



Tip of the Month September 2018

Volunteer Resources

Submitted by: VLN Staff

Did you know that VLN offers a wide variety of resources to support pro bono volunteers? This month's tip highlights resources to help pro bono attorneys represent their clients with competence and confidence.

Poverty Law Resources

Legal Resources: VLN volunteers have access to sample forms, practice guides, mentor attorneys, document preparation software, and more. The availability of resources varies by area of law. Contact one of [VLN's resource attorneys](#) to learn more about the resources available in your area of interest.

Interpreters: Volunteer interpreters are available for telephone and face-to-face meetings. Please contact one of VLN's [case coordinators](#) for more information.

Tips of the Month: VLN maintains an archive of over 100 show tips and practice guides for pro bono attorneys.

Malpractice Insurance: VLN provides malpractice insurance for all pro bono representations undertaken through VLN. To qualify for VLN's malpractice insurance, an attorney must have completed a registration form, been approved for volunteering, and have a client obtained through VLN. "Obtained through VLN" includes clients seen at VLN clinics or referred to the attorney as a VLN client by a VLN staff person.

General Volunteer Resources

Volunteer Handbook: Our volunteer handbook contains information about the relationship between VLN and volunteer attorneys, recommended case handling protocols, E-filing and E-serving, and current needs in our various areas of service.

Essential Skills for Counseling and Problem-Solving: This manual includes information relevant to helping pro bono clients, such as understanding the different types of poverty, building rapport, helping a client overcome specific barriers to participating in the case, how race and other factors intersect with poverty and ensuring effective communication. Many of the skills are, of course, directly applicable to paid work as well!

CLEs and Trainings on Poverty and Race

VLN offers a wide selection of in-person and on-demand trainings, including many trainings related to working with people experiencing poverty and trainings on race and bias.

[Making a Difference for Clients in Poverty](#) (3.0 EOB; In-Person): Designed for new volunteers, topics include an overview of unconscious bias, how to build trust and rapport, understanding the lived experiences of people living in poverty, and identifying and addressing the unique challenges for your pro bono clients.

[Race and the Legal System: Tools for Engaging in Constructive Conversations](#) (3.0 EOB credits, 1.0 on-demand; In-Person): This CLE includes an overview on how to identify and interrupt unconscious bias, strategies for overcoming common barriers to constructive conversations about race, and suggestions for speaking and listening effectively.

[Breaking Poverty Barriers to Equal Justice](#) (2.0 EOB; On-Demand): From the nationally-acclaimed *Breaking Poverty Barriers to Equal Justice* curriculum this CLE features Dr. Donna Beegle before a live audience of judges and attorneys sharing the experiences of those living in generational poverty, addressing common questions and misconceptions, and sharing concrete suggestions for how *pro bono* attorneys can increase their clients' access to the justice system.

[Working with Pro Bono Clients](#) (1.0 EOB; On-Demand): Featuring three speakers, this CLE helps pro bono attorneys better understand the realities faced by people living in poverty and suggestions on how effectively serve pro bono clients.

[Not Finding What You're Looking For?](#)

The above resources represent only a portion of the resources available to volunteers. For a complete listing of available resources go to www.vlnmn.org/volunteer-resources or contact VLN at vlnmn.org or (612) 752-6655.