



Host Site: Legal Aid of Northwest Texas

Topic of Project: Family Law and Public Benefits

Location: Abilene, TX

Description of Fellow Project:

The Rural Summer Legal Corps Fellow will focus on providing direct legal services and outreach/community education to the underserved rural counties served by the Abilene and Brownwood Offices. This Fellowship will focus on three primary areas of Poverty Law with the goal of allowing the Fellow to learn how legal aid works in rural settings and what a legal aid staff attorney experiences on a daily basis.

The Fellow will focus on three priority areas - Family Law, Public Benefits and Removal of Barriers. The Fellow will be exposed to other areas of law as the Fellow works with attorneys under special projects that provide legal assistance to pro se applicants and legal assistance to individuals and families facing legal issues because of opioid use disorder. The Fellow will observe and participate in all aspects of legal aid including client intake, staffing, case handling, advocacy and outreach/community education.

Much of the work in family law will be case preparation, including research and attending hearings and trials. In the relatively brief time that the Fellow would be with LANWT, family law and applications for protective orders offer more opportunities to be in the courtroom. Public Benefits work will provide the Fellow an opportunity to do some investigation, research and drafting but with less courtroom exposure. Barrier removal is critical to allow low-income clients access to transportation, employment, and education. LANWT has a very active Pro Bono component in each office so the Fellow will have an opportunity to participate in outreach and clinics put together by the Pro Bono Coordinator in Abilene. Each week, the Fellow will participate in client intake and case staffing.

Additional Applicant Qualifications:

The Fellowship will be conducted in-person with the opportunity for hybrid work available. Proficiency in a second language is not required but considered a plus.

