

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA
FEDERAL
PRO BONO PROGRAM**



VOLUNTEER GUIDE

February 2025

BAY AREA FEDERAL PRO BONO PROGRAM: VOLUNTEER GUIDE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Laura F. Klein, *Pro Bono* Program Manager, U.S. Department of Justice

Part I

Most Commonly Asked Questions About Federal Government Attorneys and Legal Staff Doing *Pro Bono* Work

I. *Definitions and Limitations*

What types of services may I provide, as a Federal employee?
What types of *pro bono* and volunteer services are prohibited for Federal employees?
May I provide services to political organizations?
May I represent someone in an action against the United States?
May I assist persons seeking government benefits?
May I prepare income tax returns?
May I assist family and friends?

II. *Use of Position and Agency Resources*

May I use my official position in connection with my *pro bono* and/or volunteer services?
May I use office letterhead or my business cards?
May I use agency resources such as phone, email, internet, or other government property in connection with my *pro bono* services?
May I ask my secretary to assist me?
May I use Westlaw and other electronic computer databases?
May I participate in *pro bono* and/or volunteer services on government time?
May I be given administrative leave?

III. *Conflicts of Interest*

Who should I talk to about any possible conflicts of interest?
What constitutes a conflict of interest?
Must I get approval to provide *pro bono* services?

IV. *Miscellaneous*

What about malpractice coverage?

Do I need California Bar membership?

Are there activities I can do that do not involve client representation?

What if I have never done any *pro bono* work before?

Is there a committee which helps government agencies to develop *pro bono* policies and programs?

How can I get my agency involved?

Part II

**Local Legal Services Organizations:
Descriptions, Volunteer Opportunities & Contact Information**

AIDS Legal Referral Panel

Bay Area Legal Aid

Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto

Justice & Diversity Center | Pro Bono Legal Services Program of BASF

Legal Services for Children

Open Door Legal

San Francisco Human Services Agency, Housing and Homeless Division



U.S. Department of Justice
Office for Access to Justice

950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

February 13, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Bay Area Federal Employee *Pro Bono* Program! Thank you for your interest in *pro bono* work and in using your legal skills to better your community. We hope we can help you to find an opportunity to get involved.

This *Pro Bono* Volunteer Guide will provide easy access to information about the rules governing federal employees' engagement in *pro bono* activity as well as descriptions of the organizations and *pro bono* opportunities. These organizations and opportunities have been determined to be appropriate for federal government attorneys and legal staff because they are generally free of conflicts of interest and offer substantial resources that will help you to succeed. Because each federal agency has its own regulations and procedures, it is important that you discuss any *pro bono* project with your agency's ethics office before starting to volunteer. Many agencies have a *pro bono* coordinator and a specific *Pro Bono* Policy that can guide you through these rules and any approval procedures that may be required.

Our Program seeks to offer activities to assist you in your *pro bono* endeavors, including professional development and skills enhancement. We hope to organize trainings to prepare you to volunteer, opportunities where federal attorneys can volunteer together, and information sessions on various topics relevant to *pro bono* practice. If you would like to get involved in the development of these ideas or have questions about *pro bono* activities generally, please contact me at Laura.F.Klein@usdoj.gov.

Thank you again for your interest in using your legal skills to help those who cannot afford an attorney. We look forward to working with you to help those in need.

Sincerely,

Laura F. Klein
Pro Bono Program Manager
Office for Access to Justice
U.S. Department of Justice
Chair, Federal Government *Pro Bono* Program

PART I

MOST COMMONLY-ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS AND LEGAL STAFF DOING *PRO BONO* WORK

I. Definitions and Limitations

What types of services can I provide, as a Federal employee?

Within the restrictions explained, below, you are permitted to do *pro bono* work.

Pro bono legal work and volunteer services may be broadly defined to include many different types of activities performed without compensation. Examples include, but are not limited to, services to persons of limited means or other disadvantaged persons, assistance to charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental, health, and educational organizations, services to individuals or groups seeking to protect civil rights, civil liberties or public rights, and activities seeking to improve the law or legal system.

