

## EASTERN REGION LEGAL INTAKE

### INTAKE UPDATE

January 2024

The ERLI Intake Update is a monthly newsletter that lists current intake information for major legal services programs throughout the state of Massachusetts. The first section lists general civil legal programs, the second section lists programs that handle specific legal topics, and the third section lists agency and non-legal referrals.

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#### Changes for January 2024

Eastern Region Legal Intake (ERLI), a project of the Volunteer Lawyers Project, publishes the Intake Update. Any questions about the Intake Update may be directed to [lcarrasquillo@vlpnet.org](mailto:lcarrasquillo@vlpnet.org).

*For intake changes and new listings included in this issue, see below:*

**Boston College Legal Services Lab** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**CASA MYRNA** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**CASLS** – Limited Intakes for SSA cases (See Full Entry)

**DE NOVO** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Disability Law Center** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**GBLS** – Closed for SSI/SSDI intake until further notice (See Full Entry)

**GBLS Children's Disability Project** – OPEN (See Full Entry)

**GBLS Clemency Initiative** – Closed (See Full Entry)

**GBLS CORI & Re-entry Project** – Closed for Intake from Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> through Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (See Full Entry)

**Health Care for All Helpline** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**JRI Health Law Institute** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Massachusetts Bar Association** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Massachusetts Advocates for Children (MAC)** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee (MHLAC)** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Metro West Legal Services (MWLS)** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Northeast Legal Aid** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Public Guardian Services (PGS)** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**Somerville Office of Housing Stability** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

**TAP** – Closed until Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 (See Full Entry)

**Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP)** – Services Updated (See Full Entry)

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**GENERAL CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMS**

The following programs provide free services within the priorities indicated. Program Intake hours are Monday - Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm unless designated otherwise. Program hours and priorities may change during the month; please call individual programs to verify information.

**BOSTON COLLEGE LEGAL SERVICES LAB**

**885 Centre Street, Newton, MA 02459**  
**Phone: (617) 552-0248 Fax: (617) 552-0593**

**bclawlab.org**

**CLOSED**

**Service Area for Eviction Defense and Public Housing Subsidy Termination:** Boston (all neighborhoods), Newton, Waltham, and Watertown.

**Service Area for Family Law:** Suffolk and Middlesex Counties.

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish (Intake Coordinator)

**Cases Handled (provides representation if income eligible, no telephone advice):**

**Housing:** Eviction defense and possible counterclaims, Public housing advocacy for current public housing tenants, tenants with housing subsidies (vouchers), and applicants who have been unfairly rejected.

**Family Law:** Domestic Relations Cases: divorce, custody, alimony, and child support & Administrative Advocacy against the state Department of Children and Families (DCF): fair hearings, advocacy for third party kin, and representation in petitions for young adults.

**CAMBRIDGE AND SOMERVILLE LEGAL SERVICES (CASLS)**

**60 Gore Street Suite 203, Cambridge, MA 02141**  
**(617) 603-2700 • Fax Line: 617-494-8222**

**www.gbls.org**

**Service Area (for non-elders, i.e., under 60 years old):** Arlington, Belmont, Cambridge, Somerville, Winchester, Woburn.

**Service Area (for elders, i.e., 60 and over):** Cambridge and Somerville only

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** Spanish, Portuguese

**Cases Handled (non-elders; under 60 years old):**

**Government Benefits:** Denials, terminations, and issues relating to state benefits (TAFDC, SNAP, Mass Health, EAEDC, and EA shelter benefits). **OPEN** for *limited* SSA cases (terminations and denials after reconsideration).

**Housing:** Eviction cases at the NTQ and Summons and Complaint stages and (if public housing) at grievance stage. Tenant group issues. Denial of admissions to public housing, Section 8, or other subsidized housing (not denial of emg. status or transfers). Section 8 terminations. Housing advice.

**Mental Health And Disability Rights:** Considers cases where a mentally ill and/or disabled client believes his/her legal rights have been violated based on status as disabled person, including rights to services from mental health and other disability service agencies; Housing and Public Accommodation discrimination based on disability; Institutional Rights and discharge advocacy from psychiatric hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutional settings; Guardianship defense; Advocacy for Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (a.k.a. "Rosie D.") mental health services and special education cases for children with psychiatric disabilities.

**CASLS ELDER Unit Service Area (age 60 and above):** *Cambridge and Somerville only*

**ELDER Cases Handled:** Government benefits; Access to health care and mental health services; Housing (tenants only), including evictions (subsidized housing\*), denials of admission to public, Section 8, and other subsidized housing, and Section 8 terminations; Nursing home residents' rights. Guardianship defense; Protective service issues. Limited advice on consumer issues. \*CASLS will consider evictions of elders in private housing but only if the client meets CASLS income and asset limits.

**Family Law:** Located at GBLS; see GBLS Family Unit listing.

**Employment:** Located at GBLS; see GBLS Employment Unit listing.

**Immigration:** Located at GBLS; see GBLS Immigration Unit listing.

## CHELSEA LEGAL SERVICES

214 Arlington Street, Chelsea, MA 02150

Phone: (617) 446-3037, Fax: (617) 655-9449

[www.chelsealegalservices.org](http://www.chelsealegalservices.org)

During the COVID 19 Outbreak, for the safety of our clients and staff, meetings are held by appointment only. To apply for services, please call our phone number or use the online application.

**Intakes taken by phone and online at [www.chelsealegalservices.org](http://www.chelsealegalservices.org)**

**Service Area:** Chelsea, Revere, Lynn, East Boston

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish

### Cases Handled:

**Housing:** Private/Public/Subsidized housing eviction defense, terminations, conditions, discrimination.

**Consumer Law:** Bankruptcy (all chapters), General Consumer including Debt Collection Defense, auto dealers, and unfair and deceptive practices.

**COMMUNITY LEGAL AID, INC AND CENTRAL-WEST JUSTICE CENTER**

**Central Mass: (855) 252-5342 • TDD (508) 755-3260**

**www.communitylegal.org**

**Intake Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:30 am to 12:15 pm; Wednesday 1:30 pm to 4:15 pm**

**Worcester Office:** 370 Main Street, Suite 200, Worcester, MA 01608. (508)752-3718

**Springfield Office:** One Monarch Place, Suite 400, Springfield, MA 01144. (413) 781-7814

**Northampton office:** 20 Hampton Avenue, Suite 100, Northampton, MA 01060. (413) 585-0418.

**Pittsfield Office:** 152 North Street, Suite E-155, Pittsfield, MA 01201. (413) 499-1950

**Online Application:** [Get Help - Central West Justice Center \(cwjustice.org\)](#)

[Get Help - Community Legal Aid](#)

**Service Area:** Central and Western Massachusetts.

**Languages of Advocates/Additional Staff other than English:** Spanish; French; Urdu; Hindi; Korean; Portuguese; Russian.

**Cases Handled (non-elders; under 60 years old):**

**Family:** Divorces, custody, visitation, and child support issues for custodial and non-custodial spouses if client is victim of domestic abuse. Will also handle restraining order cases if client is victim of domestic abuse. Also has an Uncontested Divorce Project for residents of Worcester or Hampden County, through which the agency will provide representation if no issues of custody, visitation, property division or alimony.

**Housing:** Eviction defense, foreclosure defense, housing discrimination (in Worcester County), denial or termination of subsidies, emergency homeless shelter, affirmative conditions claim.

**Public benefits/Medicare advocacy:** Limited TAFDC, EAEDC, food stamps, MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, Social Security, Disability and SSI, Medicare, and Unemployment cases.

**Immigration:** Humanitarian-based relief, including VAWA petitions for victims of domestic violence, U visas for victims of crime, SIJS petitions for abandoned/neglected minors, and some asylum cases.

**Veteran:** Federal and State benefits; Service Upgrade and Service Classification

**Migrant Farmworkers:** (This is statewide project; any migrant worker experience issuing with immigration, housing benefits, wage, and hours, working conditions, family law can be referred).

**CLAVC/Victims of Crime Grant:** Any civil legal issue that is related to or arises out of being a victim of a crime, whether that crime has been reported or prosecuted.

**CORI and Expungement**

**ELDER Cases Handled:** Social Security, SSI, EAEDC, Veterans benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits, Food Stamps. Access to Health care-Medicaid, MassHealth, Medicare. Nursing home discharges, transfers, and quality of care issues. Guardianship/conservatorship defense. Elder abuse including financial exploitation. Evictions, public/subsidized housing denials/terminations, Homesteads, Healthcare proxies and Power of Attorneys



**DE NOVO**

**FORMERLY: COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES AND COUNSELING CENTER (CLSACC)**

**47 Thorndike Street, Suite SB-LL01 Cambridge, MA 02141**

**www.clsacc.org**

**Telephone (617) 661-1010**

**Fax (617) 661-1011**

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish (2 Attorneys)

Representative; Asante (1 Attorney); Farsi/Dari (1 Intake Specialist), Spanish (Intake Specialist)

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:**

Spanish (1 Administrative Assistant, 1 Case Manager)

**Cases Handled:**

**Immigration:** *Services available STATEWIDE.*

- We will be open to take five asylum cases on a first come; first served basis (**CLOSED**).
- SIJ, U-Visa, and VAWA cases will remain open.
- 6 weeks minimum before a court date if there is one and we are only able to help clients who have not yet had an individual hearing.

