



CHRISTIAN[®]
LEGAL AID

CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY

Clinic Startup Manual

*"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.
Speak up and judge fairly. Defend the rights of the poor and needy."*

Proverbs 31:8-9

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Thank you for beginning the journey of starting a new Christian Legal Aid (CLA) clinic! The first step in starting a CLA clinic is to care. It is a rare person who understands the importance of providing legal services to the needy and who cares enough to want to do something.

Scripture calls us to: “Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow” (Isaiah 1:17). Christian attorneys have a biblical mandate to serve the needy on matters of justice. Sadly, only about 20% of the legal needs of the poor in America are met each year.

The second step is prayer. As serving the needy is a biblical call, lift up your desire to create a CLA clinic to the Lord for guidance.

This guidebook discusses the next steps—the practical steps from envisioning a clinic to establishing the groundwork for a functioning CLA clinic. Although a clinic can be as simple as a single attorney hanging a proverbial shingle and speaking with clients who walk through the door, setting up a formal structure and procedures will help ensure the long-term success of a new clinic. This guidebook is based on the experience of many years of CLA clinics serving thousands of clients across the country.

But please don’t let this guidebook intimidate you! It may seem like there is much to do, but none of it is rocket science. It just takes a few dedicated volunteers working together to create a basic organizational structure.

We hope this guidebook is helpful. May the Lord bless you as you begin what will be a spiritually uplifting endeavor in serving those whom God calls you to serve.

—Christian Legal Society

Clinic Models

The clinics in Christian Legal Society’s (CLS) CLA network are each founded and operated independently. CLS serves the CLA clinics by providing them resources, coaching, and other services. CLS does not impose any particular model of a clinic, nor does it have any control over its member clinics. As a result, there is a wide variety of clinic models in the CLA clinic network. How they are structured depends on the circumstances of the clinic locale and the vision of the founder.

Roughly two-thirds of CLA clinics are completely volunteer-run. They can range in size from just a few attorneys who informally meet with clients who walk in the door of a church to large programs with hundreds of volunteers operating in multiple locations throughout a metro area.

Other clinics have paid staff. They can range from merely having a part-time administrative coordinator who handles the logistics of running a clinic to a small program with a paid executive director and one or two staff attorneys and up to a full-fledged nonprofit law firm employing dozens of staff attorneys. Some clinics have additional staff such as social workers, paralegals, client advocates, and other related positions to serve alongside the attorneys.

The vast majority of new clinics start as all-volunteer programs, so this manual will largely focus on a volunteer-based model.

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them.”

Matthew 18:20 (NIV)

Volunteer-based clinic

Starting a new CLA clinic usually begins with one person, typically an attorney, who feels God’s call to serve the needy with their legal skills. A legal aid clinic can be started by a non-attorney, but by definition, a legal clinic needs attorneys. If you are not an attorney, then you will need to recruit attorneys to start the clinic with you.

Although a legal clinic theoretically can be operated by just a single person, it is highly recommended that you not operate a clinic alone. Unless you are starting as a paid director, running a solo volunteer clinic can be lonely and can quickly lead to burnout. The more people who share the work, the easier it will be. Working as a team is a lot more enjoyable, and you have the benefit of more wisdom and experience.

Staffed clinic

The exception to having multiple people start a clinic together is where you plan to start the clinic yourself as a paid director. Clinics that begin immediately with a paid director are usually founded by an entrepreneurial attorney who has significant years of experience in a law practice and who has the financial wherewithal to start a new clinic without a high income. Often they begin on a part-time basis.



Sometimes such a clinic is started by an attorney with enough years of practice to have saved enough funds to last a few years or who is retiring after a full career. Other times it is a sole practitioner who has already been doing so much pro bono or “low bono” work that they are actually better off converting the practice to a nonprofit in order to take donations to supplement their meager client fees.

No matter how a staffed clinic is started, the key is being able to fundraise to support the clinic. Unless you have enough financial security or a wealthy uncle willing to foot the bills, you cannot start a staffed clinic without learning how to fundraise. If the idea of doing major fundraising scares you, you are better off starting a volunteer clinic.

Low bono law firms

Typically, legal aid clinics serve clients whose income is at some increment above the federal poverty level. For instance, the large

clinics funded by the Legal Services Corporation (LSC)¹ legally may only serve clients whose income is no more than 125% of the federal poverty level. This leaves a large demographic of Americans whose income is too high to be served by LSC clinics but too low to afford market-rate attorneys.