What types of pro bono and volunteer services are prohibited for Federal employees?

Any service that would conflict with your official duties is prohibited. 5 C.F.R. § 2635.802. For example, federal employees, in most cases, are prohibited from representing parties before the federal government. 18 U.S.C. § 205. (See questions below on conflicts of interest.) In addition, each federal agency has its own regulatory standards of conduct which its employees must follow. For example, Department of Justice attorneys may not provide services that involve criminal or habeas corpus matters, whether federal, state, or local. 5 C.F.R. § 3801.106.

May I provide services to political organizations?

Yes, but only within the following limits:

You must comply with the restrictions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. § 7234) and your agency's policy concerning political activities by high-level and political appointees;

The Office of Personnel Management has stated that it would be inappropriate to grant administrative leave to employees to engage in partisan political activities;

No partisan political activity may take place on government time or by using government property, because partisan political activity is subject to more restrictive rules than other non-official activity, See 5 C.F.R. Part 734.

May I represent someone in an action against the United States?

No. 18 U.S.C. § 205 prohibits you from representing another person before any court or agency of the United States, in a matter in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest. There are limited exceptions for representing your immediate family (spouse, child, and parents), fellow employees in personnel administration proceedings, and certain employee organizations in limited circumstances.

May I assist persons seeking government benefits?

Yes, in limited ways. You may provide non-representational assistance, such as filling out forms for a person seeking government benefits. However, you should be mindful that you may not contact a federal agency, with the intent to influence, on behalf of another person except those persons permitted by 18 U.S.C. § 205(e). You may not represent a third party before any government agency.

May I prepare income tax returns?

Yes, but you are prohibited from representing another person before the IRS in connection with a tax return.

May I assist family and friends?

Yes, provided the services you are providing fall within the definition of *pro bono* and/or volunteer services and you are not receiving compensation.

NOTE: There are some limited exceptions to this rule which may permit employees to represent family and friends in non-pro bono matters as long as the United States is not a party and the matter is not criminal in nature. You should contact your Deputy Designated Agency Ethics Official (DDAEO) if you would like to represent a family member or friend and the representation does not fall within the definition of *pro bono* or volunteer services.

II. Use of Position and Agency Resources

May I use my official position in connection with my pro bono and/or volunteer services?

No. You may not indicate or represent in any way that you are acting on behalf of your agency, or in your official capacity, when providing *pro bono* or volunteer services.

May I use office letterhead or my business cards?

No. You may not use office letterhead, business cards, fax cover sheets, etc., or otherwise identify yourself as a federal government employee in any communication, correspondence, or pleading.

May I use agency resources such as phone, email, internet, or other government property in connection with my pro bono services?

Each agency has its own policy on the use of its resources and property. Some agencies will allow for the personal use of government equipment and facilities provided there is only a negligible cost to the government (such as electricity, ink, small amounts of paper, and ordinary wear and tear). You should contact your supervisor or ethics officer to find out about your agency's policy.

May I ask my secretary to assist me?

No. *Pro bono* and volunteer services are not official duties and may not be assigned to or required of support staff. If you need support staff assistance on a pro bono matter, contact the Federal Government Pro Bono Program or your agency pro bono coordinator to request to be matched with someone in the Pro Bono Support Staff Resource Pool.

May I use Westlaw and other electronic computer databases?

Each agency has its own policy on this issue. Contact your pro bono coordinator or agency ethics officer to find out about your agency's policy.

May I participate in pro bono and/or volunteer services on government time?

You are encouraged to seek *pro bono* and volunteer opportunities that can be accomplished outside of your scheduled working hours.

However, activities may sometimes occur during the work day. You may be granted annual leave, leave without pay, or may be permitted to make up any time you are away from the office. Contact your pro bono coordinator or agency ethics officer to find out about your agency's policy.

