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Position: Paralegal, *Medical-Legal-Community Partnership*

Background:

The Medical-Legal-Community Partnership (MLCP), a program of Philadelphia Legal Assistance (PLA), seeks to bring on a Haverford House Paralegal to become part of a unique legal care team. PLA is a non-profit organization dedicated to enforcing and protecting the rights of individuals and families by providing accessible, creative and high quality legal assistance and working collaboratively for systemic change. In the MLCP, legal staff operate on-site in community health centers and collaborate with the healthcare teams to address the legal aspects of patients' medical and social services needs that so often undermine the efficacy of care. By working in partnership, medical, legal and social service staff can collectively address the host of issues that can impede vulnerable populations' access to-- and ability to benefit from-- protocols to treat and prevent illness. The MLCP has run in two West Philly public health centers since 2014 and will begin a new partnership starting in January 2019 in Northeast Philly to serve patients enrolled in Esperanza Health Center's and Delaware Valley Community Health's medicine-assisted-therapy (MAT) programs. Both MAT programs are holistic care models to aid those recovering from substance use disorder, particularly opioids. Legal aid works in this context to partner with patients in building the stability and security necessary for recovery.

MLCP teams address such issues as: Health insurance access and income supports; housing safety and security; utility shutoff prevention; legal status; family stability and child welfare issues; domestic violence and other health-harming legal issues.

Responsibilities:

Paralegal duties include: Interviewing and advising patients who become clients via referrals from health center staff; working with healthcare providers to understand the relationship between clients' legal, medical, and social circumstances; evaluating a client's situation and making appropriate referrals; negotiating with local and state agencies to help clients access critical benefits; representing clients in administrative proceedings; researching, understanding and utilizing statutes and regulations (including those that fall under the Affordable Care Act); coordinating and managing case referrals; community outreach and education on legal rights.

Minimum Qualifications:

We seek a college graduate with a demonstrated commitment to community service, a high sense of empathy, and an eagerness to work on a collaborative team. This person is a resourceful problem-solver with excellent written and oral communication skills. Academic background in public health, health policy, legal studies, or social services preferred but not necessary. Attention to detail and ability to follow specific protocols are a must. Spanish language capabilities preferred, especially if interested in serving at Northeast MAT program sites.

Supervisor:

The Haverford House Fellow may contact and will report to:

Cynthia Haskin, Supervising Attorney of the MLCP

Philadelphia Legal Assistance

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Position: Paralegal, *Family Law Unit*

Background:

The Haverford House Fellow will be a member of the Family Law Unit (FLU), and will receive extensive training in the area of family law. 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, and protection from abuse matters. The family law practice at PLA focuses on issues of family violence for representation, but all income-eligible individuals who call our intake hotline receive information and legal advice.

Responsibilities:

The Fellow will assist clients in a variety of domestic relations matters, including custody, support, and protection from abuse. This assistance includes client interview, pleading preparation, litigation coordination, assisting litigants via the Family Court Help Center, 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 paralegal provides an essential service to low-income families in Philadelphia as most must navigate complicated legal systems without assistance, often having to face down their abusers alone. The Fellow may also assist attorneys in the FLU 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 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 FLU works closely with other units within PLA and with other legal and social services agencies in the Philadelphia area, with which the Fellow will become familiar. 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 and sexual assault 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 INFORMATION

Fellow will report to the Supervising Attorneys of the Family Law Unit, Susan Pearlstein and/or Emilia Golanska.

Susan Pearlstein

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Emilia Golanska

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Position, Paralegal and Outreach Coordinator

Background

Philadelphia Legal Assistance seeks a Haverford House fellow to work with our General Intake Unit (GIU) to perform client intake, build our network of community partners, and conduct outreach to clients and organizational partners. PLA is a non-profit organization dedicated to enforcing and protecting the rights of individuals and families by providing accessible, creative and high quality legal assistance and working collaboratively for systemic change. The GIU consists of three paralegals who are supervised by an attorney, who is in the role of Director of Intake & Service Delivery. This unit collaborates with all other units of PLA and other legal services providers to provide holistic care to our clients.

The first responsibility of the position is to conduct face to face and telephone interviews with prospective clients during which a determination of financial eligibility and the identification of the legal problem(s) are made. The fellow would complete referrals to pro bono agencies and provide advice and brief services under the supervision of an attorney. The second responsibility would be to address the low-income residents of Philadelphia that PLA currently fails to reach. The fellow will work with staff to determine which populations are not able to access our services, who we can partner with to best reach these populations and then creatively conduct outreach to those targeted areas. The fellow will learn about a wide variety of legal subject areas and community resources. A successful candidate will be self-directed and passionate about increasing access to legal aid. The Director of Intake & Service Delivery will provide substantive training and close supervision.