**Family Law: ADVISE ONLY**

- 4 cases per week.
- Area of coverage Cambridge, Somerville, Medford, Everett, Chelsea, Arlington, Belmont, Brookline, Watertown, Boston (includes Dorchester, Roxbury, W. Roxbury, Mattapan, Allston, Brighton, E. Boston, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, Hyde Park, Charlestown)
- Note: Only Cambridge residents can be helped if there is not presence of domestic violence.
- \*Case types: Divorce, child support, custody, visitation, restraining orders.

**Government Benefits (SSI/SSDI): OPEN with restrictions**

- 4 cases a month.
- Area of coverage: Cambridge, Somerville, Medford, Everett, Chelsea, Arlington, Belmont, Brookline, Watertown, Boston (includes Dorchester, Roxbury, W. Roxbury, Mattapan, Allston, Brighton, E. Boston, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, Hyde Park, Charlestown)
- \*Case type: Denied, overpayment, reduction, termination.

**Housing: OPEN**

- Area of Coverage: Cambridge, Somerville, Arlington, Belmont, Medford, and Newton.
- \*Only taking six cases per week\*
- Our intake criteria will be:
  - Have received a notice to quit/notice of termination/notice of possible lease violation/cease and desist letter from their property owner.
  - Have been served court papers by their property owner/have an active eviction or housing court case.

- Have received notice that their section 8 will be or has been terminated.
- Have been denied public housing or a section 8 voucher or preference or have been locked out of their home by their property owner.

*\*Also offers individual, couple and group psychotherapy/counseling services in English on a sliding fee scale. Call the main number to see if there are services available. Ask for the Clinical Director\**

**DISABILITY LAW CENTER**

**(617) 723-8455 • 1-800-872-9992**

[www.dlc-ma.org](http://www.dlc-ma.org)

**Email: [intake@dlc-ma.org](mailto:intake@dlc-ma.org)**

Boston Office: 11 Beacon Street, Suite 925, Boston, MA 02108

Northampton Office: 32 Industrial Dr East, Northampton, MA 01060

**No Walk Ins.**

**Intake Hours:** DLC's voicemail system accepts messages 24/7. A request for assistance can also be completed [online 24/7](#)

Voicemails will receive a call back based upon issue and capacity. Voicemails or Online Requests received Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays 9am to 1pm will take priority.

Reasonable accommodations can be requested by telephone or email.

**Service Area:** Statewide.

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Russian (1 Attorney); Spanish (1 Attorney, 1 Intake Specialist); Portuguese (2 Intake Specialists); American Sign Language (1 Attorney); Urdu (1 Attorney); Hindi (1 Attorney)

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** French and Spanish (1 Support Staff).

**General information about services:**

DLC's Core Function is to keep people with disabilities safe from abuse and neglect wherever they live and where they receive services. DLC does most of this work by monitoring for abuse and neglect and investigating allegations of abuse and neglect as well as other systemic initiatives.

All services are free. There is no Massachusetts eligibility for unemployment income limits for services, but income may be a factor in case acceptance if capacity is limited.

**Individual Cases Handled:**

**Abuse and Neglect Cases** – limited information, advice, or representation for individuals, and possible monitoring or investigation on issues where people with disabilities have serious allegations or complaints of abuse and/or neglect where they live or receive services.

**Benefits Cases** – information and advice on the impact of working on SSI/SSDI recipients’ benefits; information, advice and representation to students on benefits needing disability-related accommodations in school.

**Civil Legal Aid for Victims of Crime** – information, advice and representation for people who are victims of a crimes and are experiencing disability discrimination related to the crime (ex. community inclusion, employment, health care, housing, abuse prevention, human rights, public accommodation)

**Civil Rights** – limited information, advice, and representation

- Disability Discrimination: physical access, access to programs and services provided by state entities, communication access, accessible medical/mental health services, employment
- Housing Discrimination: reasonable accommodations or modifications. **No evictions.**
- Voting Access: barriers to voter registration or barriers at polling locations.

**Health Care** – information, advice, and representation on issues relating to access to durable medical equipment (ex. wheelchairs) for individuals on MassHealth, effective communication in health care.

**Human Rights** – information, advice, and representation on complaints of serious and systemic violations of human rights where people with disabilities reside, barriers in discharge from a psychiatric facility.

**Representative Payee** – nominations for potential investigation to SSA where Representative Payees may be inappropriately administering beneficiary benefits.

**DOVE (DOMestic Violence Ended), Inc.- Legal Advocacy Program**

**P.O. Box 290267, Quincy, MA 02269**

**[www.dovema.org](http://www.dovema.org)**

**Legal Helpline:**

**(617) 770-4065 (voicemail)**

**(617) 658-9719 (text)**

**[legaldept@dovema.org](mailto:legaldept@dovema.org) (email)**

DOVE’s staff attorneys are specifically educated on domestic violence and applicable laws. They provide trauma-informed, client-centered services and guide survivors through the legal system while keeping in mind safety concerns.

**Service area:** DOVE’s legal services are available to residents of Norfolk County or those who have cases in Norfolk County courts and who are survivors of intimate partner violence.

Avon, Bellingham, Braintree, Brookline, Canton, Cohasset, Dedham, Dover, Foxborough, Franklin, Hingham, Holbrook, Hull, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Milton, Needham, Norfolk, Norwood, Plainville, Quincy, Randolph, Sharon, Stoughton, Walpole, Wellesley, Westwood, Weymouth, Wrentham

**Languages other than English:** Spanish and Mandarin (all other languages supported via phone interpretation)

**Cases handled:**

**Domestic Relations (OPEN):** Legal advice, consultations, and limited assistance representation (as capacity allows) for survivors of domestic violence in a wide range of family law matters including 209A Abuse Prevention Order, divorce, custody, paternity, parenting time, and child support cases (All District Courts in Norfolk County and Norfolk County Probate & Family Court).

**Housing & Benefits (CLOSED for Housing Intakes):** Legal advice, consultations, limited assistance representation, and legal representation (as capacity allows) for survivors of domestic violence in summary process (eviction) cases, subsidy preservation cases, and appeals of subsidized housing waitlist priority denials; assistance with reasonable accommodations and VAWA transfers and lease bifurcations; legal advice and representation in SNAP and TAFDC termination and overpayment cases (All District Courts in Norfolk County and Metro South Housing Court).

**Immigration (OPEN):** Legal advice, consultations, and legal representation (as capacity allows) for survivors in U-Visa, T-Visa, VAWA self-petition, and removal of conditions cases.

**EASTERN REGION LEGAL INTAKE (ERLI) of the Volunteer Lawyers Project** [www.vlpnet.org](http://www.vlpnet.org)

**Intake Helpline Phone Number(s): Local: (617) 603-1700 / Toll Free: (800) 342-LAWS (5297)**

**Live Intake Helpline Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. & Tuesday 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

ERLI accepts **online intake submissions** Monday-Friday at <https://vlpnet.org/get-help/>. An email address is required for submission.

**Executive Director:** Joanna G. Allison, Esq.

**Call Center Supervising Attorney:** Natasha Lewis, Esq.

**Call Center Manager:** Chris Neighbours

ERLI provides intake, information, referral, and legal advice to eligible low-income individuals seeking legal assistance. Callers must provide essential information about themselves such as contact information (name, date of birth, address), household size and income, amount of financial assets and immigration status to be screened for legal services. Callers who are not eligible for direct services from the Volunteer Lawyers Project are provided legal information and/or referrals.

ERLI also screens clients for eligibility for the Volunteer Lawyers Project court-based clinics and ERLI's advice panels. Information about the court-based clinics can be found at <https://vlpnet.org/get-involved/clinics-and-projects/>.

Limited English Proficient callers are offered free access to a telephonic interpreting service when speaking with an Intake Specialist. ERLI no longer offers walk-in service.

ERLI's service area includes the service areas of the Volunteer Lawyers Project, Metro West Legal Services, and Greater Boston Legal Services.

**Area(s) Served:**

**City:** Acton, Allston, Arlington, Ashby, Ashland, Auburndale, Bedford, Bellingham, Belmont, Billerica, Boston, Braintree, Brighton, Brookline, Cambridge, Canton, Carlisle, Chelsea, Chestnut Hill, Cohasset, Concord, Dedham, Dorchester, Dover, East Arlington, East Boston, East Cambridge, East Watertown, East Weymouth, Everett, Foxborough, Framingham, Franklin, Grove Hall, Hingham, Holbrook, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Hull, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Lexington, Lincoln, Malden, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medford, Medway, Melrose, Millis, Milton, Mission Hill, Natick, Needham, Newton, Newton Highlands, Newtonville, Nonantum, Norfolk, North Cambridge, Norwell, Norwood, Plainville, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Roslindale, Roxbury, Roxbury Crossing, South Boston, Scituate, Sharon, Sherborn, Somerville, South Walpole, South Weymouth, Stoneham, Stow, Sudbury, Waban, Wakefield, Walpole, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, West Roxbury, Weston, Westwood, Weymouth, Winchester, Winthrop, Woburn, Wrentham.

**GREATER BOSTON LEGAL SERVICES (GBLS)**

197 Friend Street, Boston, MA 02114

(617) 371-1234

[www.gbbs.org](http://www.gbbs.org)

**GBLS ASIAN OUTREACH UNIT**

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Chinese – Cantonese or Mandarin (3 Attorneys, 1 Paralegal); Vietnamese (1 Attorney; 1 Paralegal).