May I be given administrative leave?

As noted above, you are encouraged to seek *pro bono* opportunities that can be accomplished outside of your scheduled working hours. If that is not possible, such as when you have a court appearance in a *pro bono* case, OPM regulations allow employees to request administrative leave for volunteer activity which enhances the professional skills and development of the employee. See 5 C.F.R. 630.1403. Also, many agencies allow for administrative leave or excused absence for *pro bono* activity, such as the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Energy, the National Labor Relations Board, and many others. To find out if your agency provides administrative leave for pro bono activity, contact your agency pro bono coordinator or Laura Klein, Laura.F.Klein@usdoj.gov.

III. Conflicts of Interest

Who should I talk to about any possible conflicts of interest?

Your Deputy Designated Agency Ethics Official (DDAEO) or Ethics Officer.

What constitutes a conflict of interest?

Any activity that would:

1. Violate any federal statute, rule, or regulation, including for example, 18 U.S.C. § 201 *et seq.* and the Standards of Conduct at 5 C.F.R. § 2635;
2. Interfere with the proper and effective performance of your official duties, including time availability;
3. Cause a reasonable person to question the integrity of your agency's programs or operations;
4. Require your recusal from significant aspects of your official duties;

5. Create an appearance that your official duties are being performed in a biased or less than impartial manner; or
6. Create an appearance of official sanction or endorsement.

Must I get approval to provide pro bono services?

Each agency has its own policy regarding its employees' outside activities. An employee seeking to engage in any *pro bono* legal work or volunteer services must follow his or her agency's procedures for outside activities. You should consult with your ethics officer regarding approval requirements.

IV. Miscellaneous

What about malpractice coverage?

The federal government does not provide malpractice coverage.

However, generally volunteer programs organized by the local bar or more established referral programs provide malpractice coverage to their volunteers. The Federal Government *Pro Bono* Program only publicizes organizations and opportunities which provide malpractice insurance coverage to its volunteers. Every organization listed in this Guide provides malpractice insurance to volunteers.

If you find a *pro bono* opportunity on your own, you should ask the organization through which you will be providing *pro bono* services whether it will provide malpractice coverage for you.

Do I need California Bar Membership?

You must be a member of the California Bar to provide legal advice in California. If you are not a member of the California Bar, you may volunteer in limited ways, such as working with students in law-related education programs (mentoring, moot court and mock trials), conducting intake at approved organizations, providing assistance to other pro bono attorneys volunteering for approved organizations).

Special Note: Federal government attorneys who are CA Bar members are provided an exemption from the Minimum Continuing Legal Education requirements. CA Bar Rule 2.54. See <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Attorneys/MCLE-CLE/Requirements/Attorney-Exemptions>. However, the exemption restricts attorneys to practicing within the scope of their employment. If they practice outside the scope of their employment, they will lose their

exemption. There is an exception for pro bono work, but only pro bono work performed “through a California qualified legal services project or a qualified support center, or through a legal services project or support center that primarily provides legal services without charge to indigent persons in another jurisdiction and is funded by the Legal Services Corporation or the Older Americans Act or receives funding administered by the jurisdiction’s interest on lawyers trust accounts program.” CA Bar Rule 2.54(B). Consult your agency pro bono coordinator or the DOJ Pro Bono Program Manager, Laura Klein, Laura.F.Klein@usdoj.gov, for guidance.

Are there activities I can do that do not involve client representation?

Absolutely! Government attorneys regularly staff clinics. At these clinics, attorneys provide brief advice and referral for clients on a walk-in basis and do not take on the cases. You can also do law-related education in schools, present know-your-rights seminars, and more.

What if I have never done any pro bono work before?

No problem. It is never too late to start doing *pro bono* work. There are lots of resources and support to help you.

