

PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES IN PHILADELPHIA



photo by B. Krist for GPTMC

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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 the *pro bono* opportunities, training programs and benefits that are available at these organizations, please review the *Volunteer Notebook*, *The Directory of Public Interest Organizations*, and *List of Training Opportunities*, which are 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 40008, Philadelphia, PA 19106

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

www.aclupa.org

Mary Catherine Roper, Staff Attorney; mroper@aclupa.org

Mission: to defend the civil rights and civil liberties of individuals as guaranteed by the constitutions of Pennsylvania and the United States with a comprehensive program including impact litigation, public education and advocacy.

Description: provides direct legal assistance and referrals for *pro bono* legal representation in cases involving free speech, religious liberty, due process and the right to counsel, gay and lesbian rights, and discrimination.

Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

Center City Office:

1424 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

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

North Central Office:

3638 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140

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

www.clsphila.org

Catherine C. Carr, Executive Director; ccarr@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

42 South 15th Street, 4th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102

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

www.philalegal.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 (voice) 215-772-3125 (fax)

www.elc-pa.org

Janet Stotland, Of Counsel; jstotland@elc-pa.org

Len Rieser, Executive Director; lrieser@elc-pa.org

Mission: to ensure that all Pennsylvania children have equal access to quality public education, with special emphasis on students most at risk of school failure.

Description: provides referrals for *pro bono* legal assistance and legal advice for parents and students in cases involving students' legal rights to public education. Represents families in cases with potential for broad impact.

Face to Face Legal Center

109 E. Price Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144

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

www.facetofacegermantown.org

Veronica Ludt, Legal Center Director; vludt@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

42 South 15th Street, 6th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-733-0878 or 1-800-729-1607 (phone) 215-733-0876 (fax)

www.friendsfw.org

Theresa Rodriguez, Staff Attorney; Arthur Read, General Counsel

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 and Council Migration Service of Philadelphia

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

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

www.hiaspa.org

Judith Bernstein-Baker, Executive Director; jbernsteinbaker@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

42 South 15th Street, 4th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-523-9595 or 800-837-2672 (phone) 215-981-3866 (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; 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

215-587-3350 (phone) 215-587-3166 (fax)

www.legalclinicforthedisabled.org

Linda Peyton, Executive Director; lpeyton@mageerehab.org

Mission: to provide free legal services to low-income people with physical disabilities in Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware and Chester counties.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* representation in cases involving domestic violence, consumer protection, public benefits, insurance claims, Social Security Disability, ADA, special education, housing, and domestic relations issues.

Mazzoni Center

21 S. 12th St., 8th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107

866-LGBT-LAW (toll free) 215-563-0657 (phone) 215-563-0748 (fax)

www.mazzonicenter.org

Nurit Shein, Executive Director; nshein@mazzonicenter.org

Mission: to provide quality 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 income persons experiencing legal problems relating to LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) status in over 30 distinct practice areas, including LGBT 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

Dennis Mulligan, Director; dmulligan@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

50 Mt. Zion Road, York, PA 17402

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

www.pirclaw.org

Angela Edris-Eveler, Executive Director; aeveler@pirclaw.org

Mission: to provide legal support and services to adults and children detained by the Department of Homeland Security in Pennsylvania detention facilities.

Description: provides direct legal services and referrals for *pro bono* representation in cases involving removal/deportation proceedings, with an emphasis on immigrants who have fled torture in their home countries or who fear being tortured if returned to their countries and other vulnerable populations, including unaccompanied children, families, survivors of domestic violence and immigrants with mental health conditions.

Pennsylvania Innocence Project

1719 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122

215-204-4255 (phone)

www.innocenceprojectpa.org

Marissa Bluestine, Legal Director; innocenceprojectpa@temple.edu

Richard Glazer, Executive Director

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 Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts

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

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

www.artsandbusinessphila.org/pvla

Miriam K. DeChant, Esq., Legal Director; mdechant@artsandbusinessphila.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.

**Philadelphia VIP, Pro Bono Legal Services
and LawWorks, a Project of VIP**

42 South 15th Street, 4th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-523-9550 (phone) 215-564-0845 (fax)

www.phillyvip.org

Sara Woods, Executive Director; swoods@phillyvip.org

Ourania Papademetriou, Managing Attorney, Litigation; op@phillyvip.org

Stefanie Fleisher Seldin, Managing Attorney, LawWorks; sfseldin@phillyvip.org

Mission: VIP's mission is to recruit, train and support volunteer attorneys to provide free representation to low-income clients in non-fee generating civil cases. LawWorks, a project of VIP, provides *pro bono* assistance to nonprofits, small business owners and low-income homeowners seeking legal title to their homes.

Description of VIP: provides referrals for *pro bono* legal representation in cases from adoption to zoning. Focus is on areas of critical legal need for low-income Philadelphians; to maintain or increase income, to stabilize families, to prevent homelessness and to support community economic development.

Description of LawWorks: provides referrals for *pro bono* representation for eligible nonprofit organizations and small businesses that benefit low-income communities and low-income homeowners seeking clear title to their homes.

Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia

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

www.pilcop.org

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

Mission: To advance the constitutional promise of equal citizenship to all persons irrespective of race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender or poverty. PILCOP uses public education, continuing education for clients and client organizations, research, negotiation and, when necessary, the courts to achieve systemic reforms that advance the central goals of self-advocacy, social justice and equal protection of the law for all members of society.

Description: provides direct legal representation and referrals for *pro bono* legal presentation in civil cases involving public school quality and finance reform, fair housing and lending, child custody and foster care, police accountability, education for children with disabilities, deinstitutionalization for people with disabilities, health care services to children, and employment discrimination.

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

Judy Berkman, Managing Attorney; judy.berkman@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

100 South Broad Street, 18th Floor, Land Title Building, Philadelphia, PA 19110

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 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.

SCRUB: Public Voices for Public Spaces

1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1605, Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-731-1775 (phone) 215-732-5725 (fax); www.urbanblight.org

Mary Tracy, Executive Director; tracy@urbanblight.org

Mission: to advocate for a pleasing visual environment and quality of life for all citizens regardless of income, education or neighborhood. SCRUB promotes equal enforcement of laws affecting the built environment by providing free technical assistance and legal representation to low income communities who would not otherwise have access to the courts.

Description: provides referrals for *pro bono* representation to community groups and citizens in zoning cases filed in local, state and federal court.

Support Center for Child Advocates

1900 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

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

www.advokid.org

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

Jodi Schatz, Pro Bono Coordinator and Intake Attorney; 267-546-9228; jschatz@advokid.org

Mission: to advocate for abused and neglected children in Philadelphia, with the goal of providing a permanent, nurturing environment for every child.

Description: provides *pro bono* legal representation and social services to abused, neglected, abandoned and medically needy children in Philadelphia through the use of Child Advocates, who are specially trained volunteer attorneys who work with staff social workers and lawyers in child protection cases, adoption cases, kinship care cases, and cases involving medically needy children who are in the child welfare system.

Villanova School of Law: Lawyering Together Program

299 North Spring Mill Road, Villanova, PA 19085

610-519-7228 (phone) 610-519-5144 (fax)

Elizabeth Dunn, Director of Pro Bono Programs; dunn@law.villanova.edu

Mission: to match attorneys and law students to work on pro bono cases.

Description: Lawyering Together is a service learning project that matches attorneys with law student clerks to work on *pro bono* cases. Teams work on cases from Philadelphia VIP; Senior Law Center or Support Center for Child Advocates. If an attorney is already working on a *pro bono* case with another agency, the program will provide a law student clerk if requested.

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.