

Remote Clinic FAQs for Attorney Volunteers

WHAT ARE THE MVLCs?

The Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinics are free brief legal advice and referral services provided to the community by Marquette law students and volunteer attorneys. The clinics do not provide ongoing representation.

AM I ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE AS A VOLUNTEER?

You must be licensed in Wisconsin and in good standing to participate with an exception for registered in-house lawyers per SCR 10.03(4)(f). We ask you to complete the MVLC Volunteer Attorney Training (<https://law.marquette.edu/mvlc/volunteer-attorney-information>) which provides you with important information regarding our processes, policies, resources, etc. The in-person or live online training is eligible for one ethics CLE credit.

WHEN & WHERE DO THE CLINICS OPERATE?

We operate nearly every day of the week on Zoom. Clients contact us by phone or email and are scheduled for an appointment at a designated time.

DO I NEED A ZOOM ACCOUNT? WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ZOOM?

We provide the Zoom account. You should download the Zoom application (<https://zoom.us/download>). Before your shift you will receive an email pointing you to that week's clinic information, including the Zoom link. We have developed some [Zoom Instructions and Tips](#) for your review. The MBA has also generously provided MVLC volunteers to fee access to a one-hour [Zoom training session by Judge Kahn](#).

HOW DOES THE CLIENT JOIN?

Most clients join using the Zoom app and are using the video function. Some call in using the teleconference phone number provided by Zoom. When clients only do the latter, you cannot see their face and they cannot see yours.

WHERE SHOULD I BE DURING THE CLINIC?

Anywhere you'd like! Please make sure you are in a place with minimal background noise and that no one will be passing by in the background. Clients need to rest assured that no one is overhearing their confidential conversation with you.

WHAT IF I CANNOT MAKE IT TO MY SHIFT AND NEED TO REQUEST A SUB?

Email the remote MVLC listserv (mvlc-remote-attorneys@lists.marquettelaw.org) and request a sub. Please be sure to include your shift date, time, and indicate whether you are seeking a family or civil attorney substitute. Email mvlc.law@marquette.edu with who will be taking your place.

HOW LONG IS MY SHIFT AND HOW FREQUENTLY WILL I BE SCHEDULED?

Each shift is three hours long. On average, volunteer attorneys work one three-hour shift every four to six weeks. We schedule by the semester (fall, spring, and summer) and typically, an attorney works approximately four three-hour shifts per semester.

HOW MANY CLIENTS WILL I SEE DURING MY SHIFT?

Each client has an hour-long appointment and approximately three clients will be seen by each volunteer during a clinic. Occasionally, volunteer teams finish with a client early and see an "on-call" client. If there are no on-call clients, please spend any downtime connecting with the volunteer law students.

WHAT KINDS OF CASES WILL I SEE?

Clients bring a wide range of civil legal questions to the clinics. Family law is the most common area of law we see and for this reason we work to schedule at least one family law attorney during each clinic shift. Housing questions, debt issues, and various small claims scenarios are presented at every clinic. Attorneys are not expected to be experts in all areas of law. Attorneys are able to provide competent brief legal advice even on matters about which they have little knowledge because of the resources and support available at each clinic. This includes other attorneys with whom to consult, topical resource guides, law student assistance, and an attorney supervisor present during each clinic. Some questions are ill-suited for brief legal advice including employment discrimination, public school law, commercial real estate transactions, and complex litigation. All volunteer attorneys have discretion to tell a client that their question is simply too complex for the brief services provided at the clinics. Volunteer attorneys receive a brief synopsis about each client by email the day before their scheduled shift.

HOW CAN I GET DOCUMENTS OR FORMS TO OR FROM A CLIENT?

To send documents to a client, there are two options: 1) law students can attached documents to the Client Visit form they are completing during the meeting, or 2) if a client does not have access to email, please alert the clinic supervisor and we will coordinate mailing the documents to the client.

To receive documents from a client, there are two options: 1) the client can email them to MVLC.LawMU@gmail.com, or 2) the client can fax the documents to 414-288-0200. In either instance, alert the clinic supervisor to check those accounts for the documents.

WILL I BE COVERED BY LIABILITY INSURANCE?

Marquette University provides liability insurance for all trained attorney volunteers of the MVLC.

ARE WE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE FORMS FOR CLIENTS?

Generally, yes. It is common for volunteer lawyers to complete small claims forms, fee waivers, and many other civil court forms. Ideally, clients should leave with completed documents and a checklist of instructions about how to proceed. The Milwaukee Justice Center offers daily forms assistance for Milwaukee County family court cases to which clients may be referred for help with most family forms.

ARE WE PERMITTED TO DRAFT LETTERS OR OTHER DOCUMENTS?

Yes. Volunteer attorneys are encouraged to draft letters or other documents they deem appropriate given the brief legal advice setting. Court documents prepared from scratch (as opposed to court forms produced by the Wisconsin Court System) must contain a statement that the document was prepared with the assistance of an attorney.

CAN WE TAKE CASES FOR PRO BONO REPRESENTATION FROM THE CLINIC?

Yes. If you do, you will be proceeding without reliance on Marquette University's liability coverage. The State Bar may provide you with coverage for pro bono representation. Contact pro bono coordinator Jeff Brown at jbrown@wisbar.org for more information.

CAN WE REFER CLIENTS TO PRIVATE ATTORNEYS?

There are instances where such a referral may be appropriate; however, we ask that you provide the client with several choices.

WHAT DO STUDENTS EXPECT FROM ME?

Please think of yourself in a mentoring role to the students. Sharing your legal reasoning and analysis is certainly part of students' interest, but the clinic is also a comfortable place for students to connect with lawyers as they develop professionally. As time allows, conversation about your own career path and development and words of wisdom for the student are appreciated.

VOLUNTEERS HAVE PERSONAL PRO BONO ACCOUNTS.

Access the account at <https://marquette.vsyslive.com/>. Your account username and password are the email address you have provided us. You may change your password once you log in for the first time. In your account you can view your upcoming assignments, view your pro bono and CLE history (click on the "Reports" tab), update your profile with current contact information and areas of expertise, and more. It is helpful for us to have your mobile and desk numbers on record. Please fill them in if they are not already provided.

Visit our website for information about upcoming CLEs and clinic information: <http://www.marquettelegalclinic.org>.