First, you can start by going to a training. Many legal services organizations host trainings throughout the year on substantive areas of law that are designed for attorneys who are new to the subject area. Second, these organizations assign mentors to government attorneys to help you with your work. Third, online resources and local legal service providers have terrific manuals, sample forms, and pleadings banks that you can use.

Many attorneys start by co-counseling their first *pro bono* case. And you don’t have to start by taking a case – you can work at a clinic, volunteer at an intake site or do a range of other activities.

Is there a committee which helps government agencies to develop pro bono policies and programs?

Yes. The Federal Government Pro Bono Program has been established to assist federal agencies in developing *pro bono* policies and programs. The Program organizes events to encourage more government attorneys to participate in *pro bono* work. The Program has a committee in San Francisco to assist attorneys and legal staff who wish to do *pro bono* work in the Bay Area.

How can I get my agency involved?

Contact the DOJ *Pro Bono* Program Manager, Laura Klein, Laura.F.Klein@usdoj.gov, the DOJ Pro Bono Program Counsel, Lara Eilhardt, Lara.Eilhardt@usdoj.gov, or the DOJ Pro Bono Program Attorney-Advisor, Raksha Ravikumar, Raksha.Ravikumar@usdoj.gov.

PART II

LOCAL LEGAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS

AIDS Legal Referral Panel

Bay Area Legal Aid

Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto

Justice & Diversity Center | Pro Bono Legal Services Program of BASF

Legal Services for Children

Open Door Legal

San Francisco Human Services Agency, Housing and Homeless Division

AIDS Legal Referral Panel

1663 Mission St., Suite 500

San Francisco, CA 94103

Phone: 415-701-1200

www.alrp.org

Contact: Jake Creecy, Volunteer Coordinator, jakec@alrp.org

ALRP's mission is to help people with HIV/AIDS maintain or improve their health by resolving their legal issues. ALRP accomplishes this mission by providing free and low-cost legal services to people with HIV/AIDS in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Volunteer Opportunities:

1. ***Estate Planning*** – Pro bono attorneys draft wills, advance directives and powers of attorney to assist clients with planning for health emergencies and end-of-life decisionmaking.
2. ***Housing*** – Pro bono attorneys represent ALRP clients in eviction defense matters.
3. ***Insurance Disputes*** – Pro bono attorneys assist ALRP clients with insurance disputes to safeguard their healthcare.

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? Yes.

Training: ALRP offers trainings to volunteers and is willing to come to government offices to do a presentation.

Mentoring/Supervision: ALRP attorneys and other volunteer attorneys with expertise serve as mentors.

Bay Area Legal Aid

1735 Telegraph Avenue

Oakland, CA 94612

Phone: 510-250-5218 Fax: 510-663-4711

www.baylegal.org

Contact: Andrea Del-Pan, Pro Bono Director, probono@baylegal.org

Bay Area Legal Aid (BayLegal) is the largest provider of free civil legal services to low-income individuals and families living throughout the Bay Area. Our clients are spread across our seven county service area and include the working poor, seniors, veterans and people with disabilities. We work to address both the immediate crises that they face when they walk into our offices, and the root causes of their poverty, through systemic advocacy and impact litigation. Our regional offices are located in Napa, Contra Costa; Alameda; San Francisco; San Mateo and Santa Clara and counties.

Our Priority Areas:

- **Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention:** We help survivors escape violence and create safe and stable environments for themselves and their families through Family Law and Restraining Order assistance.
- **Housing Preservation:** We help clients access and preserve safe, affordable housing free of discrimination, with a specific focus on Eviction Defense and Fair Housing.
- **Consumer Protection:** We help clients to obtain economic self-sufficiency and avoid predatory lending and abusive collection practices.
- **Access to Healthcare:** We help clients to obtain and navigate essential health services.