“Low bono” service refers to serving clients at reduced fees below market rate. Low bono assistance fills a crucial gap of legal service to clients who can afford to pay some fees but not the high hourly rate of many attorneys, especially in urban areas. Low bono service can be provided by either nonprofit legal aid clinics or for-profit law practices. Low bono private practices are beyond the scope of this manual but mentioned here because they are an important means of meeting the access-to-justice gap.

¹ The Legal Services Corporation is a federally funded entity that provides financial support to the largest network of legal clinics in the country. LSC does not currently provide funding to any CLA clinic. See www.lsc.gov.

Initial Recruitment & Vision-Casting

Starting a volunteer-based CLA clinic requires recruiting others to help you. You will want to cast a wide net and collect the names and contact information of as many people as possible. Initially you just want to find people who may be interested in learning about CLA generally.

Start by preparing a short vision statement of your plans for a CLA clinic. (See the CLA website ChristianLegalAid.org for basic language about the mission and purpose of CLA clinics.) Share it as widely as possible.

Don't begin by directly asking people to help you start the new clinic. Most people, even attorneys, have no idea how a legal aid clinic works and may be uninterested in or even intimidated by such a request. Instead, ask them merely to provide their name and email address to learn more about it—no commitment requested at this stage.

Personal contact is always most effective. Reach out personally to attorneys you know and ask people who are excited by the idea to reach out to people they personally know.

Once you have a critical mass of attorney names (depending on the size of your community), organize an initial interest meeting. An in-person meeting is ideal, but given how busy attorneys are, you may want to consider having a hybrid in-person/online meeting.

For now, merely ask them to come learn what Christian Legal Aid is all about and hear your vision for starting the clinic. Out of these contacts, perhaps half of them will come to the initial meeting. Hopefully after hearing your vision, a few people will feel a tug in their hearts to help you start the clinic, but most people will likely require time to think about it.

Follow up with everyone after a few weeks and, at that time, ask specifically for help in starting the clinic. If you can find just two or three others who will commit to helping you, you have succeeded!

The initial recruitment is primarily targeted toward attorneys; however, it is highly beneficial to have non-attorneys help in starting a clinic too, as there are many administrative tasks with which anyone can help.

Once you have a team of three or more committed attorneys (and any number of non-attorneys), you are ready to proceed to the next step of establishing the clinic. Start by having an initial planning meeting of your core group to establish a plan and divvy up responsibilities.



Find a Clinic Partner/Host Organization

To meet with clients, you will need a facility in which to do so.

Typically, CLA clinics are held at organizations such as:

- churches
- ministries that serve the needy (e.g., Salvation Army centers or Gospel Rescue Missions)
- law firms (especially ones with Christian law partners to serve as champions)

The benefits of working with such organizations include:

- having a natural pool of clients (if the organization already provides other services to the needy)
- having a natural pool of volunteers (e.g., a church with many members)
- being able to benefit from the reputation of the organization
- possibly having financial help or in-kind donations of things such as computers, wi-fi, office supplies, etc.

It is highly recommended, however, that you find an organization willing to serve as a *co-equal partner* in the CLA ministry. Organizations that merely provide space but have no stake in the clinic often treat the clinic as a low priority. The minute they need the extra space, your clinic will be let go.

Ideally you will want to find an organization that is excited about the idea of hosting a legal aid clinic and adopts it as its own ministry.

Ideally you will want to partner with an organization that is excited about the idea of hosting a legal aid clinic and adopts it as its own ministry. You want to have a host that treats the CLA clinic as its own ministry, not just as doing a favor for an external ministry. Usually, churches or other ministries that already have some kind of service to needy people are more naturally interested because they have constituents who can benefit from the clinic.

Start by searching your community for possible host partners and contact them to introduce your vision of a CLA clinic. Identify one that is interested, has the space to accommodate a clinic, and ideally has enough staff and/or church membership to be able to provide some assistance.

Once you find an interested organization, try to get buy-in and commitment from the leadership and then identify someone (ideally a pastor or staff, not merely a volunteer) who will be an internal champion of the CLA clinic. Having the leadership invested in your



Organizational Setup

clinic will reap long-term benefits and provide stability to the clinic.

Depending on how large the organization is, ask the host partner if they can provide:

- one main liaison person
- space to hold regular clinic meetings (e.g., Sunday school classrooms)
- if possible, donation of some administrative staff time to help with clinic logistics (e.g., client intake)
- help in recruiting attorneys and non-attorney volunteers
- help in advertising the clinic
- help in raising financial support, either directly from their budget or from their membership

Churches or ministries with sufficient staff may be able to donate some staff time to help with the clinic. One very helpful task is to have a host staff person do intakes of calls from potential clients. This allows your clinic to advertise the host entity’s phone number for setting up clinic appointments, if your clinic uses an appointment model.