Qualifications

- Ability to speak, read, and write Spanish is preferred.
- Strong communication and interviewing skills.
- Ability to interact and communicate calmly with people.
- Ability to analyze complex factual scenarios and, after training, identify the legal problem.
- A commitment to improving the well-being of low-income communities.
- Strong research skills
- Maturity, self-motivation, and ability to adapt quickly.
- Prior work or volunteer experience at a non-profit serving low-income clients is preferred.
- Strong writing and problem solving skills.
- Organizational skills, public speaking skills

Supervisor Contact Information

Maureen Olives
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POSITION: “SAVE YOUR HOME PHILLY” PARALEGAL

Background

Philadelphia Legal Assistance (PLA) seeks to bring on a Haverford House Fellow to work with low-income Philadelphia residents in danger of losing their homes. PLA provides free civil legal assistance to low-income individuals and families in Philadelphia. For Philadelphia residents who are low-income, elderly, or disabled, our legal assistance is often crucial to protecting their [homes](#), their [children](#), their [safety](#), and their [livelihood](#).

PLA operates the “Save Your Home Philly” Hotline, a central point of contact for Philadelphia homeowners at risk of losing their homes. The lawyers and paralegals at PLA work in close collaboration with Community Legal Services, Philadelphia VIP, and a network of housing counselors to assist homeowners in **navigating the legal system, understanding and safeguarding their rights, and avoiding homelessness**. The Hotline is a critical piece of the network of services available in Philadelphia for low-income homeowners to preserve neighborhood and family stability by remaining in their homes. Hotline paralegals play a direct role in obtaining affordable housing costs for low-income homeowners.

Responsibilities

A successful candidate will have a variety of responsibilities as part of a team of attorneys and paralegals, including:

- Interviewing and advising clients faced with mortgage and tax problems, both in person and over the phone
- Evaluating a client’s situation and making appropriate referrals
- Advocating for clients with mortgage companies and taxing authorities in writing as well as over the phone
- Researching, understanding and utilizing statutes, regulations and city ordinances
- Coordinating and managing case referrals
- Tracking policy developments and disseminating new information to other paralegals on the team
- Providing litigation support to housing unit attorneys
- Proposing and supporting loan modification agreements

Qualifications

Working with “Save Your Home Philly” is a hands-on, skill-building experience. Previous knowledge of consumer and homeownership legal issues is not a requirement for this position. Qualifications include:

- Strong communication and interviewing skills
- Commitment to improving the well-being of low-income communities
- Compassion, understanding, patience, and a talent for working cooperatively with a broad spectrum of people
- Maturity, self-motivation, and ability to adapt quickly
- Prior work or volunteer experience at a non-profit serving low-income clients is preferred
- Spanish language fluency a plus

Supervisor/ Contact Person

Margaret Robinson, Supervising Attorney of the Save Your Home Philly Hotline
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Position: Haverford House Fellow Paralegal, *Unemployment Compensation Unit*

Background: The Unemployment Compensation Unit at PLA represents clients who are seeking unemployment compensation benefits or have been assessed overpayments by the Department of Labor and Industry. Unemployment compensation is a vital social safety net that provides temporary income replacement to workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. PLA represents over 600 clients a year, providing counsel and advice, representation at administrative hearings, and legal briefing in appeals. Our unit focuses on impact litigation before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court and we work closely with the Department of Labor and Industry to address the systemic problems our clients face. Currently, a main focus of the unit is the design and implementation of Pennsylvania's new unemployment compensation computer system, which will "go-live" in October 2020.

Position Overview and Responsibilities: The Haverford House Fellow Paralegal will participate in community education events and manage a case load of clients. This year's fellow will have a special focus on the PA UC Benefit Modernization Project, which will drastically change the way our clients interact with the UC system. Unit Supervisor Julia Simon-Mishel has been advising the Department on the project, but the unit is planning massive community outreach and media about the upcoming changes. If you are interested in questions of data privacy, artificial intelligence, and predictive analytics, this position will give you the opportunity to explore and work on those issues as they relate to PA's new computer system, and public benefit systems more generally.

This position is ideal for someone who is passionate about workers' rights, wants to become an advocate for Philadelphia's low-income population, and is ready to have a tangible impact on clients' lives. This position offers a fellow the unique opportunity to represent clients in unemployment administrative hearings, gaining real exposure to the legal profession, while also engaging in systemic work on benefit modernization. The Haverford House Fellow Paralegal will be trained and supervised by the Unemployment Compensation Unit's Supervising Attorney.

Desired Qualifications and Skills: We seek a Haverford House Fellow Paralegal with a demonstrated commitment to service, a deep sense of empathy, and an eagerness to advocate for workers' rights. This Fellow will have excellent written and oral communication skills, an aptitude for attention to detail, and strong public speaking abilities. Prior advocacy experience (debate team or prior jobs/internships) is preferred. Spanish fluency is helpful though not required.

Supervisor Contact Information:

Julia Simon-Mishel
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