Volunteer Opportunities Offered:

- **Accept a case for representation** with our training and mentorship, or within your specialty or experience (we have both full- and limited-scope opportunities).
- **Limited Scope Representation in Domestic Violence Restraining Order Hearings** – Volunteer attorneys provide limited scope representation (appx. 1 or 2 hearings) for domestic violence survivors seeking permanent restraining orders and important related child custody, visitation and support orders. Volunteers receive training, a practice manual and sample pleadings and ongoing mentorship. Opportunities are available throughout the year and the project runs a summer associate program. Estimated time commitment: 25 hours.
- **Domestic Violence Restraining Order Clinics** - BayLegal staff and volunteers assist self-represented domestic violence survivors complete the paperwork and understand the process to request a restraining order and important custody, visitation and support orders.

- **Consumer Rights Legal Clinics**– BayLegal staff and volunteers assist self-represented litigants in limited civil debt collection matters. Clinics are offered weekly in Bay Point, Fremont, Redwood City, Richmond, Napa, and San José.
- **Research/investigate** systemic legal issues facing indigent and working poor communities

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? Yes.

Supervision and Training: We provide mentorship and training to pro bono attorneys from a broad array of legal backgrounds. We are committed to working with you to find the right opportunity that matches your skills and interests

Get Involved: Learn more about our work by visiting our website – www.baylegal.org and by completing a volunteer application at [Volunteer Application Form](#) | [Bay Area Legal Aid](#).

Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto

1861 Bay Road
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
Phone: (650)-326-6440

www.clsepa.org

Contact: [Romana](#) Castaneda, Intake and Clinic Coordinator, rcastaneda@clsepa.org

Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto (CLSEPA) is a nonprofit offering legal services to improve the lives of low-income families throughout the Bay Area. We specialize in immigration, housing, workers' rights, records clearance, and consumer protection. Our team works side-by-side with low-income communities and partners with community-based organizations, churches, and schools to bring about lasting change. We achieve our mission using multiple, innovative strategies, including community education, individual legal advice and representation, legal assistance to community groups, policy advocacy, and impact litigation.

Volunteer Opportunities:

1. *Re-Entry Opportunities:*

a. *RAP Sheet Review clinic* (**NOTE: This opportunity is not appropriate for DOJ attorneys.**) A 'RAP Sheet' is a Record of Arrests and Prosecutions. For an individual to clean up their criminal record, they need to understand the details of their record. It isn't always easy to decipher a RAP sheet, so volunteers review and analyze the RAP sheets, creating a summary and completing judicial council forms for the eligible petitions for dismissal. Time commitment per RAP sheet: 30 minutes to 1-2 hours (depends on RAP sheet length)

b. *Declaration of Rehabilitation drafting clinic* (**NOTE: This opportunity is not appropriate for DOJ attorneys.**) Volunteers will participate in declaration drafting with clients who are eligible for dismissals. This requires interviewing a client, obtaining pertinent facts and supporting documents to produce a persuasive declaration of rehabilitation that can be filed with their petitions for dismissals to the Court. Time commitment: 2-8 hours over the course of 2-3 weeks

c. *Interview Workshop:*

To expand the impact of our clinic work and further serve our clients, we are inviting people who are interested in improving their interviewing skills, learning about the laws governing interviews, and seeking employment.

California has passed a statewide "Ban the Box" that prohibits employers from asking about convictions in a job interview and only allows for a background check after a conditional offer has been made. We want to offer holistic services to people to learn more about their rights as

job-seekers, and also have the soft skills to address questions about their backgrounds with confidence and professionalism.

In the workshop, our volunteers will learn about laws governing criminal background checks. Volunteers will work with clients to do mock interviews, including asking difficult or prohibited questions and provide feedback and advice on the participant's performance in the interview. There will be a brief training covering the fair chance law, AB 2138, and what questions can and cannot be asked during the mock interviews.