However, be sure to provide appropriate training for the host staff. An intake person should know how to interact with the popu-

lation you hope to serve and receive instruction on how to solicit the necessary information for a client meeting. Quality client intake is extremely valuable for fruitful attorney-client meetings.

It is recommended that you enter into a partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) that sets out the expectations of what each party will provide in the relationship so there is no confusion or disappointment in each other’s fulfillment of responsibilities. For instance, these are common responsibilities of each party to address:

CLA clinic:

- Attorney volunteers
- Training of attorneys and non-attorney volunteers
- Attorney malpractice insurance

Host partner organization:

- Client meeting spaces
- Office supplies and storage space
- Wi-fi access
- Recruitment of non-attorney volunteers
- Help advertising to clients
- General liability insurance

Once you have found a host organization, you will need to decide what kind of organizational structure or affiliation your clinic will have.

Informal association

Some CLA clinics decide not to have any organizational structure or affiliation but act merely as an informal association of attorneys. This is simple and requires no legal work, but without any legal structure, the clinic lacks liability protection of a corporate shield, and it is also far more difficult to open a bank account and enter into legal transactions.

If each attorney is in private practice and has malpractice insurance, the attorneys would want to provide your services in a way that falls within the scope of coverage. Each attorney should check with their firms to see if they permit such work outside the purview of the firm, as well as their malpractice policies to determine the scope of coverage of work outside the purview of the firm.

Program of existing ministry

If you find a host organization willing to legally “adopt” your CLA clinic as its own (more than just as a partner), that is highly beneficial. Your legal aid services would be provided under the auspices of the host organization. Having your CLA clinic serve as a legal part of another organization would provide significant benefits, such as:

- You wouldn’t need to create a new legal entity.
- The CLA clinic would be protected legally by the host organization.

- The clinic’s budget would be part of the host organization’s budget.

However, the potential downsides are:

- The clinic would be subject to the control of the host organization.
- The clinic may not have its own identity.

Independent organization

The most common organizational form for a CLA clinic is an independent nonprofit corporation. Having independent nonprofit corporation status provides the most flexibility and has numerous advantages such as being able to:

- have legal liability protection
- enter into contracts, including buying your own malpractice insurance
- open your own bank account
- raise funds in your own name
- develop your own identity and have a long-term outlook
- develop your own leadership
- set your own policies
- recruit volunteers more widely

Creating an independent organization requires establishing a nonprofit corporation. While this requires some work, it isn’t rocket science and can be done relatively simply. The basic requirements include:

Board of directors. Most states require a minimum of three directors to start a nonprofit corporation. Although some require only one initially, it’s still a good idea to have a minimum of three, for many reasons.



Client Demographics

Governing documents. The two initial documents required to start a nonprofit corporation are the Articles of Incorporation² and Bylaws. It is relatively easy to find model nonprofit Articles of Incorporation. Many states even have templates that can be completed online. It is important to note, however, that many state templates lack the “magic language” required by the IRS for federal tax-exemption. If you plan on applying for federal tax exemption, be sure to include the required language. (*See Appendix I.*) Model Bylaws are also relatively easy to find. CLS has a template specifically for CLA clinics.

Employer Identification Number (EIN). This is obtained by completing a simple application form on the IRS website.

501(c)(3) application. If you wish to be federally tax exempt (so donors can provide tax-deductible donations), you will want to apply for tax-exempt recognition with the IRS. In 2014, the IRS made available a simplified version of its tax-exemption application called the Form 1023-EZ. This simplified application can be used by organizations whose annual gross receipts for the first three years are expected to be \$50,000 or less (among other requirements). Because CLA clinics that don’t have paid staff will almost always be under this limit, they typically can apply for 501(c)(3) recognition fairly easily. If you plan to have a budget larger than \$50,000, you will need to use the standard Form 1023 application which is more onerous.

Geography

Both the location where you set up a clinic and what host organization you work with impact what types of clients you serve, so it’s helpful to consider this issue at the outset.

Legal aid clinics based in a down-trodden urban area will typically serve different types of clients and see different types of legal issues than clinics based in the suburbs.

Clinics in urban areas are more likely to see clients facing deep poverty, homelessness, or serious mental health issues. Although this is a broad generalization, common legal issues faced by urban clients include public benefits (Social Security/disability, etc.), criminal defense, and criminal record expungements.