Serves Asian immigrant clients with linguistic and/or cultural barriers in the following areas:

**Employment:** Wage and hour, priority to groups of workers who share a legal issue and nail salon workers.

**Immigration:** All areas, priority to Southeast Asians facing deportation and undocumented immigrants.

**Housing:** Eviction, priority to groups of tenants who share a legal issue

Also serves as an access point for Asian immigrant clients to legal services provided by any other GBLS unit.

**AOU Clinics:** We have replaced all community-based clinics with a phone line. For Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese speakers, call 617-603-1809, leave a message with your name, phone number, and the reason you are calling, and we will call you back that week.

**GBLS ELDER, HEALTH AND DISABILITY LAW UNIT**

*Formerly Greater Boston Elderly Legal Services*

**Eligibility:** No income guidelines.

**Service Area:** Acton, Arlington, Boston, Braintree, Bedford, Boxborough, Burlington, Cambridge, Carlisle, Chelsea, Cohasset, Concord, Everett, Harvard, Hingham, Holbrook, Hull, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Malden, Maynard, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Norwell, Quincy, Randolph, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Scituate, Somerville, Stoneham, Stow, Wakefield, Weymouth, Winthrop, Wilmington, Winchester, Woburn.

**Elder Law:**

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Haitian Creole (1 Paralegal); Spanish, (2 Paralegals)

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** Spanish (1 Secretary)

**Cases Handled (including advice and counsel, brief service, and full representation, as appropriate):**

**Housing issues (non-Boston residents ONLY; refer Boston elders to GBLS housing unit)**

**(Closed):** Evictions only from public/subsidized housing; public/subsidized housing issues.

**Government benefits (Closed for SSI/SSDI):** SSI, SSDI, Food Stamps, EAEDC, Veteran's benefits. Nursing Home issues. Health care access and Medicaid.

\*OPEN for SSI related cases (terminations, denials, overpayments) for elders, except disability, and except for CASLS\*

**Health Law:**

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish (1 Attorney and 2 Senior Paralegals); Haitian Creole (1 Senior Paralegal)

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** Spanish (1 Secretary).

**Cases Handled:**

The GBLS Health Unit is OPEN for Intake for SSI/SSDI disability cases with a PIA of less than \$1125 at the ALJ stage or higher. They will remain OPEN for Intake for all health-related cases, including Commonwealth Care, the Health Safety Net (formerly free care), and Medicare (see Medicare Advocacy Project listed below). SSI disability applications and SSI/SSDI application problems at the hearing stage; SSI/SSDI cases where the client has had an ALJ hearing, and the hearing has been continued so the client can get an attorney; SSI and SSI/SSDI termination problems only if termination is due to SSA claiming caller has medically improved. Will handle limited number of "fleeing felon" cases. SSA cases should be directly referred to Legal Services Center if within their jurisdiction. "Age 18 reviews": disability cases where a child has been on SSI and is now being evaluated as an adult.

**WILL NOT HANDLE:** Cases at initial or reconsideration stage; SSI/SSDI overpayment cases; SSI financial issues; SSA paternity related issues; Representative Payee issues; private short term or long-term disability (LTD) insurance claims. Also, will not take cases that have been denied at the Administrative Law Judge or Appeals Council stage, and client was represented.

**Health Care Access:** Advice, counsel, and full representation in access to public health insurance programs such as MassHealth, including CommonHealth, CMSP, the Health Safety Net (formerly hospital uncompensated care or free care); MA health reform act programs such as Commonwealth Care (in addition to usual referrals re: eligibility denials and terminations, please refer callers who are seeking or have been denied Commonwealth Care premium waivers or individual mandate penalty waivers. Access to public health insurance programs includes eligibility denials or terminations; denials of prior approval for services, or another problem with accessing services. If caller has no health insurance, and wishes to speak to someone about it, refer to Unit.

**GBLS Children's Disability Project (CDP)**

**OPEN**

The Children’s Disability Project (CDP) provides advocacy for children under age 18, who have been wrongfully denied Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. We accept cases at all levels of administrative appeals and Federal Court. CDP provides limited advice to parents on their rights to Special Education for their children.

The legal definition of children’s disability is different from the common notion of a disabled child. For example, a child is considered disabled if he/she is under age 18 and has a physical or mental condition that can be medically proven and which results in marked or severe functional limitations, and the condition must have lasted or be expected to last at least 12 months or result in death.

NOTE: CDP will perform a comprehensive merit assessment of each case before deciding on legal representation. Assessment will include a review of all pertinent records including treating sources (medical records), school, day-care providers, counselors, and other professionals who may have information about the child’s level of functioning.

**GBLS Education**

**School Discipline cases:** any Boston Public School (BPS) student who has been served with notice of a threatened suspension or expulsion.

**Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI) cases:** Boston families/children who either currently have MassHealth-funded CBHI services (home-based mental health services and supports) and need advocacy related to those services, or who want CBHI services but are having difficulty accessing them.

**Special Education cases:** BPS students who need special education advocacy and either:

- Have an emotional or behavioral disability OR
- Fit into one of the following categories
  - o Department of Youth Services-involved
  - o Department of Children and Families-involved
  - o Homeless
  - o Suspended or expelled within the last year
  - o Attending an alternative education school or have an IEP placement in a therapeutic school.

**GBLS MEDICARE ADVOCACY PROJECT (MAP)**

*Located at GBLS: 1-800-323-3205 or can contacted through ERLI: 617-603-1700*

**Service Area:** STATEWIDE (except for areas served by Community Legal Aid (including – Worcester, Holyoke, Springfield) and South Coastal County (SCCLS including Brockton, Fall River, Hyannis, New Bedford).

**Eligibility:** No income guidelines. Caller must be Medicare eligible.

Assists elders and person with disabilities with Medicare and Medicare related matters. Provides advice, referral, brief service, and full representation as appropriate in following types of cases.

**Cases handled:**

**EMERGENCY:** IF CALLER WILL RUN OUT OF MEDICATION WITHIN THE WEEK

**Wrongful denial of coverage of benefits and services to which caller is entitled**

**Medicare Part A:** hospital stays, observation vs. admissions, premature discharges, skilled nursing facility stays, hospice care, home health care.

**Medicare Part B:** physician services, durable medical equipment, ambulance services, oxygen therapy, preventative care, multiple outpatient services, limited medications.

**Part B enrollment problems:** Part B premium penalties for late enrollment; delayed onset date; termination of coverage for failure to pay premiums.

**Part C:** Medicare Advantage Plans (HMO, managed care plans; fee for service plans; etc.) enrollment dates, eligibility issues; coverage issues; broker/agent issues.

**Medicare Part D prescription drug issues:** enrollment, low-income subsidy eligibility aka Extra Help; penalties for late enrollment; medication denials; transition from MassHealth to Part D.

**Other:** Prescription Advantage issues; MassHealth Buy-In; Senior Buy-In.; termination of coverage due to lack of improvement (“Jimmo” cases); termination of coverage due to non-payment of premiums.

**GBLS EMPLOYMENT LAW UNIT**

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish (2 Attorneys and 1 Paralegal); Portuguese (1 Attorney); Haitian Creole (1 Administrative Assistant). Interpreters will be provided free of charge to clients in any language.

**Client Priorities:** Clients must either:

- be living with their minor children; OR
- have lost a job at which their gross income was \$50,000 or less, OR
- have difficulty communicating in English, OR
- have other reasons why a lack of representation will be especially difficult i.e., difficulty articulating problem, illiteracy, low level of education, cultural or disability barriers, OR
- the cases involve day labor or other temporary work issues, OR
- domestic workers; OR
- client is encountering barriers to employment or other opportunities because of CORI, OR



- client is experiencing workplace harassment/discrimination that might be criminal and so the client may qualify under CLAVC

### Cases Handled:

**Unemployment Cases:** **\*PLEASE NOTE: Will NOT take referrals for callers who are looking for help with UI or other employment issues because they have been terminated for noncompliance with vaccination requirements\*** | Will handle all Unemployment Insurance and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance appeals at any stage if benefits have been denied or employer has appealed initial grant of benefits. Will handle all issues pertaining to access problems due to the unemployment agency's UI Online program, access to extended UI benefits to participate in training, and UI and PUA overpayments and attempts to get waivers of overpayments.

**Domestic workers:** Accepting all cases for domestic workers (nannies, housekeepers, care givers of people with disabilities and the elderly) with unemployment, wage and hour, tax, labor trafficking, retaliation, or related immigration issues.

**Access to Training:** Will handle cases for clients attempting to secure job training and extended unemployment benefits through the unemployment system, the trade adjustment act, or through the one-stop career centers. Representation of Community-Based Organizations: Will handle employment related advocacy issues and provide workers' rights training and assist with administrative or legislative advocacy.

**Wage and Hour Cases:** For immigrants only, wage and hour issues where the amount owed is \$1,000 or more.

**Wage and Hour Cases:** For immigrants only, wage and hour issues where the amount owed is \$1,000 or more.

**CLOSED Victims of Crime:** Will handle employment discrimination cases when form of discrimination may be a crime.

**The GBLS Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC):** This project provides free tax assistance and representation to low-income taxpayers who have issues with the Internal Revenue Service or MA Department of Revenue. The LITC does not prepare routine tax returns since Volunteer Income Tax Assistance / VITA and Tax Counseling for the Elderly / TCE sites provide this service during tax season. **OPEN** for low-income families who have yet claim tax credits for 2020 and/or 2021, or whose credits were denied. Priorities are immigrant families or disabled persons with any tax controversy (frozen/delayed refunds; audits; collections; ITINs needed or denied); bank or wage levies; Economic Impact Payment filings or delays.