2. Housing Pro Bono Opportunities:

a. Mandatory Settlement Clinic:

This clinic will mostly involve talking with the client, figuring out their goals and legal issues, and then negotiating with opposing counsel by phone or email. Then hopefully finalizing a written settlement agreement

Volunteers to sign up for virtual settlement conference clinics that are held every *Tuesday morning from 8:30 am to 12:15 pm via Zoom* and by phone. We have also found that it's best to start working with the clients before the conference date, and we now can provide client contact info in advance so that you can talk with your client, review the court papers, and even start negotiating with opposing counsel before Tuesday morning, hopefully making this a less stressful experience for all. **You will do a brief court appearance to provide a status update, not a formal argument.**

Time commitment: 3.5-6 hours per clinic.

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? Yes.

Training: Yes, if needed. Can also provide group training and MCLE credit.

Supervision/Mentoring: CLSEPA always provides supervision at clinics. CLSEPA can also provide interpretation, space for client meetings, if needed, and resources such as sample briefs.

Justice & Diversity Center | Pro Bono Legal Services Program of the Bar Association of San Francisco

201 Mission St., Suite 400 San Francisco, CA 94105

www.sfbar.org/jdc | Phone: 415-782-8970

Contact: [Antonia](#) More, Director of Pro Bono Legal Services, amore@sfbar.org

Volunteer Opportunities Available:

1. **Family Law Project** – Volunteering with JDC’s Family Law Project offers valuable experience and the chance to make a real impact on your client’s life. FLP has options to take dissolution/divorce cases full-scope (with or without property or custody and support issues), as well as limited-scope motions and hearings on child custody and support, or spousal support. Volunteer attorneys may also file petitions for guardianships over children, which is a process largely based on legal forms. All proceedings are before the Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco. The FLP accepts attorneys with all levels of experience and provides basic family law training and supervision from our experienced supervising attorney.
2. **Community Organization Representation Project (CORP)** –CORP provides free business/transactional services to nonprofit organizations that serve low-income communities across Northern California. Volunteers must have at least five years of experience in transactional law, or be working with a colleague with that experience. Volunteer attorneys take on limited-scope matters for nonprofit clients, such as contract review/negotiation and labor/employment questions or manual updates.
3. **Tenant Advocacy Project** - The Tenant Advocacy Project (TAP) assists low-income tenants in San Francisco to avoid eviction by negotiating with landlords, rent boards, master tenants and property managers. Issues include: rent disputes, rental assistance, housing conditions, income recertifications, and other disputes with landlords or property managers. This is a limited representation opportunity that does not involve litigation.
4. **Mentoring and Education-Related Opportunities** – From high school to law school, our programs break down barriers, build confidence, and show that the legal profession is for everyone. Volunteer attorneys can mentor students to prepare them for college, give short presentations, and coach mock trial teams.

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? Yes.

Training: JDC offers legal training for the Family Law Project and the Tenant Advocacy Project and can coordinate group trainings specifically for government attorneys.

Legal Services for Children

1254 Market St. 3rd Floor

San Francisco, CA 94102

Phone: 415.863.3762

<http://www.lsc-sf.org/>

Contact: Cynthia Henning, Pro Bono Director, cynthia@lsc-sf.org

Legal Services for Children (LSC) provides free legal and social services to children and youth in order to stabilize their lives and help them realize their full potential. LSC's in-house attorneys and social workers, as well as our *pro bono* attorneys, provide clients with comprehensive, holistic services to enable them to achieve safety and stability at home, educational success, and freedom from detention and deportation.

Volunteer opportunities to directly represent children in the following legal proceedings:

1. *Probate Guardianship Proceedings*: There are many situations in which a child or young person cannot live with their parents. A legal guardianship allows the minor to stay with a relative or another adult and gives that relationship legal protection. Guardianships can offer a great deal of stability for the minor. Volunteer attorneys represent minors in petitioning the Probate Court for a legal guardianship. The process includes meeting with the youth and caregiver, preparing legal documents, and appearing at a court hearing.
2. *School Discipline Proceedings*: Volunteer attorneys (and non-attorney advocates) represent children facing expulsion or other disciplinary action to ensure that their right to due process is upheld. After meeting with the student and investigating the case, volunteer attorneys negotiate on behalf of their client, and may represent students at a hearing in front of a school administrative panel. Attorneys ensure that their client's voice is heard. Very often having an attorney involved means that the student is not expelled and is able to continue with their education.

