



LEGAL SERVICES CENTER
CENTRO DE SERVICIOS LEGALES

The WilmerHale Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School
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Harvard Law School's
WilmerHale Legal Services Center
Offers a Rich Variety of Practice Opportunities

"At the . . . Legal Services Center, everybody wins. People from the greater Boston area receive superb legal assistance and law students gain valuable clinical experience."

HLS Dean Elena Kagan, 2003

The WilmerHale Legal Services Center (formerly the Hale and Dorr Legal Services Center) is Harvard Law School's oldest and largest clinical teaching facility. The Center offers students a chance to gain practical legal experience by handling real cases under the supervision of experienced attorneys and paralegals. Located in Boston's culturally diverse Jamaica Plain neighborhood, the Center is a general practice law firm that provides legal counsel to over 1,000 clients annually, some of whom are very poor, but many of whom can and do make co-payments or pay on a lower-than-market basis for the service they receive. The Center sponsors up to 80 HLS students each academic semester through many different clinical courses and, during the summer, sponsors a program for volunteer law students from law schools in both the local area and throughout the country.

As a student working at the Center, you will be placed in one of the Center's clinics which are housed in six substantive practice groups and will work with Clinical Instructors, experienced practitioners and mentors, who will supervise your work and provide guidance as you build and manage your own caseload. The Center provides substantive training in each practice area and also offers general instruction on topics such as client interviewing and intake, case management, legal investigation and discovery, creative legal analysis, research and drafting. In several of the Center's practice units there are opportunities to work with partners and associates from the Boston law firm of WilmerHale, who also provide deposition and negotiation skills trainings for our summer interns. Additionally, the firm annually donates hundreds of hours in student supervision, trainings and case consults, particularly in the estate planning, corporate-legal and litigation practices of the Center.

Many students at the Center will appear in court to argue their client's case. Other students will focus exclusively on transactional work, such as helping individual and small business clients at real estate closings or business negotiations. All students at the Center will have direct responsibility for client work. Although you will receive training and guidance from the Center's experienced Clinical Instructors and support staff, the clients you work with will be *your* clients and you'll quickly learn what it's like to analyze real-life problems, handle actual emergencies, and juggle a variety of important clients and cases. In short, you will learn what it's like to be a practicing attorney!

PRACTICE AREAS & CLINICS AT THE CENTER

The Center has five main practice groups housing over a dozen ‘clinics’. This summer, students will have the opportunity to work in one of the following clinics at the Center.

The Administrative/Disability Law Clinic works to secure and protect income and health care benefits for disabled and elderly clients through trial-like advocacy before administrative law judges. Moreover, by focusing our work on client cases with novel issues or traditionally unsuccessful yet deserving claims (i.e., representing large numbers of younger individuals with mental impairments) our practice attempts to translate individual case advocacy into systemic change and policy reform. Hearings are primarily before Social Security Administration Administrative Law Judges, although students also represent clients on appeals from adverse agency findings before federal appeals court judges. Students working in the Clinic interview clients, conduct extensive factual investigations, produce legal research and writing, work with experts, prepare witnesses, and present cases before administrative law judges.

The Business and Non-Profit Organization Clinic provides legal assistance to start-up and existing small businesses, entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations and community development corporations on a wide range of legal matters. The range of services includes entity formation and choice of entity counseling; contract negotiation and preparation; corporate and commercial financing; shareholder agreements; business acquisitions and sales; commercial leasing; licensing, permitting, and zoning advice; trademark and copyright advice, registration, and intellectual property licensing; corporate governance and compliance; tax-exempt applications and various other kinds of business-related transactional legal work. In addition to serving the direct legal needs of clients, the Clinic participates in community workshops on legal issues relevant to small businesses and non-profit organizations. Students in the Clinic may have opportunities to draft documents; research and apply legal doctrine; interview, represent and counsel clients; and engage in strategic decision-making, issue analysis and problem solving.

The Domestic Violence Clinic focuses on family violence as it manifests in abuse prevention and other family law cases. This widespread problem destroys the mental and physical health, well-being and financial stability of many women and children in our society. The Center’s Domestic Violence Clinic accepts cases from a variety of community-based agencies, but has established a special partnership, the Passageway Health-Law Collaborative (PHLC), with the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and its affiliated community health centers. The PHLC aims to provide victims of domestic violence with comprehensive and coordinated legal and social services. Experienced social workers at the hospital provide safety planning, support and case management to victims of domestic violence, while students at the Center provide legal representation to these clients. The PHLC focuses on providing assistance in the areas of family law and estate and permanency planning, with referrals to any of the Center’s clinics in order to assure that clients get help on legal problems that often compound the domestic violence issues. Students working in this Clinic interview and counsel clients, conduct factual investigation and legal research, develop case strategies, collect and analyze documents, conduct written discovery and draft pleadings. Some students may have multiple court appearances in motion practice, restraining orders, pre-trial conferences, status conferences and hearings; many students negotiate directly with opposing attorneys, pro se opponents and in court-mandated “mediations.”