Clients seeking assistance should call (617) 603-1569, or email [litc-intake@gbls.org](mailto:litc-intake@gbls.org).

### Alternative Resources

There are 4 LITC locations in Massachusetts providing services to taxpayers who are low income or who speak English as a second language (ESL). DOR and IRS grants allow these clinics to provide more assistance with state-specific tax issues. The clinics do not provide current year tax preparation services but may be able to help qualifying taxpayers with collection matters, audits, appeals or responses to DOR and IRS notices.

- Boston – Greater Boston Legal Services LITC (800) 323-3205
- Jamaica Plain – Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School LITC (866) 738-8081
- Lynn – Northeast Legal Aid LITC (978) 458-1465

- Springfield – Springfield Partners LITC (413) 263-6500
- IRS Taxpayer Advocate at (617) 316-2690
- MA DOR Office of the Taxpayer Advocate at (617) 626-2280

### **CORI and Re-entry Project**

**cori@gbls.org**

**617-603-1554**

**Intake is CLOSED from Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> through Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Zoom Clinics open to anyone on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of every month from 2:00PM – 4:00PM (starting 10/28/2020). Register for these clinics at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XZHQCMM>

1. People seeking to seal their records.
2. People seeking expungement of their records.
3. Appeal of CORI sealing petitions denied by a judge.
4. People wrongly denied the right to seal cases by the Commissioner of Probation due to a larceny case of \$1200 or under \$1200 being treated as a felony although the felony larceny threshold of \$250 was increased to \$1200 so these amounts are now misdemeanors and have only a 3-year waiting period under new law.
5. Cases where a judge ordered sealing or expungement, but the Commissioner of Probation will not seal or expunge the CORI as ordered.
6. Violations of BAN the BOX where a job application asked for CORI info.
7. People with Juvenile Court Youthful Offender cases on their CORI. These should no longer be on CORI due to change in law.
8. People who were denied or may be denied a professional license (driving instructor, real estate appraiser, etc.) by an agency because of their CORI especially where: (1) the application asks about arrests and/or non-convictions; or (2) the application does not warn people not to list sealed records.
- 9. People who were denied or terminated from employment at a ride sharing service (Lyft, Uber, etc.) on account of their CORI.**

**Note:** Clients must live in Boston or have some cases to seal in a Boston area court to use these clinics. Advice, limited representation, or full representation provided.

### **The Trafficking Survivor Conviction Relief Initiative**

**trafficking@gbls.org**

**617-603-1545**

The Trafficking Survivor Conviction Relief Initiative at Greater Boston Legal Services is accepting new clients interested in seeking sealing, expungement, or vacatur of offenses they received as a result of having been trafficked.

Often, as part of a trafficking scheme, a trafficker will coerce or force the person they're exploiting into engaging in criminal activity.

These charges can vary widely in nature depending on how the trafficker chooses to exploit their victim. Some examples of crimes could include:

- Prostitution or sex-work charges
- Drug possession or selling
- Weapons carrying or selling
- Identity and financial crimes
- Shoplifting
- Trespassing
- And more

### **Survivor-Specific Legal Remedies**

In addition to general record sealing and expungement statutes, there are special statutes designed to help survivors clear their records of charges they received as a result of having been trafficked.

These statutes vacate offenses, meaning the remove any guilty findings.

- M.G.L. 265 c. 59 covers offenses for
  - o Prostitution or sex-work
  - o Minor drug possession
- Mass. Crim. Pro. 30(b) and relevant case law cover any offenses where trafficking or abuse was not known at the time of prosecution.

If you are interested in receiving help from The Trafficking Survivor Conviction Relief Initiative, email [trafficking@gbls.org](mailto:trafficking@gbls.org).

Please note, Greater Boston Legal Services is committed to prioritizing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and LGBTQ+ people.

### **The Clemency Initiative**

**[clemency@gbls.org](mailto:clemency@gbls.org)**

**617-603-1545**

**CLOSED**

The Clemency Initiative at Greater Boston Legal Services is accepting new clients interested in filing for a commutation or a pardon from the Governor.

\*Please note, we are committed to prioritizing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and LGBTQ+ people. If you were denied clemency, you must wait at least 1 year to re-apply.

### **Commutation Eligibility**

People who are serving a Massachusetts state court (not federal) sentence who are:

- **Not eligible for parole.**
- Not currently waiting for court decisions, appeals, and there are no pending cases against you.
- No violations of prison institutional rules in the past year.
- Served at least 15 years of a sentence for murder.
- Participated in programs (education, training, self-improvement, etc.) as offered.
- Participation in military, public, or charitable service.
- Participation in rehabilitation, education, mentoring, other self-development programs.
- Provided substantial assistance to law enforcement.
- Accepted responsibility for actions.

Pardon Eligibility

- Released from prison.
- At least 5 years without new misdemeanors after release, parole, or probation.
- At least 10 years without new felonies after release, parole, or probation.
- Positive contributions to your community.
- Paid restitution as ordered.
- Participated in restorative justice program.
- Past military, public, or other community or charitable service.
- Participated in rehabilitation, education, mentoring, other self-development programs.
- Accepted responsibility for actions you committed.
- Denied a job or last other opportunities because of your offense.

If you are incarcerated and interested in our help, send a letter with your name and prison ID number to: Lucie Gulino, Clemency Initiative, Greater Boston Legal Services, 197 Friend St. Boston, MA 02114.

**GBLS FAMILY LAW UNIT**

**Languages spoken other than English:** Spanish (5 attorneys, 2 paralegals, 1 secretary), Gujarati, Hindi (1 attorney), Portuguese (1 paralegal). Interpreters available at no charge for all other languages.

**Priority cases/clients for Family Law/Domestic Violence cases (Domestic Violence Legal Assistance Project (DVLAP):**

- Victims and survivors of domestic violence with custody of children
  - Where opposing party is the perpetrator and the children's other parent
  - With a contested family court matter with perpetrator as opposing party
    - Custody-support-parenting time
    - Paternity
    - Divorce
    - Separate Support
    - Contempt
    - Modifications
- Victims and survivors of domestic violence who were:
  - Denied a 209A restraining order by District Court OR Probate and Family Court
  - Have a 209A extended for less than one year by District Court OR Probate and Family Court
  - Have a case where both parties have 209As against the other

**Priority cases/clients for Civil Legal Advocacy for Victims of Crime (CLAVC) (no income restrictions)**

- Victims and survivors of domestic violence with custody of children who are over income for DVLAP

- Where opposing party is the perpetrator and the children's other parent
- With a contested family court matter with perpetrator as opposing party
  - Custody-support-parenting time
  - Paternity
  - Divorce
  - Separate Support
  - Contempt
  - Modifications
- Victims and survivors of domestic violence with no children with opposing party
  - Where opposing party is the perpetrator
  - With a contested matter in family court
    - Divorce
    - Separate Support
    - Contempt
    - Modification
- Victims of crime who need legal services because of the crime perpetrated against them.
  - Examples (not a complete list):
    - 209A Restraining Orders
    - Guardianship of minor cases in Probate Court (No juvenile court cases)
    - Pre-petition DCF cases (No juvenile court cases)
    - Evictions based on domestic violence and other crimes
    - Identity Theft
    - Wage theft

**Other services available**

- Court based restraining order programs
  - Suffolk County Probate and Family Court Domestic Violence Project
    - Physical office is closed during pandemic
    - Call 617-603-1520 to reach duty advocate
  - Middlesex County Probate and Family Court SAFEPLAN project
    - Physical office is closed during pandemic
    - Call 781-384-0370
- Relocation Counseling Project
  - Provides telephone counsel, advice, limited representation for victims of domestic violence and other crimes regarding legal rights and responsibilities when victim is contemplating leaving Massachusetts to escape crime or fleeing to Massachusetts to obtain safety. Does NOT provide financial support.
  - Call 617-603-1557 to reach duty advocate

**GBLS HOUSING UNIT**

**Service Area for Housing Cases:** Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Canton, Chelsea, Cohasset, Everett, Hingham, Holbrook, Hull, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Norwell, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Scituate, Stoneham, Wakefield, Weymouth, Winthrop.

**(Only send housing cases from Newton, Waltham, or Watertown to GBLS if BCLAB is closed.)**

**Cases Handled:**

**Evictions:** Pro Se Clinic: Mondays at 9:30 am by appointment, walk-ins permitted if space allows. Clinic provides overview and assistance in filing paperwork in response to eviction hearings. Also, individual representation and advice in eviction matters.

**Public/subsidized housing issues:** GBLS Housing unit will take section 8 terminations where the client has exhausted their administrative appeals and is within 30-60 days of the decision. Limited representation in obtaining subsidy or admission to public housing or if is having problems with a subsidy. Emergency Shelter Issues. Will handle cases involving EA (Emergency Assistance). Limited intake for shelter location issues if related to disabilities, employment, or education. No assistance regarding shelter conditions.

**GBLS IMMIGRATION UNIT**

GBLS Immigration Unit will handle asylum cases; cases involving domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes; and unaccompanied minors. Telephone Intake messages can be left requesting callbacks at **617-603-1808** and calls will be returned as time permits.

