent and have been wrongly convicted; provide clinical training and experience to students in the fields of law, journalism, criminal justice, and forensic science; collaborate with law enforcement agencies and the courts to address systemic causes of wrongful convictions; and strengthen and improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Pennsylvania through public education and advocacy.

Description: screen, evaluate, investigate and develop cases for litigation where an inmate has been wrongfully convicted of a crime but is in fact innocent; advocate for policies and reforms to address systemic causes of wrongful convictions.

Philadelphia Family Court Help Center

Walk-In Help Center: Family Court, 1501 Arch St., 11th Floor, Philadelphia

Operating Hours: Every week day from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.

For more information, contact phillyhelpcenter@gmail.com

Mission: to assist the public with information explaining court rules, giving out court forms, answering questions, and referring to other sources of assistance.

Description: The Family Court Help Center is a collaboration of the Family Court, Philadelphia Legal Assistance, Women Against Abuse, and the Family Law Section of the Philadelphia Bar Association. Volunteer attorneys, with the assistance students from local law schools, provide information and assistance with preparing and filling pleadings to unrepresented litigants in custody cases.

Philadelphia Landlord/Tenant Legal Help Center, A Collaborative Project Administered by SeniorLAW Center

Walk-In Help Center: Municipal Court, 1339 Chestnut Street, 10th Floor

Operating Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Mission: to provide free legal information, advice, and limited representation to unrepresented, low-income individuals who are facing eviction and other legal rental housing problems in Philadelphia

Description: Legal information, advice and limited representation services are provided to tenants who live in Philadelphia and whose income is 200% of the federal poverty level or below. Tenants may receive services at the Help Center during intake hours by signing in at the Clerk's Counter to meet with an attorney on a first-come, first-served basis.

Philadelphia Legal Assistance: Medical-Legal-Community Partnership (MLCP)

The Cast Iron Building, 718 Arch St., Suite 300N, Philadelphia, PA 19106

215-981-3800 (phone) 215-981-3860 (fax)

<http://philalegal.org/>

Mission: The MLCP is part of collaboration between Philadelphia Legal Assistance and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health to provide free legal assistance on-site at community health centers. Through MLCP, law students from area law schools, supervised by PLA lawyers, provide advice and referrals to patients on-site at Health Center 3 and Health Center 4 in West Philadelphia. The goal of the partnership is for health center staff to work together with legal staff to improve patients' physical, social, emotional, and legal well-being.

Description: provides free legal assistance, advice and referrals to patients onsite at healthcare settings.

Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts

Arts + Business Council of Greater Philadelphia, 200 S. Broad St., Suite 700, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-790-3836 (phone) 215-790-3888 (fax)

<http://artsbusinessphl.org/philadelphia-volunteer-lawyers-arts/>

Rachael Nave, Esq., Director of Legal Services: RNave@ArtsBusinessPHL.org.

Mission: to provide legal services, educational programs and community building events for artists, lawyers and cultural organizations.

Description: provides referrals for *pro bono* legal representation of individual artists and arts and cultural organizations in matters involving a wide range of arts-related legal issues, including intellectual property, contracts, leases and real estate, taxes, and non-profit issues. PVLA's Patent Pro Bono program provides restricted legal assistance (patent counseling and prosecution) to qualifying inventors under a partnership with the USPTO following the implementation of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act of 2011.

Philadelphia VIP and LawWorks, a Project of VIP
1500 Walnut St., Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-523-9550 (phone) 215-564-0845 (fax)

www.phillyvip.org

Sophie Bryan, Executive Director; sbryan@phillyvip.org

Mission: VIP's mission is leverage the powerful resources of the community to provide quality volunteer legal services and ensure access to justice for low-income Philadelphians. VIP's service model is to recruit, train, and provide ongoing support to volunteer attorneys who donate their time to represent low-income Philadelphians in non-fee-generating civil cases that threaten housing, income, family stability, and community vitality. LawWorks, a project of VIP, provides free legal assistance to nonprofits and small business owner on transactional matters.

Description of VIP: provides referrals for *pro bono* legal representation in cases from adoption to estate planning to foreclosure defense. VIP's focus is on areas of critical legal need for low-income Philadelphians, including preventing homelessness; preserving or increasing income; and stabilizing families.