The Employment Civil Rights Clinic handles a broad range of employment rights cases, with a focus on claims of employment civil rights - discrimination, retaliation, and reasonable accommodations. The practice has cases pending at a variety of levels including before state courts, federal courts, and administrative agencies such as the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) and the Division of Unemployment Assistance. The Clinic has an overarching mission to identify structural problems and novel issues adversely affecting employee rights and to develop innovative strategies to address those problems and issues. Students working on employment cases engage in a wide-range of practice experiences including case screening, client counseling, negotiating with opposing counsel or employers, conducting witness interviews, taking formal depositions, drafting briefs, and presenting oral

arguments at hearings. Recently, students have participated in conciliation conferences, taken numerous depositions, negotiated with opposing counsel to resolve discovery disputes, and drafted discovery. In a number of cases pending at the MCAD, students have presented oral arguments at investigative conferences or appeal hearings.

The Estate Planning Clinic provides direct client representation on estate planning and probate, guardianship, debt counseling, and private insurance cases. The practice helps individuals maximize control over decision-making and secure their children's future in the event of incapacity or death through the drafting of wills, trusts, powers of attorney, health care proxies, funeral planning directives, living wills, guardianships and relationship agreements. The practice also assists survivors and family members in probating the estates of deceased clients. While the Clinic offers legal services to low- and middle-income individuals in our community, we specialize in serving people living with HIV/AIDS, the disabled and the frail elderly. Estate Planning Clinic guardianship and contested estate probate cases involve representing clients at hearings before state probate court judges. Student work in the Clinic involves extensive client interviewing and counseling, and often requires frequent communications/negotiations with medical providers, employers and their human resources departments, creditors and insurance companies. Students work closely with clients to develop comprehensive estate plans, analyze government and private insurance benefits, assess clients' financial situations and when necessary provide debt counseling and bankruptcy services.

The Family Law Clinic addresses issues of custody, visitation, child and spousal support, support arrears, health and life insurance, and the equitable division of marital property and debt in the context of divorce, separate support, annulment, paternity, modification, contempt, guardianship and adoption actions. In all cases the clinic prioritizes the representation of custodial parents, seeking to maximize the resources, income and the standard of living of the household with the children, through optimal child support, alimony and property division orders. In this clinic, students interview and counsel clients, conduct factual investigation and legal research, develop case strategies, collect and analyze documents, conduct written discovery and draft, file and serve pleadings. Some students may have multiple court appearances in motion practice, restraining orders, pre-trial conferences, status conferences and hearings. Students negotiate directly with opposing attorneys, pro se opponents and in court-mandated "mediations." In cases scheduled for full trial, students conduct depositions, develop witness and exhibit lists, trial strategies, and a trial notebook, prepare, conduct the direct and cross-examination of witnesses, make opening statements and closing arguments at trial and draft post-trial briefs.

The Health Law Clinic has a long history as a regional leader in providing civil legal services to people living with HIV/AIDS and other chronic, terminal or disabling medical conditions. The Clinic was founded in 1987, as one of the first AIDS law clinics in the country. Since that time the Clinic has provided direct legal services to hundreds of individuals living with serious illnesses or disabilities and affected families where minor children are at risk of being displaced by the death or permanent disability of a parent or caretaker. The Center's Health Law Clinic works closely with the Boston Medical Center, Quincy Medical Center, Brigham and Women's Hospital, AIDS Action Committee, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, and other community based organizations to ensure that the legal service needs of those living with HIV and AIDS and other serious medical conditions are met. Students in the Clinic provide direct client representation in civil law cases involving public benefits, discrimination, debt counseling, insurance, family, and estate planning. Student work also includes research, policy development and advocacy on current health care access policy reform initiatives. Recently, students developed Medicaid training materials for volunteer attorneys assisting victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and fact sheets for consumers living with HIV analyzing services provided through eleven southern states' Medicaid programs. On the national level, students monitored all Congressional Katrina-related health care initiatives and worked with collaborative partners to educate members of Congress on the importance of the pending Early Treatment for HIV Act.