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish (2 Attorneys, 1 Paralegal); French (1 Attorney); Portuguese (1 Attorney); Haitian Creole (1 Paralegal).

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** Spanish (1 Intake Paralegal, 1 Secretary); Haitian Creole (1 Secretary/Paralegal); French (1 Volunteer Attorney).

**GBLS WELFARE LAW UNIT**

**Languages of advocates fluent in languages other than English:** Spanish (1 Attorney, 2 Paralegal Advocates); Portuguese (1 Attorney, 1 Paralegal Advocate); Cape Verdean Creole (1 Paralegal Advocate). WLU uses interpreters for other languages and for these languages as needed.

**Cases handled:**

Other than as limited below, the WLU considers: 1) any type or stage of **TAFDC**, **EAEDC**, and **Food Stamp (SNAP)** cases; 2) All types of childcare cases regardless of whether or not DTA or TAFDC is involved; 3) cases for clients who have not received all of the 2020 and 2021 stimulus payments for themselves and their dependents and/or have not received all of the special 2021 Child Tax Credits for all of their children (it is not too late to claim them); and 4) cases in which the Bureau of Special Investigations is investigating an alleged welfare or child care fraud case or seeking a client to agree to disqualification from benefits and repayment of alleged overpayments.

**Cases not handled:** Welfare cases covered by the GBLS Elder Unit or by the CASLS office.

## **GBLS CONSUMER RIGHTS PROJECT**

### **Cases Handled:**

- Debt collection cases
- Credit reporting issues
- Consumer Scams
- Alternative Energy/Utility Supplier Cases
- Debt Settlement (where clients pay a company to supposedly settle their debts) Bankruptcy cases (Ch.7) if we have capacity
- Foreclosures

### **We will not take:**

#### **Car Repossession and ANY other “car cases:”**

- **The unit is, however, interested in speaking to potential CLs who had their car seized AS PART OF a collection for UNRELATED car debt. (i.e., not a car repossession but part of a collection action).**

**Small Claims Clinics:** GBLS represents low-income debtors in debt collection cases in small claims court on a limited assistance basis at the following locations:

- Roxbury Municipal Court on Wednesdays at 1pm
- Chelsea District Court on Wednesdays at 9am

The Volunteer Lawyers Project hold additional clinics.

## **HARVARD LEGAL AID BUREAU (HLAB)**

**23 Everett Street, First Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138  
(617) 495-4408 • Fax (617) 496-2687**

[www.harvardlegalaid.org](http://www.harvardlegalaid.org)

**CLOSED**

**Housing Intake Hours:** Monday, 9 AM – Noon and 5 PM – 7 PM

**Wage & Hour Intake Hours:** Wednesday, 9 AM – Noon and 5 PM – 7 PM

### **Service Area (by Area of Law):**

**Family Law, Government Benefits, and Wage & Hour Cases:** Acton, Arlington, Ashby, Ashland, Ayer, Bedford, Belmont, Billerica, Boston (Allston, Brighton, Charlestown, Dorchester, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roslindale, Roxbury, West Roxbury), Boxborough, Burlington, Cambridge, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Chelsea, Concord, Dracut, Dunstable, Everett, Framingham, Groton, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Lowell, Malden, Marlborough, Maynard, Medford, Melrose, Natick, Newton, North Reading, Pepperell, Revere, Somerville, Tewksbury, Townsend, Tyngsborough, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Westford, W. Townsend, Weston, Wilmington, Winchester, Winthrop, and Woburn.

**Housing Cases:** Boston (Allston, Brighton, Charlestown, Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roslindale, Roxbury, South Boston, South End, West Roxbury), Cambridge, and Somerville.

**Cases Handled:**

**CLOSED Eviction Clinic:** Clinic helps with answer & discovery forms. The clinic only serves people who have received a Summons & Complaint and who have not yet completed their answer & discovery. To qualify for the clinic, a tenant must have received both a Notice to Quit and a Summons & Complaint. Clinic is held every Wednesday at 10 AM. For HLAB to assess eligibility, clients should complete a [referral form](#)

**CLOSED Family Law: (note different service area)** Divorce, 209A issues, child support, custody, contempt, etc. Priority for custodial parents and cases involving domestic violence, restraining order against opposing party or kidnapping/threat to kidnap.

**CLOSED Housing: (note different service area)** Evictions private, public, or subsidized housing at Notice to Quit or Summons and Complaint Stage. Section 8 voucher terminations at court appeal stage only.

**CLOSED Government Benefits: (note different service area)** SSI/SSDI—ALJ stage, no strict overpayments.

Unemployment benefits—DUA hearings at the Boston office only.

**CLOSED Wage and Hour:** Representation to clients who have not been paid the wages, overtime, and other compensation they have earned.

**CLOSED Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS):** Represents juveniles seeking special immigrant juvenile status in family court.

**HARVARD TRANSACTIONAL LAW CLINICS**

6 Everett Street – Suite 103, Cambridge, MA 02138  
(617) 998-0101 • Fax: (617) 998-0146

[www.harvardtlc.org](http://www.harvardtlc.org)

**Service Area:** Boston Metropolitan Area.

**Eligibility & Fees:** No income guidelines. Fees are based upon clients' ability to pay. In most cases, below-market rates are set on a flat-fee basis. Free services are available to those who qualify.

**Program Description:** Provides legal services to individuals and organizations for business, nonprofit, real estate, and entertainment transactions. Provides legal services to small businesses and entrepreneurs, homeowners, community development corporations, artists, producers, non-profit organizations as well as various community and economic development organizations and social service providers.

**Cases Handled:**

**Small Business & Non-Profit Organizations:** business formations; contract preparation and review; business permits; licensing; financing; customer and contractor agreements; trademarks; employee and confidentiality agreements; business sales and acquisitions; partnership and shareholder agreements; corporate governance and compliance reviews; applications for tax-exempt status and with regulatory compliance for non-profit organizations.

**Real Estate:** Residential and commercial purchases, sales, and leasing; residential and commercial development; condominium conversion; affordable housing and community revitalization; zoning.

**Music, Arts and Entertainment:** Artist and company representation; copyright and trademark



registration; contract drafting and negotiations; rights releases and licensing; music, visual and literary arts counseling.

**JEWISH FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICE – BET TZEDEK LEGAL SERVICES (JF&CS)**

**1430 Main Street (Rte. 117), Waltham, MA 02451**

**[www.jfcsboston.org](http://www.jfcsboston.org)**

**Intake Line: (781) 693-1333**

**Eligibility:** Income 200% or below the Federal Poverty Guidelines, limited assets.

**Service Area:** Greater Boston.

**Languages of Staff who regularly assist Clients in languages other than English:** Russian.

**Cases Considered:**

JF&CS Bet Tzedek is currently **CLOSED** for new intake for Benefits matters. JF&CS Bet Tzedek has limited ability to provide referrals to pro bono attorneys in the areas of Elder Law, Consumer Law, Bankruptcy, Housing, Trusts & Estates, and Family Law (discrete issues only). JF&CS Bet Tzedek can also provide general information in these areas. Extremely time-sensitive matters cannot be considered for referral to pro bono attorneys. JF&CS Bet Tzedek can access the many resources of the agency and refer callers to additional programs including the Hunger and Nutrition program, Journey to Safety (domestic abuse) program, Disabilities Resource Network, Senior Services and more.

**LAWYERS CLEARINGHOUSE**

**7 Winthrop Square, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02110**

**[www.lawyersclearinghouse.org](http://www.lawyersclearinghouse.org)**

**(617) 544-3434**

The Lawyers Clearinghouse (LC) operates free legal clinics at nine Boston-area homeless shelters and agencies. To qualify, clients must be homeless, using shelter services, or be otherwise income eligible for free legal services. The LC tries to help with most civil legal issues and commonly assists clients with housing, social security, CORI, and immigration cases. The LC does not handle domestic relations cases (divorce, child support, custody) or represent defendants in criminal trials. Clients should sign up in advance, if possible, by contacting the representative listed for each shelter below. Clients who are unable to sign up in advance may still attend a clinic. Each clinic starts at 9:30am.

**LEGAL SERVICES CENTER OF HARVARD LAW SCHOOL**

**122 Boylston Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130**

**[www.legalservicescenter.org](http://www.legalservicescenter.org)**

**(617) 522-3003 • Fax (617) 522-0715**

**Intake Hours:** Varies by practice area— please call for schedule.

**Service Area:** Greater Boston

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** Spanish (1 Interpreter/Receptionists, 1 Case and Business Manager)

**Cases Handled:**

**Consumer Law:** Consumer debt collection defense, **No longer taking bankruptcy cases.**

**Family Justice Clinic – Not taking new clients:** Domestic Relations (Divorce, paternity); Restraining Orders (209A), DCF Investigation – Early Defense, DCF Fair Hearings.

**Federal Tax Clinic:** Audit reconsiderations, Offers in Compromise, Installment Agreements, IRS Liens and Garnishments, Innocent Spouse Claims, Dependency Exemptions, Child Tax Credit, Earned Income Credit, Tax Court, and more. Intake Line: 617-390-1729

**Government Benefits – Not taking new clients:** SSI and Social Security, SNAP/Food Stamps. Intake Line: 617-390-2524

**Housing:** Eviction cases with a focus on the housing issues of survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**Student Debt – No longer in this office can visit website [PPSL.org](http://PPSL.org) or call 617-390-2669:** Federal, private, and institutional debt, with a focus on for-profit Colleges.