Clients in suburban areas are more likely to be “working poor,” i.e., people whose employment means they are living above the poverty line but still can’t afford private attorneys. They may be fairly educated and may have more ability to help themselves in legal matters but need help learning their options and determining a strategy. Suburban clients are more likely to have issues regarding elder law and consumer law/contracts.

Other issues, such as landlord/tenant disputes, family law, and domestic violence are common everywhere.

Populations

Specific populations that clinics might choose to focus on serving include:

Both the location where you set up a clinic and what host organization you work with impact what types of clients you serve.

Immigrants. Immigration issues naturally are more common where there are pockets of immigrants. Most metropolitan areas have certain areas with greater concentrations of immigrants. Because immigration is one of the top areas of legal need in the U.S., there are many secular and faith-based legal aid programs that specifically serve immigrants.

Refugees. Refugees (those who flee their countries because of war, persecution, or violence) are a particular type of immigrant who have more unique issues, particularly applying for asylum.

Victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. Although these are two different groups of people, they are both common subjects of legal aid programs that work with others in providing holistic services, such as shelter, housing, and mental health counseling.

Elderly. The elderly are unfortunately not a common focus of legal aid, but really ought to be. They are a huge demographic and have unique legal needs, including wills,

² Some states may use a different term or name to refer the Articles of Incorporation.

elder abuse, consumer issues, and scams. There is not much legal aid focused on the elderly probably because they have the hardest time finding and seeking help. But it's precisely for this reason that there needs to be more legal aid attorneys serving them, as they require more effort to reach.

Criminal defense. Very few legal clinics provide criminal defense services because the U.S. has a public defender system that provides guaranteed criminal defense to indigent defendants; however, the quality of such services in many cities is often below par because public defenders are notoriously overworked and underpaid. There are a few CLA and other private (non-LSC) legal clinics that do provide much-needed criminal defense services such as evaluating plea agreements and helping defendants understand and comply with plea agreements and probation/parole requirements.

Income level

Secular legal clinics supported by the federally-funded Legal Services Corporation are prohibited by law from serving clients whose income is above 125% of the federal poverty level.³ Independent legal clinics, including CLA clinics, usually serve clients above that line, e.g. at 200%. Most CLA clinics don't verify or rigidly enforce their income requirement.

However, if your clinic provides full representation, it may be more likely that middle-income clients would try to use your services. For such services, it is more important to enforce your income requirement so you

can best allocate your time and resources to those who, financially speaking, need it most.

Getting to know your clients

If your clinic primarily serves certain demographics of clients more than others (whether intentionally or not), it is very important for your attorneys to get to know those types of clients. As much of a CLA clinic's benefit is in ministering to clients, the more you can relate to them, the more of a blessing you can be to them.

For example, serving people with mental health issues requires attorneys to have an awareness of how mental illness can impact communication. Volunteers who lack experience working with such individuals would benefit from some training in this regard.⁴

If your clinic serves many homeless people, it's helpful to learn about the many non-legal problems that they face and get to know other ministries and agencies that provide complementary services.

If your clinic serves a particular immigrant group, it's very helpful to have either volunteers who can speak their primary language or people who can translate in meetings. And it's beneficial for attorneys to learn about their culture and common situations that lead to legal problems.

The more familiar you are with the demographics of your clients, the more sensitive you can be and avoid stereotyping and judgmental attitudes, and the better of a legal (and spiritual) advisor you can be.

³ The federal poverty level is provided at www.healthcare.gov/glossary/federal-poverty-level-fpl.

⁴ The Practicing Law Institute (www.pli.edu) often has low-cost or free online seminars on topics of interest to legal aid attorneys.

Types of Legal Issues

Most CLA clinics, particularly clinics that are completely volunteer-based and primarily provide legal advice, are general in nature and will see clients on any legal issue that comes in the door. Clinics that provide full representation typically focus on certain legal issues so they can hire attorneys with specific legal expertise or train volunteers to develop expertise in those areas. Some volunteer clinics start off seeing clients on all issues, then later decide to focus on specific areas in order to train attorneys and develop an expertise and provide more in-depth services.

The most common types of legal issues seen among CLA clinics are:

- family law (child support/custody)
- immigration
- housing (landlord/tenant disputes, evictions, subsidized housing)
- employment (wage theft)
- government benefits (Social Security/disability/TANF)
- misdemeanors (traffic offenses, disorderly conduct, criminal trespass, etc.)
- consumer law/financial/identity theft
- domestic violence
- elder law (wills, probate)
- general civil law/contracts



Types of Services

There are basic types of legal aid services that CLA clinics provide.