Description of LawWorks Project: provides referrals for *pro bono* representation for eligible nonprofit organizations and small businesses that benefit low-income communities and support community economic development.

Public Interest Law Center

United Way Building, 1709 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Second Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-627-7100 (phone) 215-627-3183 (fax)

www.pubintlaw.org

Jennifer R. Clarke, Executive Director; jclarke@pilcop.org

Mission: The Public Interest Law Center uses high-impact legal strategies to improve the well-being and life prospects of the Philadelphia region's most vulnerable populations by assuring that they have access to the resources and services that all of us need to lead our lives.

Description: The Public Interest Law Center provides direct legal representation and referrals for *pro bono* legal representation to create systemic change to benefit impoverished communities, people with disabilities, racial minorities, ex-offenders, and other marginalized groups. The Public Interest Law Center specifically works in the areas of education and special education, access to healthcare, public health and environmental justice, housing and community services, employment, and the right to vote.

Regional Housing Legal Services

2 South Easton Road, Glenside, PA 19038
215-572-7300 (phone) 215-572-0262 (fax)

www.rhls.org ; www.hemap.org

Dina Schlossberg, Deputy Director/Senior Attorney for Multifamily Housing; Dina.Schlossberg@rhls.org

Mission: to create housing and economic opportunity in under-served communities in Pennsylvania and to effect systematic change for the benefit of lower-income households statewide by providing free legal services and technical assistance to community based organizations that develop affordable housing and engage in economic development activities that benefit low-income people; informing, training and supporting consumers, and those who serve consumers, on housing and utility issues; and engaging in policy analysis and promoting system innovations focused on critical housing, economic development, neighborhood revitalization and utility.

Description: provides legal representation and referrals for *pro bono* assistance to organizations that develop affordable housing, create economic development opportunities, and revitalize communities for the benefit of lower income persons. The key practice areas are Development Services, the Pennsylvania Housing Law Project (HLP), the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project (PULP), and the HEMAP Help Center.

SeniorLAW Center

2 Penn Center, Suite 1501, 1500 JFK Blvd. , Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-988-1244 (phone) 215-988-1243 (fax)

www.seniorlawcenter.org

Karen Buck, Executive Director; kbuck@seniorlawcenter.org

Mission: to improve the lives of older Pennsylvanians and protect their rights through legal representation, education and advocacy.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* legal assistance to low-income Philadelphia residents who are 60 and over, and legal counseling, advice, information and referral services to seniors throughout Pennsylvania via its statewide SeniorLAW HelpLine. Focus is on housing, domestic violence, consumer protection, family law, economic security, health care and advance planning. *Pro bono* opportunities are available to handle individual cases in a wide range of areas, litigation and transactional, in addition to opportunities through the SeniorLAW HelpLine, providing brief legal services to seniors across Pennsylvania on a wide range of civil legal issues by telephone.

Support Center for Child Advocates

1617 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 1200, Philadelphia, PA 19103

267-546-9200 (phone) 267-546-9201 (fax)

www.advokid.org

Frank Cervone, Executive Director; 267-546-9202; fcervone@SCCALaw.org

Jodi Schatz, Director of Intake and Pro Bono Services; 267-546-9228; jschatz@SCCALaw.org

Mission: to advocate for victims of child abuse and neglect with the goal of securing safety, justice, well-being and a permanent, nurturing environment for every child.

Description: The Support Center for Child Advocates (Child Advocates) represents children age birth to twenty-one, providing high-quality, child-centered advocacy in courts and other settings in Philadelphia County. All of our clients are victims of some form of child abuse or neglect requiring legal and social service intervention. Teaming specially trained volunteer lawyers with experienced child advocate social workers and staff attorneys, we have served more than 10,000 children and youth since 1977.

Women Against Abuse Legal Center

100 South Broad Street, 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19110

215-686-7082 (phone) 215-686-7041 (fax)

www.womenagainstabuse.org

Molly Callahan, Legal Center Director; mcallahan@womenagainstabuse.org

Mission: to provide free legal services for domestic violence victims relating to protection from abuse, custody, support and divorce matters.

Description: provides direct legal representation and referrals for *pro bono* legal representation for victims of domestic violence in civil proceedings to obtain and enforce protection from abuse orders as well as in divorce, custody and support cases.