**Veterans and Family Members of Veterans:** Federal veterans benefits appeals (e.g. service connected disability, pension, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), etc.), Massachusetts veterans' services benefits (Ch. 115), discharge upgrades/correction of military records, LGBT veterans rights, estate planning, estate administration, guardianship, conservatorship, access to other public benefit programs, access to healthcare, student loan debt, tax/IRS issues, and certain other civil matters. Intake Line: 617-390-2525

**MENTAL HEALTH LEGAL ADVISORS COMMITTEE (MHLAC)**

**100 Hancock Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 1002**

**[www.mhlac.org](http://www.mhlac.org)**

**Quincy, MA 02171**

**(617) 338-2345, Press 1 “for legal help” • 1-800-342-9092 • Fax (617) 338-2347**

**Intake hours:** Voicemail system accepts messages 24/7. Intakes are conducted by phone, during regular business hours. Unable to accept walk-ins.

**Services Provided:** Primarily provides information, pro se advice, materials, and referrals on an array of legal areas. Income limits may apply.

**Language of Advocates other than English:** Spanish (2) and Portuguese (1)

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Cases Handled:** MHLAC provides information and conducts intake as described below. We may provide representation to people with, or perceived to have, a mental health condition when their legal issue meets MHLAC's case criteria. Even if we do not take your case for representation, the stories, and experiences you share help inform MHLAC's strategies to improve mental health care within systems and our communities. We unfortunately cannot assist with every type of case. If your legal issue is not listed below you should contact the Massachusetts Legal Resource Finder (<https://masslrf.org/en/home>) to find legal help.

## Education

### General Priority Intake Criteria:

1. Student attends a Public or Charter School in MA, and;
2. Student has a known or perceived mental health condition, and;
3. Student has experienced one or multiple of the following:
  - Student has been suspended, expelled, asked to withdraw, has been unenrolled or has been otherwise excluded from school; OR
  - Student is not attending school (e.g., chronic absenteeism, CRA/truancy), has dropped out OR
  - Student is being forced to go to an alternative school or another school in the district; OR
  - Student has been unfairly searched, arrested, or otherwise targeted by law enforcement and/or school resource officers at school; OR
  - Student has been harassed on the basis of their mental health condition and/or disability OR
  - Students who are not receiving appropriate services to meet their language needs.

### Any of the following criteria for Holyoke students/families:

- Student with an IEP is not getting timely evaluations;
- The IEP process is stalled or delayed because of lack of interpreters/translators;
- The student's parents are of limited English proficiency, **and**:
  - have received correspondence from the school only in English;
  - have been asked to sign documents in English which they did not understand;
  - have attended meetings or hearings at which interpreters were not available or in which the school used untrained interpreters;
  - **and** are unable to communicate with school staff because of lack of interpreters; OR have been asked by the school to waive rights.

**How to request an Education intake:** MHLAC receives referrals only, directly from organizations and advocates. Screened by the Education team, the levels of assistance that may be offered include information and referral, brief advocacy, or full representation. While we are considering your case for representation, or if we rejected your case, you should reach out to the following organizations:

- Community Legal Aid: [communitylegal.org](http://communitylegal.org) – 855-252-5342
- EdLaw Project: [youthadvocacyfoundation.org/the-edlaw-project](http://youthadvocacyfoundation.org/the-edlaw-project) – 617-910-5829
- Massachusetts Advocates for Children: [massadvocates.org/helpline](http://massadvocates.org/helpline) – 617-357-8431

**Note:** for all education intakes we will need a copy of the student's education record before we can evaluate the case for representation.

## Family Law

### Intake criteria:

- Parents with custody and parenting time cases, that can also include divorce, 209A orders, child support, alimony, limited property division or
- Termination or denial of DCF services or program to a parent with a mental health or psychiatric disability or

- Technical assistance to attorneys and case workers on behalf of parents with mental health issues in child welfare/DCF involved cases.

**How to request a Family Law intake:** To request assistance, parents can call, complete the Family Law Project (FLP) online form or email to request an intake interview. Once the intake about their situation is completed, the case is screened by the FLP staff. The levels of assistance that may be offered include information and referral, brief advocacy, or full representation.

### **Mental Health Treatment access, in Hospital Emergency Departments and Inpatient Units**

#### **Intake criteria:**

- Experiences of mistreatment and rights violations in a hospital emergency department/room or inpatient mental health facility or
- Allegations of improper disclosure of confidential mental health treatment information or
- Interactions with police or
- Access to mental health treatment issues while in jail.

**How to request an intake:** Individuals can call, complete [online form](#), or write to us. MHLAC will contact the individual to complete an intake interview about their situation. MHLAC will provide information and referral. Brief advocacy offered on a case-by-case basis.

#### **What to expect:**

MHLAC's Intake Department will respond within 2 business days to callers currently hospitalized in a facility. For all other intake areas listed above (education, family law and mental health treatment not currently in a facility) intake requests, MHLAC will make contact to conduct an intake interview within 8-10 business days. Look at this webpage to help prepare for your intake interview <http://mhlac.org/legal-help/>.

### **METRO WEST LEGAL SERVICES**

63 Fountain Street, Suite 304, Framingham, MA 01702  
(508) 620-1830 • 1-800-696-1501 • Fax (508)-620-2323

[www.mwlegal.org](http://www.mwlegal.org)

**Service Area:** Acton, Ashland, Bedford, Bellingham, Carlisle, Concord, Dedham, Dover, Foxborough, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Lexington, Lincoln, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Norwood, Plainville, Sharon, Sherborn, Stow, Sudbury, Walpole, Wayland, Wellesley, Weston, Westwood, Wrentham.

#### **Cases Handled:**

**Family Law:** **OPEN** Full-representation or advice on divorce and custody cases for victim/survivors of domestic violence. Advice for Plaintiff's in 209A cases.

**Government Benefits:** **OPEN** Will handle welfare cases (TAFDC, EAEDC, SNAP), SSI, unemployment, SSDI and Mass Health cases.

#### **Housing:** **OPEN**

- All **Public and Subsidized (Section 8 voucher)** evictions at the notice to quit stage.

- All **Private** housing evictions **involving undocumented tenants** at the summons and complaint stage (These calls are also invited to our clinic and a clinic intake is completed if they attend).
- All subsidy terminations.
- All denials for public or subsidized housing.
- All lockouts.
- Emergency bad conditions cases that tenants initiate and report at intake (i.e. no heat, no water, utilities).
- All requests for reasonable accommodations (for physical modifications to the apartment and/or changes in lease/policies).
- All executions (notices by landlord to use an execution for possession to force someone to leave their apartment).

**Special Education: CLOSED** Will handle cases involving special education for children, such as IEP issues, 504 planning and civil rights matters. Will also accept discipline cases for children not involved in special education.

**Immigration: ADVICE ONLY** No longer providing services immigration services in Worcester County. Will assist immigrant victims of domestic violence with their immigration matters including VAWA self- petitions, U Visa Petitions, T Visa Petitions, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, and asylum applications.

**PBI: OPEN** Maintains pro bono panel for: divorce; wills, powers of attorney and health care proxies; bankruptcies and CORI Sealing.

**ELDER Project Service Area:** Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Canton, Dedham, Dover, Foxborough, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medfield, Millis, Natick, Needham, Newton, Norfolk, Northborough, Norwood, Plainville, Sharon, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Waltham, Walpole, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, Weston, Westwood, Wrentham

**ELDER Cases Handled: OPEN** Government benefits, SSI/SSDI, health benefits, housing, nursing home issues, bankruptcies, wills, divorces, health care proxies (HCP), power of attorney (POA), and unemployment.

**NEW ENGLAND LAW | BOSTON - CLINIC LAW OFFICES**  
**(617) 422-7380 • Fax (617) 422-7385**

**Service Area:** Middlesex and Suffolk County

**Cases Handled:**

**Consumer Law:** Civil session debt collection, small claims debt collection, and trustee process (garnishment) cases.

**Domestic Relations:** Child support, custody, and visitation (even if parents never married), contempt's, and modifications.

**Family Law:** Divorce (only with children in the marriage).

**Housing Law:** Summary Process, Affirmative Conditions cases (non-emergency) and post-foreclosure evictions.

**Government Benefits:** SSI/SSDI and Unemployment benefit appeals only.

Cases **NOT** handled: DCF cases.

