

BE LEGAL AID

Intake/ Non Guardian ad Litem

Legal Aid remains a local program with core support from volunteers whose dedication enables it to provide civil legal services primarily on Orange County. Legal Aid is especially proud of its pro bono programs.

We assist with the following types of cases:

- Family Law
- Consumer Law
- Housing Law
- Sealing/ Expunction
- Immigration

How would you like to help? Please check all applicable:

_____ Pair with an attorney to handle cases:

_____ Family

_____ Housing

_____ Consumer

_____ Immigration

_____ Wills for Veterans

_____ Seal/ Expunction of Records

_____ Phone Screening at the LASOCBA office

_____ Attend community education events and/ or interview clients

_____ Attend community education events and give general information about LASOCBA

_____ Interview clients at the LASOCBA office one day each week

_____ Interview clients at one of our five outreach offices once a month

_____ Other (please specify): _____

When are you available to volunteer?

Please check all applicable:

_____ **During the workday**

_____ **Before the workday**

_____ **After the workday**

_____ **Weekends**

_____ **During the lunch hour**

_____ **Other (please specify):**

What steps must I take to become a volunteer?

- **Submit the completed paralegal pro bono preference form to LASOCBA.**
- **Submit to a criminal background and employment verification check, at no expense to you (instructions provided upon receipt of your form).**

For more information, please contact:

Larri T. Thatcher,

Pro Bono Director

lthatcher@legalaidocba.org

PLEASE RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO:

LEGAL AID SOCIETY of the OCBA, INC.

100 EAST ROBINSON STREET

ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32801-1694

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (407) 841-8310

FAX NUMBER: (407) 648-9240

CONTACT DATA

Name: _____

Firm: _____

Address: _____

FL Bar No.: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

I speak a foreign language (specify):

Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed

Forces? Branch: _____

A COPY OF THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF THE O.C.B.A.'S OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE 1-800-HELP FLA (1-800-435-7352) IN STATE OR AT THE WEBSITE, WWW.FRESHFROMFLORIDA.COM. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE..



Legal Aid Society
of the
Orange County Bar
Association, Inc.

**PARALEGAL
PRO BONO
PREFERENCE FORM**

Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association President's Message

We Were Made for this Moment

These are challenging times. The global pandemic and economic downturn have impacted the Legal Aid Society's clients particularly hard. But this is exactly why we exist. We provide pro bono legal services for our community's most vulnerable. But we cannot do it alone. We need your help.

For more than 50 years, the members of the Orange County Bar Association have committed themselves to access to justice, regardless of income status, by volunteering with and financially supporting the Legal Aid Society. Your support allows the Legal Aid Society to provide essential legal services to those in need, including abused and neglected children, victims of domestic violence, the elderly, veterans, and those losing their homes. This year, please volunteer to take two pro bono cases or contribute financially (or both). Your help is needed now more than ever. With your help, we will meet this challenge because the Legal Aid Society was made for this moment.

Kristopher Kest, Esq.

President,
Board of Trustees



GUARDIAN AD LITEM PROGRAM

Pro bono attorneys serve as advocates for children who are subjects of parental abuse, abandonment, or neglect. On occasion, GALs also child best interest representation in criminal, domestic relations, and delinquency cases.

Last year, Legal Aid received judicial requests to assist over 800 children in dependency court.

Be a Volunteer Advocate for Children (VAC)

A Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interest of a dependent child. All GALs in Orange County are attorneys. VACs are caring adult volunteers trained by the Legal Aid Society GAL Program to work with attorney GALs to visit with dependent children, their caregivers, and other dependency parties.

Through communication with the child, parties, and service providers, VACs convey up-to-date information to GALs about what is occurring in the life of the dependent child, as well as participate in out-of-court meetings involving the child.

What are the preliminary steps to become a VAC?

- Submit completed paralegal pro bono preference form
- Attend a free three-hour VAC training
- Submit to a criminal background check, at no expense to you. Fingerprint instructions provided at VAC training.

How would you like to help as a VAC? Please check all applicable:

_____ Visit with a child and provide a written visit report of your observations.

_____ Draft pleadings for pro bono GALs.

_____ Gather child records.

_____ Attend out-of-court meetings on behalf of the GAL to advocate for the child's best interest.

_____ Review and interpret child records to monitor the child's progress in education, socialization, or a specific area of need, i.e.– mental health.

_____ Work with children in courts other than dependency court. Please select:

- _____ Criminal
- _____ Domestic Relations
- _____ Delinquency Court

When are you available to serve as a VAC?

Please check all applicable:

_____ **During the workday**

_____ **Before the workday**

_____ **After the workday**

_____ **Weekends**

_____ **During the lunch hour**

_____ **Other (please specify):**

For more information about volunteering, training, support services, and other needs, please contact:

Leah Dual
GAL Program Director,
ldual@legalaidocba.org