Legal advice

The most basic form of legal aid is providing simple legal advice. The goal here is not to completely resolve a client's legal problem, but to:

- identify legal issues
- help determine legal options
- help strategize steps for resolving the problem

People often wonder how much can be accomplished in a typical 30- to 60-minute meeting with a client. For many legal issues, one hour is plenty of time to help a client move from feeling panicked and not knowing anything to being empowered with critical information and an action plan.

In a typical clinic meeting, a client describes a problem. You then help to do one or more of the following:

- review relevant documents
- provide an assessment of the problem
- sift out key facts
- explain the relevant law and procedures, rights and obligations
- describe legal risks, best- and worst-case scenarios, and a range of options
- strategize how best to handle the situation
- list action steps and coach how to implement the steps

The following is an example of how a client meeting might look for an eviction issue:

- review eviction notice
- tell the client that this means his landlord has commenced the process for forcing him out of his housing
- determine if the client has a lease agreement, how much rent the client owes, when his last rent payment was, if he has breached other terms, what his relationship with the landlord is like, etc.
- explain key terms in the lease agreement, the tenant's and the landlord's respective rights under state or county law, steps in the eviction process, how to respond to the eviction notice, deadlines, and hearings, etc.
- discuss whether the client has any defenses, can bring his payments up to date, can negotiate a payment plan, can find rental assistance, when he might be forced out, etc.
- strategize options such as calling the landlord, engaging in mediation, or do nothing until receiving an eviction notice, etc.
- coach on how to negotiate with the landlord, how to prepare for the hearing, plans for worst-case scenario, etc.

Often clients will have issues that are beyond your immediate knowledge. If your clinic has wi-fi, you might be able to research simple answers during the client meeting. Otherwise, you can offer to do follow-up research and get back to them later.

Coaching pro se litigants

Often you may be able to coach clients in representing themselves. Attorneys can give a basic tutorial on what goes on in a hearing, the elements of a claim or defense, and what evidence is required. You may be able to help draft an outline for a basic statement of the case, so the client knows what arguments ought to be made. It's also very helpful if you can help find the appropriate forms needed for a case.

Many clients are sophisticated enough to handle simple cases with a little bit of coaching. This kind of help is usually a lot more than what they knew before your meeting and, even in difficult cases, is often sufficient to give clients at least a fighting chance at defending themselves.

Community legal education

Community education seminars are led by attorneys (either volunteers within your program or recruited from outside your program) who are experienced in specific legal issues of relevance to low-income people in your community such immigration, landlord/tenant issues, debtor/creditor issues, elder law, etc. Also often called "Know Your Rights" seminars, they typically give basic overview of legal issues and help individuals prevent legal problems or mitigate them before they get worse. Because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure (or exorbitant legal fees), these seminars can be of huge benefit.

Community education seminars can be offered online (either live and/or recorded videos) or in person, often in venues where the relevant community already congregate, such as churches or low-income senior living communities.

For many legal issues, one hour is plenty of time to help a client move from feeling panicked and not knowing anything to being empowered with critical information and an action plan.

Limited representation

"Limited representation" (aka "unbundled representation" or "discrete legal services") refers to any legal help that is defined in scope. Generally this includes any help beyond providing advice but short of representing a client in a full litigation case. In prior years, limited representation was frowned upon by the legal community and even deemed unethical under professional ethics rules. In recent years, rules have been relaxed, and the practice has gained favor, primarily as a way to make legal services more affordable. Today, most states even permit attorneys to ghost-write motions or briefs or make limited appearances in court.

Typical examples of limited representation include:

- making a phone call to clarify an issue (e.g., asking an insurer why a claim was denied)
- drafting a letter to an opposing party (e.g., demanding an employer pay wages owed)
- negotiating a resolution on simple disputes (e.g., mediating a simple child visitation issue with an ex-spouse)
- contacting a government agency (e.g., asking a department of social services to enforce a spousal support claim)
- responding to a demand or appearing at a scheduling hearing

- helping review court documents and discovery requests, and coaching on how to respond
- ghost-writing a single motion or brief
- arguing just a single motion

Sometimes a legal problem can be fully resolved with just a phone call or letter to the opposing party. But even when limited representation doesn't fully resolve a client's issue, it can be a huge help in moving a client toward the end goal.

Full representation

The majority of CLA clinics are volunteer run, but approximately a third of the clinics have paid staff attorneys. The clinics with staff attorneys are typically more likely to provide full representation to clients, as the staff attorneys are often more equipped and have more time to devote to helping clients through entire cases. If they have litigation experience, they can dive into cases and make a big impact on clients' situations.