The Housing Clinic works on a variety of issues affecting low-income tenants and the low-income housing market in the city of Boston. Through direct and intensive advocacy on behalf of individual tenants and

tenant groups, the Clinic seeks to: (1) thwart gentrification by preventing displacement of low-income families from the Boston neighborhoods served by the office; (2) ameliorate indoor environmental hazards – including lead paint, mold, and insect and rodent infestation – and otherwise improve the physical condition of housing in Boston’s low-income communities; (3) combat discrimination in the rental market and ensure housing access and accessibility; and (4) improve the functioning of the various institutions - courts, agencies, etc.- that affect the lives of low-income tenants. Efforts advancing these goals take a variety of forms, such as individual case representation, impact litigation, law reform work, community mobilization campaigns and *pro se* clinics. The bulk of this trial intensive Clinic’s work consists of litigation in the Boston Housing Court, defending evictions and prosecuting affirmative cases to improve housing conditions.

Since early 2007 and as a result of the foreclosure crisis, the Clinic has prioritized helping tenants who are facing evictions by banks or other lenders. Lenders routinely insist on evicting all tenants after foreclosure and in the process misrepresent the rights tenants have under these circumstances. The Clinic has counseled - and successfully represented - countless tenants in this situation, has lobbied on the local, state, and federal levels for greater tenant protections, has provided trainings to *pro se* tenants, housing subsidy providers, social workers and legal services attorneys on tenants’ rights after foreclosure, and has worked with community partners and the press to bring public attention to the social problems caused by mass displacement of tenants living in foreclosed buildings. Housing students have numerous opportunities throughout the semester to engage in client interviewing and counseling, fact investigation, pre-trial discovery (including taking and defending depositions), negotiation, and motion practice, as well as to try cases. Students with placements in the Housing Clinic also have the opportunity, working with organizers, to engage in mobilization efforts and “community lawyering” and to work on legislative initiatives and other law reform work.

The Predatory Lending / Consumer Protection Clinic focuses its advocacy efforts on preserving and protecting equity for low- and moderate-income homeowners and ensuring equal and fair access to credit markets. The practice is primarily litigation and involves banking, consumer, bankruptcy and real estate law. The Clinic represents homeowners seeking to defend against foreclosures and also commences affirmative litigation against banking institutions, subprime lenders, servicers of loans, home improvement contractors, brokers, and foreclosure rescue scam artists. Cases are litigated primarily in Federal District Court, Bankruptcy Court, and Massachusetts Superior Court. The Predatory Lending/Consumer Protection Clinic also represents individuals and families seeking protection from debtors more generally via petitions for bankruptcy. Students get extensive experience in interviewing clients, analyzing loan documents, drafting complaints, drafting and responding to discovery requests, conducting and defending depositions, negotiating with opposing counsel, arguing motions, and engaging in long-term strategizing about their cases. Students may also participate in impact litigation, analysis regarding patterns of racial and gender discrimination in the Greater Boston subprime lending market, and legislative advocacy to fight against emerging federal laws seeking to preempt the more protective state predatory lending statutes. There are also opportunities for students in this Clinic to do some transactional and bankruptcy work.

The Real Estate Clinic provides legal assistance to individuals, companies and community development corporations (CDC’s) engaged in residential and commercial real estate transactions and development. The range of services provided includes representing parties engaged in residential and commercial purchases and sales, particularly first-time homebuyers; affordable housing development; real estate development; condominium conversions; zoning appeals; title examinations; commercial leases and various other kinds of real estate transactional work. Students may have numerous opportunities to draft documents; research and apply legal doctrine; interview, represent and counsel clients; negotiate transactions; conduct title searches; engage in strategic decision-making, issue analysis and problem solving.

The Recording Artist Project (RAP) Clinic focuses on entertainment law issues. RAP provides legal assistance to music artists, independent record labels, production companies, songwriters, film companies, artist managers and other arts and entertainment entrepreneurs and firms. The RAP practice includes intellectual property law related to trademark and copyright; content licensing; business formation and

advice on choice of entity, emerging Internet content and business law; and contract drafting, review and negotiation of agreements for recording, artist management, publishing and booking. Students may have opportunities to draft documents; research and apply legal doctrine; interview, represent and counsel clients; negotiate transactions; engage in strategic decision-making, issue analysis and problem solving.

The Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI) Project represents families in cases concerning the educational needs of children with disabilities who have been exposed to family violence. Particular attention is given to connecting trauma, resulting from family violence, with difficulties children may have learning and behaving in the classroom. The Clinic also undertakes policy activities that seek innovative remedies to improve the services and supports for high risk, vulnerable children. Students working in the clinic represent children and their parents/guardians in special education and related matters. Students have the opportunity to interview and counsel clients, conduct factual investigation and legal research, develop case strategies, collect and analyze school records, draft pleadings, work with experts, and negotiate and advocate with school personnel at team meetings. In cases scheduled for full administrative hearings, students appear for pre-hearing motions and develop and conduct direct and cross-examinations of witnesses. Students participate in policy activities that seek innovative remedies to improve the services and supports for high risk, vulnerable children.

ANSWERS TO SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CENTER

1. How does the Center make its summer student hiring decisions?

This year, the Center will be reviewing all applications (see question #12) received by January 30, 2009, and will invite students into our summer program in early- to mid-February. Students who have completed their second year of law school will have priority over students just completing their first year. However, the majority of our program is usually made up of first year students. We look for a range of experiences and interests while keeping in mind that many first year students haven't yet had the opportunity to practice law. Ultimately, we will strive for a diverse student body with representation from many law schools.

2. What are the Center's hours? Will I have some flexibility in setting my hours at the Center? How do I meet my obligations to my clients and keep up with my other obligations?

Our summer 2009 program begins on Monday, June 1, with a full-day, mandatory orientation, and ends on Friday, August 7, 2009. Your direct supervisor and all staff at the Center are committed to your succeeding in practice *and* meeting all of your other obligations. During the summer, the Center's business hours are:

Monday through Thursday: 8:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

All students are required to work a minimum of 25 hours per week within the time frame above during the entire 10-week program. Please note that, although 25 hours is the minimum, *the majority of our summer students work full time*. We will ask you to set a schedule of in-office work hours, which you will maintain throughout the summer

program. These hours allow you to meet regularly with your supervisor, interview and meet with your clients and to perform other professional roles in the office.

3. Can I select which of the Center's clinics I will work in?

This year, we are asking you to list your first three choices for clinic placement at the time you apply. If, however, there is only one clinic you are willing to work in, you should just list that one clinic. If you are willing to work in any of our clinics, please list and prioritize all of them. We cannot guarantee you will receive your top choice placement, but will do our best to accommodate you.

It is very important to remember that your experience at the Center will depend largely on your energy and efforts more so than the particular area of law practice in which you are engaged. All of the Center's practice areas will present you with a challenging experience and exposure to a variety of legal skills -- all of which are transferable no matter what area of law you decide to practice in.

4. Are there paid summer positions?

Unfortunately, the Center is unable to compensate students for summer work including the employer share of work/study grants. Our program is open to law students who wish to volunteer or who can obtain their own funding for summer work. We are happy to provide supporting documentation to funding sources, so please be sure to ask when you need this information.

5. Will I be able to appear in Court for my clients?

If you have completed your second year of law school, and have successfully completed a course in evidence or trial practice, your law school will be able to obtain 3:03 certification for you through the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court which will allow you to represent clients in court with a supervisor present. This is most valuable for students working in a litigation practice such as the Housing, Family Law, Employment Civil Rights or Predatory Lending Project Clinics.

However, the majority of students working at the Center during the summer have just completed their first year of law school and are unable to be 3:03 certified. Although you may not be allowed to appear in court, you will still have a valuable, interesting and challenging summer as we will build your experience around court hearings.

6. How will I know how I am doing in my practice?

Within each practice group, you will be assigned to work directly with one Clinical Instructor in your clinic. You can expect to meet regularly with your supervisor who will provide you with detailed feedback on your performance throughout the summer. At the end of the summer program, your supervisor will write a formal letter of recommendation based on your performance. Additionally, at the end of the summer, we will ask you to evaluate our summer program and to provide us with constructive feedback on how we're doing.

7. *How will I be trained?*

Each practice unit conducts in-depth substantive law and lawyering skills training beginning with the Center's full-day orientation. These trainings continue throughout a good part of the summer program. Additionally, the law firm of WilmerHale conducts deposition and negotiation skills trainings for all of our summer students.

8. *What are the Center's facilities and resources?*

The Center is located in a four-story building that contains all the amenities of a medium-sized law firm. The Center is wireless, but also has computers which are networked and linked to HLS. Our library contains a wealth of relevant practice materials, and on-line research tools are available at every terminal in the office. The Center offers interview offices, conference rooms, a student lounge with a galley kitchen, and vending machines. It is located immediately adjacent to the Stony Brook MBTA stop on the Orange Line, and so is directly accessible to public transportation. Off-street parking is available for students who commute by car.

