

Philadelphia Legal Assistance 2 Positions

Organization Overview:

Philadelphia Legal Assistance ("PLA") is a nonprofit legal services organization primarily funded by the Legal Services Corporation. PLA provides civil legal services to Philadelphia's indigent population in the areas of Consumer/Housing, Family Law, Public Benefits and has a Migrant Farm worker Project. PLA's Family Law Unit serves approximately 3,000 clients each year in the area of Family Law and views the practice of family law to be an integral part of the war on poverty and family violence. This includes providing representation and advice in a wide variety and complex mix of family law cases, including child custody, child and spousal support, protection from abuse and divorce. The family law practice at PLA also focuses on issues of family violence.

Family Law Unit Fellow

Position Overview:

The Fellow will be an integral member of the Family Law Unit, and will receive extensive training in the area of family law. The Fellow will assist clients in a variety of domestic relations matters, including custody, support, divorce and protection from abuse. This assistance includes client interview, pleading preparation, litigation coordination, and other paralegal duties. The Fellow will assist with intake for new clients, which includes determining if the client is eligible for our services, gathering all relevant information, analyzing the client's case, providing appropriate advice and drafting pleadings for the client when necessary. This is an extremely important function to Philadelphia's indigent population, as the majority (80% to 90%) of litigants in Philadelphia's Domestic Relations Court must proceed pro se, without counsel. The Fellow may also assist attorneys in the Family Law Unit with individual cases for representation, including drafting pleadings, litigation preparation, and accompanying the attorney to court proceedings. The Fellow may also have the opportunity to work with attorneys on the Unit's special projects, including our Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Project and to observe court proceedings. The Fellow will learn about other areas of law relevant to our clients, including immigration and public benefits among others areas. The Family Law Unit works closely with other units within PLA and with other legal and social services agencies in the Philadelphia area which the Fellow will become familiar with. The Fellow may also have the opportunity to participate in community outreach and community education which is an integral part of our services.

Desired Qualifications & Skills:

Commitment to family violence issues preferred. Ability to interact well with people and handle emotional issues. Prior work experience at a public interest law firm, working with domestic violence survivors or in the area of family law preferred but not necessary. Ability to speak and write Spanish or other languages preferred but not required.

Supervisor/Contact Info:

Fellow will report to the Supervising Attorney of the Family Law Unit, Susan Pearlstein.
Philadelphia Legal Assistance
42 S. 15th Street, Suite 500
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-981-3861
spearlstein@philalegal.org
www.philalegal.org

The interim supervising attorney/new contact person for the family law unit is Emilia Golanska. She can be reached directly at 215.981.3862 &/or "egolanska@philalegal.org".

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“Save Your Home Philly” Hotline Fellow

Position Overview:

The Fellow will be an integral member of the Consumer Housing Unit, and will receive extensive training in the area of mortgage foreclosure and mortgage relief programs. Paralegals will have a variety of responsibilities as part of a team of attorneys and paralegals which could include: interviewing and advising clients faced with mortgage and tax foreclosures both in person and on a hotline; evaluating a client’s situation and making appropriate referrals; negotiating with mortgage companies and taxing authorities in writing as well as over the phone; representing clients in administrative proceedings; researching, understanding and utilizing statutes, regulations, and city ordinances; proposing and supporting loan modification agreements; coordinating and managing case referrals; and providing litigation support.

Desired Qualifications & Skills:

We are looking for an individual with: the ability to communicate effectively in writing and verbally; strong analytic and reasoning ability, a sincere and strong commitment to helping others and the ability to manage conflicting demands. Compassion, understanding, patience and a talent for working cooperatively with a broad spectrum of people are essential, as are good organizational skills.

Supervisor/Contact Info:

Fellow will report to the Supervising Attorney of the Consumer Housing Unit, Irwin Trauss.
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