But sometimes staff attorneys focus on coordinating, training, and helping volunteer attorneys to do clinic work and limited representation. In doing so, the staff attorneys may be able to multiply their efforts and make a wider impact on more people, rather than serving only a few clients on large cases.

Volunteer clinic attorneys sometimes take on full representation if they have litigation skills. If they do have litigation experience but no familiarity with particular subject matters (e.g., family law and immigration, both of which can be very complex), the volunteer attorneys often benefit from finding outside attorneys who can coach them on the substantive legal issues. Outside attorneys are often so busy that they aren't willing to take on pro bono cases, but are more than happy to coach volunteer attorneys. In doing

so, the outside attorneys (often more senior) can share their experience and expertise and benefit volunteer attorneys (often more junior) who have the time and willingness to take on full cases. This is a win-win situation.

Referrals to pro bono attorneys

Often advice provided in a clinic is sufficient to enable clients to help themselves. Many clients are fairly sophisticated and simply need some guidance in what to do. But many clients may not be capable of helping themselves or the legal issues are simply too complicated for them to adequately help themselves. In such cases, CLA volunteers can try to make referrals to other legal aid clinics that may be able to provide full representation or to attorneys experienced in the legal issue who are willing to take a case on a pro bono or low bono basis.

Ideally your clinic will develop a network of referral attorneys in the community who are willing to accept full-representation cases. This is not always easy, especially in areas of the law where the demand is high, the cases are complicated, and the attorneys are already overbooked. (Around the country, family law is an issue for which it is notoriously difficult to find attorneys willing to take cases pro bono.)

Note: You should develop a policy of determining whether referral attorneys are serving as your clinic's own volunteers or not, i.e., whether they serve clients under your clinic's auspices or not. This is important for whether they are covered by your clinic's malpractice insurance.

Typically, referral attorneys are not included as a clinic's own volunteers (unless they also serve in your clinic's client meetings). Rather, once a client is referred out, the clinic's relationship with the client ends, and the client

becomes the referral attorney's client. This should be documented in writing with the client and with the referral attorney.

But some clinics do choose to have referral attorneys serve under the clinic's auspices, in which case their work would be covered under the clinic's malpractice insurance.

This distinction is also important for clinics that require volunteers to adhere to a statement of faith. For such clinics, referring clients outside the auspices of the clinic moots this issue, which broadens the scope of attorneys you can send clients to.

Referrals to other organizations and resources

Besides referring clients to other attorneys, CLA clinics can also refer clients to many other sources of help. One distinctive of Christian Legal Aid clinics is that we typically try to serve clients holistically. This includes seeing their problems not just legally but from other perspectives. Often clients can benefit from referrals to other organizations such as:

- Other charities. Women's shelters, food pantries, job training services, financial counselors, etc.
- Government agencies. Rental assistance programs, elder services, etc.
- Other Christian ministries. Marriage ministries, Christian financial counselors, and of course, churches.



Clinic Format

Clinic meetings are usually set up in one of two models: by appointment or walk-in. There are pros and cons to both models.

Walk-in model

In a walk-in model, the clinic advertises a time in which attorneys are available, and they see whoever shows up at the clinic at that time.

The pros of the walk-in model:

- Easier to set up and requires less administrative work.
- Don't have to worry about no-shows.

The cons of the walk-in model:

- Attorneys can't prepare in advance. This requires attorneys to have experience addressing a wide variety of issues and/or the ability to do quick research online. Alternatively, if the clinic limits the types of legal issues seen, attorneys can be trained in those specific issues.
- Don't know how many clients will appear.

Appointment model

In an appointment model, clients set up meeting times in advance either by phone, email, or on a web form.

Pros of the appointment model:

- Can do intake ahead of time to obtain the client's contact information, a brief summary of the facts and legal issues, and copies of relevant documents.

- By knowing the basic information ahead of time, the attorneys can prepare in advance, including doing any necessary research. (But note that often the information provided by the client may not accurately indicate the legal issues.)

Cons of the appointment model:

- Setting up appointments requires more work. Typically, an intake coordinator needs to be trained to speak with the client to obtain the basic information, or an intake form system must be set up for clients to provide the information.
- When clients fail to show up for appointments, much time is wasted. No-shows can be minimized by having the intake coordinator send a reminder ahead of the meeting.

Virtual clinic meetings

Since the pandemic, many clinics offer virtual client meetings, typically by appointment.

Pros of virtual meetings:

- Both the clients and volunteers save transportation time. This can be a huge benefit for clients who lack means of transportation and can be a selling point for recruiting volunteers.

Cons of virtual meetings:

- Aren't conducive environments in which clients feel comfortable to open up, so it's harder to get to know them and provide counseling.