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? Yes.

Training and Resources: LSC is available to provide 1-2 hour-long trainings throughout the year, and could set up an exclusive training for federal attorneys if there is sufficient interest. Webinars and video trainings are also available. LSC also has a comprehensive Legal Resource Library that includes their own Guardianship Manual and Expulsion Defense Manual, as well as many other templates and resources to help throughout the case.

Supervision/Mentoring: Each *pro bono* attorney has an LSC mentor assigned to provide technical assistance, help strategize, and address any questions or concerns that may arise during the case. *Pro bono* attorneys also work in partnership with their client's LSC social worker, taking a holistic approach to legal advocacy.

Open Door Legal

60 Ocean Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94112

Phone: 415-735-4124 Fax: 415-534-3469

www.opendoorlegal.org

Contact: Kelsey Renz, kelseyr@opendoorlegal.org

To get involved, please fill out [this online form](#).

"It always seems impossible until it's done." - Nelson Mandela

At Open Door Legal, we have proven that universal access to civil legal representation dramatically reduces poverty and that the law really can belong to all of us.

We serve San Francisco's low-income communities in Bayview, Excelsior and Western Addition. Open Door Legal represents clients in custody/visitation hearings in family law court, prevents illegal evictions, drafts living trusts, sues employers for illegal discrimination, assists clients in improving their credit scores, and helps with almost every other civil legal matter. Check out this video: [The Law Belongs to All of Us](#)

Volunteer Opportunities Offered:

Pro Bono Attorney: We provide attorneys the opportunity to work on one case at a time with us as a volunteer Attorney; a CA attorney license is not required. Our attorney staff is always available to support and train. Open Door Legal is unique in that we take civil suits for cases that do not have enough damages to be placed with private attorneys, thus providing great low-risk litigation opportunities in affirmative housing and personal injury cases. We also have many cases available for placement in family custody, probate and estate planning.

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? Yes.

Training: We offer free CLEs, including manuals and sample materials.

Supervision/Mentoring: Open Door Legal provides ongoing mentorship and technical assistance, including assistance from experienced staff and volunteers, throughout all pro bono work. Open Door Legal provides training, manuals and sample materials.

San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Contact Janay Washington, Janay.Washington@sfgov.org

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) is recruiting volunteer arbitrators to participate in our arbitration process within the temporary shelter system (Adult, Family and TAY).

San Francisco offers shelter guests the opportunity to grieve a Denial of Service issued by a shelter site, when a shelter believes the guest has violated the shelter's program rules. The guest can request a program hearing and if they are not satisfied with the outcome, guest can request an Arbitration. This process is controlled by the Shelter Grievance Ordinance (San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 20, Article XVIII).

When a grievance proceeds to Arbitration, the Arbitrator duties are as follows:

1. Conducts the Arbitration process.
2. Reviews documentation pertaining to the Denial of Service.
3. Hears statements from the shelter, guest(s) and Shelter Client Advocates (SCA).
4. Makes a final decision on the Denial of Service.

Volunteer Arbitrator Requirements:

- Volunteer arbitrators must be active members of the California Bar Association or attorney employed by the Federal Bar Association and an active member of any state bar.
- Volunteer Arbitrators are required to facilitate one three-hour arbitration session quarterly and attend Arbitration training once a fiscal year.

Does the organization offer malpractice insurance? No, but the Department of Justice Government Ethics Office advised that malpractice insurance is not required when serving as an arbitrator.

Training - The SF Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing offers periodic trainings which cover the City's homeless shelter programs, shelter policies, rules, and grievance/arbitration procedures.

Attorneys interested in becoming an arbitrator can send an email to HSHShelterArbitrations@sfgov.org.