

Host Site: Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati

Topic of Project: Employment/Post-Conviction Relief

Location: Cincinnati, OH

Description of Fellow Project:

The Student Fellow will support the Clearing Legal Hurdles to Employment (CLH) project at Legal Aid, which helps individuals resolve issues that are a barrier to success in finding or keeping a job. The Fellow will support outreach, education and services to clients, partners, and communities in our rural counties.

The Fellow will help strengthen agency partnerships in our rural communities to ensure that they know about and take advantage of recent changes to the record-sealing and expungement laws in Ohio. The RSLC Fellow will be educated on the law related to record sealing and expungement and shown how to analyze a person's eligibility for potential remedies.

The Fellow will have extensive client contact and will be a critical part of our ability to remove barriers to employment for more individuals in our rural communities. 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 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 will meet with clients, conduct intake interviews, and search records to document their criminal convictions. The Fellow will assess client eligibility for sealing/expungement, prepare pleadings and fee waivers as appropriate, and help the legal team prepare to represent clients in court. The Fellow will be present at court, and if they have a limited license pursuant to Ohio Supreme Court Rules, and are allowed by the court, they will represent clients in hearings to request an expungement.

Finally, the Fellow will work as a law clerk for attorneys in Legal Aid's CLH project. As a law clerk, the Fellow may perform research on any issue affecting employment stability, including housing, family law and custody, education, public benefits, and professional licenses. In addition to legal research, the Fellow will draft pleadings and assist with investigation and trial preparation

Additional Applicant Qualifications:

The fellowship will be in-person with limited remote work. Proficiency in a second language is not required, but language skills, including ASL, are always welcome.