Clinic Sessions

Most volunteer clinics start off holding client meetings just once per month. As they recruit more attorneys, they can increase the frequency of meetings or open new locations. It's not a good idea to have the same volunteers serving too frequently or they will burn out very quickly.

Most volunteer clinics meet clients on Saturday mornings, but some meet on weekday evenings or even during business hours. The proliferation of online meetings has made it easier to meet during business hours. Every time slot has pros and cons for both clients and volunteers. The choice of time primarily depends on the availability of volunteers.

Appointment-based client meetings usually hold sessions of 45 minutes or 1 hour, but sometimes may be half an hour or 1.5 hours. Longer meetings allow for more time to get deeper into issues, do more on-the-spot research, and get to know clients more personally.



Facilities Setup

Client greeting/waiting room

In both walk-in and appointment style meetings, it's important to have a room where clients can wait before meeting with the attorneys. Ideally there should be a volunteer greeter to welcome clients. The greeter function is very important in making clients feel welcome and comfortable. Some clinics offer drinks and snacks. Some also offer to watch young children during the meetings, which can be very helpful for clients who can't get babysitters.

Client meeting rooms

Ideally client meetings should be held in closed rooms to keep discussions confidential; however, it's preferable to have doors with windows for transparency purposes, especially if there is only one attorney per client.

Some clinics meet in large, open fellowship halls. In such rooms, it's important that client meetings are spaced far enough apart to minimize conversations being heard by others, ideally with protective screens for some privacy.

Ideally client meetings should be held in closed rooms to keep discussions confidential.

“War room”

Many clinics have a “war room” for volunteers to meet and to store equipment and files. It's helpful to have a room for the attorneys to discuss client issues before the client meetings and to debrief afterwards.

Technology on site

Generally, each attorney should have a laptop available to do on-the-spot research. Of course, this also requires the facility to have wi-fi service.

It's also helpful to have printers to print documents for clients (such as research or summary of advice and recommended action steps), as well as scanners to scan and save client documents for future reference (particularly important for full representation).

Logistics

There are several logistical issues to consider for setting up client meetings.

Volunteer scheduling procedures

Clinics need to have a system for scheduling volunteers. When the number of volunteers is still small, this can be done by email. Once the volunteer pool grows larger, clinics often use apps like Sign-Up Genius or Google Forms to set up a regular sign-up system.

Client intake process

Appointment-based clinics also need a system for signing up clients. When the number of clients is still small, email sign-ups may suffice. But as the number of clients grow, it's helpful to have a more robust system. Google Forms is user-friendly and sophisticated enough to collect substantial information from clients. Some clinics make the sign-up forms available on their websites for clients to directly submit meeting requests online.

Information that you may want to collect from clients include:

- full name
- age
- gender
- address
- email and phone
- legal issue category (provide a list of standard categories for the client to choose from)
- client's description of legal problem in their own words
- any upcoming deadlines on their matter
- name of opposing party, if any

- annual income (to determine qualification for services)
- ages of children (for family law issues)
- name of church, if any (helpful to know if you provide spiritual counseling)

It's very helpful if you can recruit intake volunteers to speak with clients ahead of the client meetings, either in lieu of or in addition to clients filling out forms. Many clients are not comfortable filling out forms, so calls with intake volunteers can be a friendlier means of collecting information. Well-trained intake volunteers can also be much more effective at soliciting the relevant facts.

Paralegals and law students are especially helpful in this role, as it requires some skill to be able to listen to clients, draw out relevant facts, and provide a summary of legal issues for the attorneys. Having pre-filtered information is also very helpful to attorneys, who can then prepare and do research ahead of the client meetings.

Document storage

You will want to set up some kind of online file storage system to maintain documents such as client files. If your clinic solely provides advice in clinic sessions and you don't plan to do follow-up work or limited representation, then you may not need to keep much in the way of client documents, other than perhaps the initial client intake. But many clinics do keep client documents in case they do follow-up work or the client returns in the future.



If you plan to keep extensive files and maintain detailed case information, you may want to invest in dedicated legal case management software (e.g., Clio); however, such software is quite costly, so most volunteer-based clinics use free or low-cost options such as Google for Nonprofits (application required). Since 2026, CLS offers free access to LegalServer case management software.

Whatever system you use, be sure to have a system in place for ensuring the confidentiality and security of client information, which

clinics have a legal obligation to protect. For instance, be sure only active volunteers have password access to the system and remove their access when they are no longer actively serving.

It's also good practice to have a document retention policy under which client files are routinely purged (e.g., after five years of no activity).