**NORTHEAST LEGAL AID**

**Lowell Office: 35 John Street, Suite 302, Lowell, MA 01852-1101**

**Fax (978) 458-3481**

**Lynn Office: 181 Union Street, Suite 201, Lynn MA 01901**

**Fax (781) 595-2022**

**Lawrence Office: 50 Island Street, Suite 203, Lawrence, MA 01840-1507      Fax (978) 685-2933**

Client and staff meetings are held by appointment only. In-person intakes are available Mondays through Thursday from 9am to 4pm (lunch 1pm to 2pm). Paper intake forms are available at the entrances of each office location and can be placed in the night drop box after they are completed. We are also available by our phone number 978-458-1465 from 9-1 Monday through Friday or use the online application. The link can be found on [www.northeastlegalaid.org](http://www.northeastlegalaid.org)

**Telephone for all three offices:** (978) 458-1465 • (800) 336-2262 Phone Intake hours are Monday through Friday 9 am to 1pm. Accepting online requests at [www.northeastlegalaid.org](http://www.northeastlegalaid.org)

**Service Area:** Amesbury, Andover, Ashby, Ayer, Beverly, Billerica, Boxborough, Boxford, Burlington, Byfield, Chelmsford, Danvers, Dracut, Dunstable, Essex, Georgetown, Gloucester, Groton, Groveland, Hamilton, Haverhill, Ipswich, Lawrence, Littleton, Lowell, Lynn, Lynnfield, Manchester-by-the Sea, Marblehead, Merrimac, Methuen, Middleton, Nahant, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, North Reading, Peabody, Pepperell, Reading, Rockport, Rowley, Salem, Salisbury, Saugus, Shirley, Swampscott, Tewksbury, Topsfield, Townsend, Tyngsborough, Wenham, West Newbury, Westford, and Wilmington.

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish, Khmer

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:** Spanish, French.

**Cases Handled:**

**Benefits – Disability:** Terminations or Denial for adults aged 18-65.

**Benefits:** Terminations or denials of EA, TAFDC, Unemployment.

**Children’s Education Legal Assistance:** Assistance with special education, school discipline, enrollment, and other matters related to the provision of primary and secondary services - K-12 only.

**Community Development and Entrepreneurship:** Services to help start, run, or expand small businesses.

**Consumer Law:** Bankruptcy (simple chapter 7 non-emergency), General Consumer including Debt Collection Defense, auto dealers, student loans and unfair and deceptive practices.

**CORI (Criminal Record) Sealing:** For MA state criminal records (no DCF, SORI, RMV, federal, or out of state).

**Domestic Relations and Family Law Helpline:** 209A cases; Family Law Helpline (serves people in need of family law services who do not fit within any of the other family law projects, services include single issue/question counsel and advice via telephone by PAI).

Full representation for family law cases including Divorce and Paternity (never-married parties' cases) cases and modifications of Divorce or Paternity judgments/orders for callers with or without minor child[ren] where there has been:

- Domestic violence/battering behavior (this includes but is not limited to physical abuse, threats, and threatening behavior) perpetrated against:
  - the caller.
  - the child[ren]; or
  - other members of the household

*The substance of these cases may include, but not be limited to, custody cases, visitation cases, division of property cases, alimony cases, child support cases, removal cases, and contempt cases.*

**Family Preservation Program:** DCF has threatened or indicated that they are considering removing child/children from the home and placing in foster care. NLA will assist from the time of an initial indication of removal or filing of a 51A report of abuse/neglect through the filing of a petition for removal and/or removal. NLA will not consider once a petition for removal has been filed or the child/children have been removed. Covering NLA traditional service area and for applicants 200% and under.

**General-Victims of Crime:** ~~CLOSED~~ General area of practice for any crime victim who has suffered physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm because of the commission of a crime. There must be a nexus between the crime and the client's civil legal need.

**Government Benefits:** SSI, SSDI, EA, TAFDC, UI, MassHealth, SNAP, Veterans Services.

**Housing:** **PARTIALLY OPEN** Private/Public/Subsidized housing eviction defense, terminations, conditions, discrimination.

**Immigration:** \*Screening handled by one of Referral Partners and not NLA/NJC\* Detention Proceedings (detained individuals, representation limited to Bond Hearing only may be available); Victims of DV/Sexual Assault (assistance to victims of DV and/or sexual assault) or any other request for immigration assistance; referrals can be made to Quintana for Legal Permanent residents seeking assistance to apply for Citizenship or to renew their LPR at Quintana Family Center 978794-5399 or zlririano@quintanacenter.org (Zulma Liriano), Meets regularly at 404 Haverhill Street, Lawrence; or JFON (Justice for our Neighbors) for Lowell Centralville United Methodist Church, 800 Bridge Street, Lowell, meets 2nd Monday of the month (except holidays) 617-794-7024 or jfonlawlowclinic@gmail.com; Woburn United Methodist, Meets 3rd Thursday of the month at 523 Main Street, Woburn, MA, call or text Julianna at 781-491-4973; Meets the 4th Monday of the month (check for holidays) at Christ United Methodist Church, 207 Haverhill Street, Lawrence call or text 617-794-7024 or email jfonlawlowclinic@gmail.com (both Lowell and Lawrence are managed by the same volunteer coordinators), Meeting the 3rd Monday of the month (check for holidays), Lynn Rapid Resource Network (LRRN) Lynn Community Health Center, 20 Central Ave., 6th Floor, Lynn walk in with no pre-registration.

**Medical-Legal Partnership with Greater Lawrence Family Health Center:**

This is a general legal aid practice formed in partnership with the Greater Lawrence Community Health Center ("The Health Center") focused on serving high needs patients who present to providers with a legal issue. Although the program is general practice, priority cases will be domestic violence/family law, housing, public benefits, and issues that affect the immediate health and safety of the client. To be eligible for this service, applicants must be patients of the Health Center.

Referrals are made directly to the MLP attorney who is on site. Currently, please do not consider immigration under this practice area.

**Uncontested divorce:** Cases which do not involve domestic violence, parties must have been separated for at least 6 months, and no disputed issue.

**Employment Law (i.e., wage, hour, or discrimination):** Cases involving employees who are encountering issues in which the employer fails to pay wages, failure to pay overtime, retaliation, and discrimination.

**LGBTQ+ Discrimination:** Issues of anti-LGBTQ+ Discrimination.

**LGBTQ+ – Gender related name/ID change:** Assistance for transgender and gender-diverse people to change their name and update their identity documents to reflect their identity.

**Low-Income and Elder Property Tax Lien Foreclosure Assistance:** **CLOSED** ~~Assistance with foreclosures due to tax liens~~

**Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic:** Northeast Legal Aid will provide a range of state and federal tax controversy representation to low income and elderly clients. Many of the legal issues that face the low-income community dovetail with tax issues. For example, family law and tax issues often coincide. The NLA LITC will encompass innocent spouse applications. Other family law tax controversies will include post-divorce tax obligations like custodial parent status, joint tax obligations, and tax obligations arising from divorce. NLA will offer legal assistance in “pure” tax controversies like assistance with the Earned Income Tax Credit examination during the audit process, Tax Court process, and the collection process. The LITC will be prepared to address identity theft issues, discharge of indebtedness, and IRS imposters and the ramifications of their frauds on low-income individuals. In addition, the clinic will handle offers in compromise which allow taxpayers to negotiate a lower tax payment if they cannot afford the taxes that are due. Finally, the LITC clinic may handle tax issues as they relate to bankruptcy, the elderly, the Affordable Care Act, immigration, and disability.

**ELDER Unit Cases Handled (some issues will be considered under other unit protocols):** Any of the above cases, nursing home/rest home/assisted living issues, regarding involuntary transfer, discharge or evictions elder abuse, and Public Benefits including Social Security and SSI issues, MassHealth denials and terminations of benefits, and VAWA or U-VISA Petitions. Refer applicants to local elder services organizations.

## **SOMERVILLE OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY**

**City Hall Annex, 50 Evergreen Ave., Somerville, MA 02145**

**[www.somervillema.gov/OHS](http://www.somervillema.gov/OHS)**

**Intake Phone: (617) 615-6600 ext. 2581; Fax: 617-591 3233**

**Service Area:** Somerville residents only (or homeless clients whose last permanent address was in Somerville).

**Languages of Advocates other than English:** Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese. OHS has a language line and can accommodate all other languages.

**Cases Handled:**



**Housing:** resolution of property owner/tenant matters, eviction prevention, answers to housing related questions (property owners, tenants, and homeowners), workshops on tenants' rights, workshops for property owners, and help accessing or applying for rental assistance.

Somerville OHS also assist with housing search.

## **SOUTH COASTAL COUNTIES LEGAL SERVICES, INC.**

### **SCCLS Fall River Law Office**

22 Bedford Street, Fall River, MA 02720-3002

(800) 244-9023 • Intake Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday

**Service Area:** Attleboro, Berkley, Dighton, Fall River, Freetown, Mansfield, N. Attleboro, Norton, Raynham, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Somerset, Swansea, Taunton, Westport.

**ELDER Service Area:** Attleboro, Berkley, Dighton, Fall River, Freetown, Mansfield, N. Attleboro, Norton, Raynham, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Somerset, Swansea, Taunton, Westport.

**Priorities:** Consumer, Education, Elder/Medicare, Family Law/Domestic Violence, Foreclosure, Health/Disability/Mental Health, Housing, Public Benefits (including TAFDC, EA, EAEDC, Food Stamps/SNAP), SSI/SSDI, Unemployment Compensation Benefits.

### **SCCLS New Bedford Office**

21 South Sixth Street, New Bedford, MA 02720-3002

(800) 244-9023 • Intake Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday

**Service Area:** Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Mattapoisett, New Bedford.

**ELDER Service Area:** Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Gosnold, Marion, Mattapoisett, New Bedford, Rochester.

**Priorities:** Consumer, Education, Elder/Medicare, Family Law/Domestic Violence, Foreclosure, Health/Disability/Mental Health, Housing, Public Benefits (including TAFDC, EA, EAEDC, Food Stamps/SNAP), SSI/SSDI, Unemployment Compensation Benefits.

