



# LEGAL AID SERVICES OF OREGON

PORTLAND REGIONAL OFFICE

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## VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

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### Pro Bono Project Descriptions

❖ **Bankruptcy Clinic.** The Oregon State Bar Debtor-Creditor Section and the VLP sponsor this project that provides information and representation to clients who are considering bankruptcy or who are already in U.S. Bankruptcy Court as pro se litigants. The project consists of two components, a class addressing bankruptcy issues and a clinic during which volunteer attorneys each meet with two clients for 30-minute appointments. Anyone may attend the 45-minute class, which is taught by a member of the bankruptcy bar or bench. Volunteer attorneys meet with clients, help them assess whether bankruptcy is appropriate, and if so, provide ongoing representation. The monthly clinic alternates between sites in Beaverton, east Portland and downtown Portland. 12-15 attorneys, one mentor and one speaker are typically scheduled for each clinic. Clinics are held on one Tuesday or Wednesday evening of each month from 6:15-9:00 p.m. An online CLE and written training materials are available at [www.oregonadvocates.org](http://www.oregonadvocates.org).

❖ **Clackamas County Pro Bono Project.** The Clackamas County Pro Bono Project – Expungement Clinic is a partnership between the Clackamas County Bar Association, Clackamas County Law Library, LASO, and the Clackamas Service Center. The clinic is designed to help low-income clients in Clackamas County complete expungement paperwork and consists of one-time brief service to clients. Volunteer attorneys meet with clients, help them assess whether they qualify for an expungement and, if so, complete the paperwork. Training opportunities and materials are available.

❖ **Domestic Violence Project.** The Domestic Violence Project matches pro bono attorneys with victims of domestic violence for representation in contested Family Abuse Prevention Act (FAPA) restraining order hearings, Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities Abuse Prevention Act hearings (EPPDAPA), Sexual Abuse Protective Order hearings (SAPO), and stalking order hearings. These cases tend to have short timelines, limited issues and require a court appearance. Attorneys sign up in advance to be available to take a case on a specific day (restraining order hearings are generally held on Mondays and Thursdays). DVP volunteers represent clients in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties (you can choose which counties you want to take cases in). This project is an excellent volunteer opportunity for new lawyers, lawyers seeking litigation experience, and attorneys who cannot commit to taking long-term cases. This project covers a discrete area of law and most of the volunteers are not family law practitioners. Volunteers are not expected to assist clients with family law matters that may exist after the protective order hearing. An online CLE and extensive written materials are available for this project at [www.oregonadvocates.org](http://www.oregonadvocates.org).

❖ **Pro Se Assistance Project.** Volunteer attorneys provide limited assistance to clients requiring discrete legal advice or document review. Attorneys are scheduled to meet with three clients, each for a 45-minute appointment. Clinics are held from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Multnomah County courthouse. Attorneys respond to discrete family law questions and/or review documents prepared by unrepresented litigants. Attorneys are NOT expected to provide ongoing representation to clients and clients sign a retainer agreement detailing the limited scope of the attorney-

client relationship. Volunteer attorneys must have family law experience to volunteer for this project. **PROSAP Facilitation Clinic.** Attorneys with little (or no) family law experience can volunteer for this portion of the Clinic, by helping clients complete their pro se documents. Once the paperwork is completed, clients attend a “regular” PROSAP clinic to meet with an experienced family law attorney. Facilitation Clinics take place on Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 2 – 4 PM at Legal Aid.

❖ **Statewide Tax Clinic.** The Statewide Low Income Taxpayer Clinic provides advice and representation to low income clients who have a tax controversy with the IRS or the Department of Revenue. Pro bono tax cases are referred through a listserv where basic case information is posted. An attorney interested in taking the case responds to the email and is then provided with conflict checking information. Cases cover a range of state and federal personal income tax issues including collections, examinations (audits), innocent spouse claims, and tax court cases. Volunteer opportunities are also available for recent graduates and new members of the Bar.

❖ **Senior Law Project.** The Senior Law Project (SLP) began in 1978 and is the VLP’s largest project, with over 25 legal clinics per month. Volunteer lawyers meet with clients who are 60 or over (or who are married to someone 60 or over) at nine senior center locations in Multnomah County. They provide 30-minute consultations, on any civil legal issues, for up to six clients per clinic. All clients 60 or over are eligible for free 30-minute consultations, regardless of their income. SLP volunteers provide continuing pro bono services for only those clients who meet VLP financial eligibility requirements. The VLP sponsors a monthly Elder Law Discussion Group to provide information and support.

❖ **Legal Aid Night Clinic.** LASO co-sponsors this evening clinic with Stoel Rives, LLP and Dunn Carney LLP. Clinics are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:30 p.m at the Standard Insurance Building (downtown Portland). Volunteer attorneys from the two participating law firms screen the cases and provide continuing legal representation to clients with meritorious cases. Two volunteer attorneys are scheduled for each clinic and each attorney meets with up to four clients per clinic. The following issues are referred: consumer law, small claims advice, criminal record expungements, landlord/tenant damage claims, estate planning, and uncontested guardianships.

❖ **ProBonoOregon Listserv.** Legal service offices around the state post cases to this listserv one time per week. Postings are sent to individual attorneys or pro bono coordinators for internal distribution within firms. An attorney who is interested in accepting a pro bono opportunity contacts the listing office for full case information. Listings include the type of case and a brief description of the issue and do not include highly identifying facts or party names. Conflict information is discussed with interested attorneys when they contact the listing office. This project allows pro bono attorneys to take a pro bono case when it fits best with their schedule. Sign for the listserv on Legal Aid’s website, [www.oregonadvocates.org](http://www.oregonadvocates.org).

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**For more information or to volunteer, please contact:**

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*Many of our volunteer training materials can be accessed through LASO’s advocate website at: [www.oregonadvocates.org](http://www.oregonadvocates.org). You must first register for the website. Additional self-help materials can be found on our client website at: [www.oregonlawhelp.org](http://www.oregonlawhelp.org). For information on other pro bono opportunities in Multnomah County, please view the Multnomah Bar Association Young Lawyer Section’s Pro Bono Opportunities Handbook, found at [www.mbabar.org](http://www.mbabar.org).*