

**Host Site:** Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati

**Topic of Project:** Kinship Care

**Location:** Cincinnati, OH

The project will be in-person if public health conditions allow.

**Description of Fellow Project:**

The Rural Summer Legal Corps Fellow will support Legal Aid's Kinship Care Team, which provides assistance to grandparents and others who are caring for children whose parents cannot raise them due to a variety of issues, including substance use, untreated mental illness, or incarceration. The goal of the Kinship Care Team is to bring stability and economic security, through comprehensive legal assistance, to kinship caregiver families. Major components of the project include outreach, maintenance of referral relationships with partner agencies, brief-service legal clinics in our seven counties, with a particular emphasis on our four most rural counties (Brown, Clermont, Clinton and Highland), and legal advocacy to help clients access public benefits like Medicaid, Food Stamps, and cash payments to support the children they are raising.

The RSLC fellow will have extensive client contact, and will be a critical part of our ability to serve a high volume of kinship families. The Fellow will conduct telephone intake interviews to determine client eligibility and obtain background information in preparation for review by an attorney. The Fellow will help determine if a kinship caregiver just wants information, without further representation, or would like to meet with an attorney to discuss their case in more detail. The fellow will collaborate with the Ohio Justice Bus (a project of the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation) to schedule and publicize in-person clinics, outreach, and education events in our rural communities. The Fellow, with training and supervision, will practice issue-spotting and synthesize potential legal issues for the attorneys. When appropriate, the Fellow will draft custody pleadings for clinic clients, to be reviewed and approved by an attorney supervisor.

Finally, the Fellow will work as a law clerk for all of the attorneys on the Kinship Care Team. As a law clerk, the fellow may perform research any issue affecting a kinship family, including housing, education, public benefits, and custody. In addition to legal research, the fellow will, draft motions and assist with investigation and trial preparation.

**Applicant Qualifications:**

- Access to reliable transportation is preferred but not required.