9. *I'm planning to work at a law firm after graduation. Does work at the Center help students who are not interested in a legal services or public interest career?*

The majority of students who work at the Center take jobs at large law firms after graduation. Most of these students report that their experience at the Center helped them develop valuable skills that were readily transferable to the large firm setting – including interviewing, legal and factual analysis, drafting, argument, case management and dealing with ethical and professional issues. Work experience at the Center is usually viewed as a major plus by law firm recruiters and hiring partners, and alumni of the Center report that their clinical work experience gave them an advantage in getting more interesting and responsible assignments soon into their firm work.

10. *What is the Jamaica Plain neighborhood like?*

Jamaica Plain – “JP” - is a center of urban revival and renewal. It is one of the most diverse and vital neighborhoods in the city of Boston and is home to folks of all different classes, cultures, and backgrounds. Within a short walk of the Center you will find a variety of shops and “Best of Boston” restaurants, many specializing in ethnic cuisines. Frederick Law Olmstead's “Emerald Necklace” runs through JP and includes the beautiful Jamaica Pond, Harvard's University's Arnold Arboretum (a world-famous and lovely botanical garden), and Franklin Park with its zoo and 18-hole golf course. And, the original Sam Adams Brewery (free samples offered with tours!) is a short two blocks from the Center's Boylston Street location. This tour is always a favorite for our summer students! Many students will have a chance to visit other interesting and historic parts of Boston in connection with their casework.

11. *What do other students say about their experiences at the Center?*

Next to our clients, the Center's students are its most enthusiastic supporters. Here's what a few of our former summer students have to say about their experiences at the Center:

“One of the best aspects of my summer experience was that the attorneys I worked with were also Harvard Law School clinical instructors, so their approach to their mentoring responsibilities was very much geared to teaching and training. I had a wonderful relationship with my mentor/attorney which allowed me to receive the guidance I needed as well as exercise some independence in my client interactions.” - Karen C.

“The law isn’t what they teach you in casebooks. The law is about real people and real and immediate problems that affect the basic necessities of life. LSC teaches you the skills to learn, apply and evaluate legal issues in a fast-paced and supportive environment. I know that my experience at LSC will greatly influence the rest of my law school education and my future legal career.” - Linda T.

“For me, the benefits of the Legal Services Center experience are clear. I developed skills there that are highly valued in the law firm setting – skills including managing a caseload, dealing with colleagues and superiors, conducting fact investigations, counseling clients, negotiating, and drafting everything from leases to motions and trial briefs. The Center provides students a laboratory in which to learn about the practice of law. Part of the education process involves making mistakes and learning from them. The Center’s staff function, in large part, to assist students in working through our mistakes. Often, the professional law firm doesn’t have time to do this and is not always so forgiving.” - James D. F.

“The Legal Services Center gives its students the opportunity to interact with clients, opposing counsel, government agencies and the courts. I knew the work I did and the decisions I made were having a real impact on real people. My favorite moments came when I witnessed the look on clients’ faces after my hard work achieved the results they desired; results that would make their lives better.” - Andrew B.

“I liked the huge amounts of responsibility that the supervisors gave students from very early on. I was overwhelmed at first, to say the least, but it was refreshing to have someone have so much confidence in my abilities. It was incredibly satisfying to discover that I could in fact handle the responsibility.” - Michelle P.

“I can’t think of a better way to have spent a summer than working at RAP (Recording Artists Project). I met lots of great clients, learned a lot about the music industry, was exposed to a real variety of legal problems and contributed to solutions in a meaningful way. There is plenty of support from the instructors at LSC, but students are really in the driver’s seat. I was busier and more involved than I expected to be. It is hard not to work hard when the work is this engaging.” - John F

12. *What are my chances of getting a summer position at the Center?*

This summer, the Center will only be sponsoring approximately 30 students in our summer program. Your application packet, which is due no later than January 30, 2009, must include the following documents:

- (1) Resume;
- (2) Cover letter;
- (3) Writing sample (maximum of 5 pages even if subpart of a larger text);

- (4) Names and contact information for two references; and
- (5) Your top 3 choices for clinic placement within the Center.
(see question #3 for details)

All applications will be reviewed by a committee composed of representatives of each practice unit at the Center. When our hiring decisions are made, we will begin offering positions by e-mail and will keep an active wait list until all positions are filled. Once all slots in our summer program have been filled, we will contact all remaining students on our waitlist. Due to the large number of applicants, we do not individually interview students nor, unfortunately, can we accommodate all students who apply.

13. What if I have additional questions or need more information?

Please check out the Center's web site: www.law.harvard.edu/academics/clinical/lsc/ and/or contact Cheryl Burg Rusk (rusk@law.harvard.edu) with any questions you may have.