### **SCCLS Hyannis Law Office**

460 West Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601-3653

(800) 244-9023 • Intake Hours: 9:30 am to 1:30 pm, Monday – Thursday

**Service Area:** Aquinnah, Barnstable, Bourne, Brewster, Carver, Chatham, Chilmark, Dennis, Eastham, Edgartown, Falmouth, Gay Head, Halifax, Hanson, Harwich, Hyannis, Kingston, Lakeville, Marion, Marshfield, Marston Mills, Mashpee, Middleboro, Nantucket, Oak Bluffs, Orleans, Pembroke, Plympton, Provincetown, Rochester, Sandwich, Tisbury, Truro, Wareham, Wellfleet, West Tisbury, Yarmouth.

**ELDER Service Area:** Aquinnah, Barnstable, Bourne, Brewster, Chatham, Chilmark, Dennis, Eastham, Edgartown, Falmouth, Gay Head, Harwich, Hyannis, Marston Mills, Mashpee, Nantucket, Oak Bluffs, Orleans, Provincetown, Sandwich, Tisbury, Truro, Wellfleet, West Tisbury, Yarmouth.

**Priorities:** Consumer, Education, Elder/Medicare, Family Law/Domestic Violence, Foreclosure, Health/Disability/Mental Health, Housing, Public Benefits (including TAFDC, EA, EAEDC, Food Stamps/SNAP), SSI/SSDI, Unemployment Compensation Benefits.

**JUSTICE CENTER OF SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS LLC (Subsidiary of SCCLS)**

**231 Main Street, Suite 201, Brockton, MA 02301-4342**

**Call (800) 244-8393 • Intake Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday**

**Area Served:** Abington, Avon, Bridgewater, Brockton, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Easton, Hanover, Plymouth, Rockland, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, Whitman.

**ELDER Services Area:** Abington, Avon, Bridgewater, Brockton, Carver, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Easton, Halifax, Hanover, Hanson, Kingston, Lakeville, Marshfield, Middleboro, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Rockland, Stoughton, Wareham, West Bridgewater, Whitman.

**Priorities:** Consumer, Education, Elder/Medicare, Family Law/Domestic Violence, Foreclosure, Health/Disability/Mental Health, Housing, Immigration/Asylum, Immigration, Public Benefits (Including TAFDC, EA, EAEDC, Food Stamps/SNAP), SSI/SSDI, Unemployment Compensation Benefits

**VETERANS LEGAL SERVICES**

**(857) 317-4474 • Fax (844) 621-2797**

**[info@veteranslegalservices.org](mailto:info@veteranslegalservices.org)**

Veterans Legal Services helps homeless and low-income veterans through comprehensive legal services. Intakes are performed through our on-site legal clinics at area shelters and service centers. Legal issues handled are primarily in the following areas: Family Law/Domestic Relations, Landlord/Tenant, Public Housing, CORI/Criminal Records, Consumer Debt, Public Benefits, State and Federal Veterans' Benefits. Veterans Legal Services does not handle the following: Labor, Dept. of Children & Families Cases, Fee Generating Matters, Criminal Law.

**Services are available through our legal clinics for low-income veterans only.** Please call our office at 857-317-4474 Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm, for eligibility screening and to check clinic dates and times

- **Bedford Veterans Affairs Medical Center** – By appointment only. Every 6 weeks. 200 Springs Road, Building 80, Bedford, MA.
- **Chelsea Soldiers' Home** – Walk-in. Most alternating Mondays, 10:30 a.m., 91 Crest Avenue, Chelsea, MA.

- **New England Center & Home for Veterans** – Walk-in. Most Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. 17 Court Street (Government Center), Boston, MA.
- **Norfolk County Veterans Treatment Court** – For veterans participating in the Veterans Treatment Court only. Usually the first Tuesday of each month. 631 High Street, Dedham, MA.

**Weather Cancellation Policy** – Clinics are not held if Boston Public Schools are closed due to weather.

## **VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS**

*A Program of the ARTS & BUSINESS COUNCIL OF GREATER BOSTON*

**15 Channel Center Street - Suite 103, Boston, MA 02210**

**[www.artsandbusinesscouncil.org](http://www.artsandbusinesscouncil.org)**

**(617) 350-7600 • Fax (888) 412-7610**

**Email: [mail@artsandbusinesscouncil.org](mailto:mail@artsandbusinesscouncil.org)**

**Service Area:** Statewide

The VLA provides *pro bono* assistance or referrals for income-eligible artists and arts organizations on all types of civil legal matters and for non-artists with art-related legal problems including but not limited to contracts, copyright, trademark, first amendment, not-for-profit incorporations, consignment of fine art, collections, and live/workspace.

## **VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT (VLP)**

**7 Winthrop Square, Floor 2, Boston, MA 02110**

**[www.vlpnet.org](http://www.vlpnet.org)**

**(617) 423-0648**

**Use ERLI's number for Intakes unless otherwise indicated: (617) 603-1700.**

**All clients, including elders, must be financially eligible for legal services.**

**Service Area:** Acton, Arlington, Ashland, Bedford, Bellingham, Belmont, Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Canton, Carlisle, Chelsea, Cohasset, Concord, Everett, Foxborough, Framingham, Franklin, Hingham, Holbrook, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Hull, Lexington, Lincoln, Malden, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medford, Medway, Melrose, Millis, Milton, Natick, Needham, Newton, Norfolk, Norwell, Norwood, Plainville, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Sharon, Sherborn, Scituate, Somerville, Stoneham, Stow, Sudbury, Walpole, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, Weston, Westwood, Weymouth, Winchester, Winthrop, Woburn, Wollaston, Wrentham.

**Languages of Additional Staff who regularly assist clients in languages other than English:**  
Spanish.

## **CASES HANDLED:**

**Listed below are VLP's general areas of practice and case priorities. This list is not exhaustive of the services offered by VLP. Clients should call the Eastern Region Legal Intake (ERLI) line**

**for further information on VLP’s units. For most up to date information on VLP clinics, clients should call ERLI or check the website.**

**Bankruptcy:** Cases where clients in debt are seeking information about their options and are considering bankruptcy. Clinics are *not* being run until further notice.

**Consumer:** Cases where clients are facing debt collection for credit card debt, utilities, medical debt, and automobile repossession. Cases involving unfair debt collection practices as well as identity theft as it relates to a debt collection matter.

*Clinics:*

- BMC Dorchester Small Claims (In-Person): 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month from 11am – 1pm and 2 – 4pm.
- VLP also hosts virtual clinics in BMC Central. To determine eligibility for virtual clinics, clients should contact ERLI to complete an intake.

**Family Law:** Cases involving divorce, custody, paternity, contempt, modification actions, etc. VLP’s Family Law Unit cannot handle emergencies, active domestic violence issues should be referred to GBLS or elsewhere.

*Clinics:*

- Suffolk Probate & Family Court Family Law Clinic: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 9am – 1pm.
- VLP also hosts virtual clinics. To determine eligibility for virtual clinics, clients should contact ERLI to complete an intake.

**Guardianship:** Cases where the client is seeking to become the guardian of a minor child OR of an incapacitated person (including incapacitated elders). Clients ideally should obtain a Medical Certificate or Clinical Term Report prior to contacting VLP.

*Clinics:*

- Suffolk Probate & Family Court Guardianship Clinic: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 8:30am – 1pm.
- Middlesex Probate & Family Court Guardianship Clinic: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 10am – 2pm.
- VLP also hosts virtual clinics. To determine eligibility for virtual clinics, clients should contact ERLI to complete an intake.

**Housing:** Cases involving evictions, bad conditions, utilities, retaliation, etc. In public and subsidized housing: applicant selection issues, program terminations, evictions, etc.

*Clinics:*

- VLP hosts an Answer & Discovery Clinic. All clients need to be screened by VLP staff and scheduled to attend the A&D Clinic. To determine eligibility, clients should contact ERLI to complete an intake.

**Wills & Advance Directives:** Drafting and modifying of simple wills, powers of attorney, and / or health care proxies. Potential brief advice on trust and estate matters.

**Wage & Hour:** Cases involving non-payment of wages, minimum wage & overtime violations, tipped wage violations, accrued wage violations, commission payments, misclassification as independent contractor, etc. Currently VLP is not able to take employment discrimination cases or wrongful termination. If clients feel that they have been discriminated against, advise them to file a complaint with MCAD (Mass Commission Against Discrimination).

*Clinics:*

- VLP participates in a monthly Wage Theft Clinic at Suffolk Law School which is held approximately once a month from 4 – 6pm. Upcoming Wage Clinics are on VLP’s calendar. To determine eligibility, clients should contact ERLI to complete an intake.

**Unemployment:** Unemployment insurance matters involving disqualification of claims; where the Client was initially denied benefits OR where the Client was initially granted benefits, but the employer has since appealed. Cases where clients want to appeal a hearing decision to the Board of Review, who have a hearing scheduled for an overpayment waiver, or who have appealed a disqualification late under certain circumstances.

**Civil Appeals Clinic:** VLP, in collaboration with Boston-based members of the Association of Pro Bono Counsel (APBCO), operates a pro bono Civil Appeals Clinic. The Appeal Clinic is limited to advice and brief services – can potentially assist with drafting initial appeals documents and providing advice on the merits of an appeal and the appellate procedure. The areas of law that are appropriate for referral are the main practice areas of VLP, including family law, housing, consumer, employment, guardianship. To determine eligibility, clients should contact ERLI to complete an intake.