Volunteer Base

Although it only takes a handful of people to get a clinic going, the following are types of volunteers you may want to recruit over time.

Leadership team

Initial start-up team. As mentioned previously, it's recommended that you have at least three committed volunteers to start a clinic, preferably three attorneys, plus any number of non-attorneys to help with administrative tasks.

Board members. If you decide to form an independent nonprofit corporation, your initial start-up team can serve as the initial board of directors. But as you grow, you'll want to expand the board to include a broader group of people, perhaps representatives from your clinic host organizations or other people who serve needy people in other ways.⁵ If you do not form an independent nonprofit corporation (e.g., if your clinic becomes a program of a church or other organization), it's still highly beneficial to create an advisory board for providing guidance to the legal clinic, even though the advisory board would have no legal governance authority.

Clinic directors. Once your CLA clinic opens more than one location, you'll want to have directors leading each separate site.

Legal volunteers

It is highly recommended that client meetings have two or more attorneys. The more heads, the more collective experience and wisdom there is. Having more than one person also minimizes problems such as male/female dynamics and personality conflicts. Often female clients prefer to have at least one female attorney. This is particularly important if the client has issues related to domestic violence.

State-licensed attorneys. Each state has its own rules regarding whether attorneys not licensed in the state may serve in a legal aid program. Some states permit attorneys not licensed in the state to serve in the limited capacity of merely providing advice within a legal aid setting. Others require attorneys not licensed in the state to be supervised by state-licensed attorneys. Be sure to know your state's rules.

Non-licensed attorneys. There are often attorneys not licensed in the state who wish to volunteer in CLA clinics. These can include retired attorneys, in-house attorneys, or non-practicing attorneys. With appropriate training, these attorneys are often the most enthusiastic and helpful because they want to put their legal background to good use and don't have other opportunities to do so.



Law students. Law students are often eager to serve in order to get real world experience (and some law schools require volunteer service). Students are also often the most eager to do good in the world, so it's beneficial to take advantage of their service; however, using student volunteers does require extra time to train and manage. Often the best functions for them to help with are:

- doing client intakes
- taking notes and creating client summary forms
- conducting legal research

Paralegals. Paralegals can be extremely helpful given their experience with legal work. They can usually do everything law students can and more.

Non-legal volunteers

Non-attorney volunteers are helpful for many different tasks in running a CLA clinic. These include:

Administration. Maintaining database of volunteers, clients, donors; handling client logistics, etc.

Hospitality. Serving as client greeters.

Ministry. Providing spiritual counseling to clients and volunteers.

Interpreters. Translating clinic materials to the public and in client meetings.

Communications. Creating and maintaining a website, preparing newsletters, etc.

Bookkeeping.

Event coordinators. Organizing fundraiser dinners, social events, etc.

Some clinics allow non-attorneys to join in client meetings. People gifted in spiritual ministry can be helpful in being good listeners, providing spiritual counseling, and praying; however, it's important to ask for the client's permission to have non-attorneys present, either ahead of time or at least at the beginning of the meeting. Also, all non-attorneys should be required to sign confidentiality agreements before volunteering.

⁵ There is much written about the art of developing and running a nonprofit board, including many free resources online. It's highly recommended that your board chair consult some of these resources.

Volunteer Recruitment

Recruiting attorneys isn't always easy. The following are some recommendations for means of recruiting attorneys.

Personal contacts. Personal contact is often the best way to recruit attorneys, so the first step is tapping into the networks (both personal and professional) of your volunteer team. Ask your volunteers to spread the word about your clinic to their network of contacts.

Christian Legal Society attorney chapters. A great place to start is often through a CLS attorney chapter if there is one in your area. Attorney chapters can be found through the Attorney Ministries portal on the CLS website (www.christianlegalsociety.org). Individual CLS members can be found in the public Attorney Directory on the CLS website.

Local bar associations. Local bar associations may be a good source for finding attorneys, but typically this requires you getting personally involved so you can get to know the attorneys first. Bar associations may be a better source of referral attorneys rather than in-clinic attorneys, particularly if you require in-clinic attorneys to sign a statement of faith. Specialty bar associations may be particularly helpful for finding attorneys who specialize in specific areas, particularly family law or immigration.

Churches. Churches above a certain size, especially in metropolitan areas, almost always have some attorney members. Church leadership generally know attorneys in their



congregations because attorneys are often called to serve on elder boards or provide pro bono help. Personal connections with a church are often needed to make inroads within a church because many churches are so busy with their existing ministries that they aren't receptive to cold contacts. Also, many churches, especially ones that don't actively minister to the needy, won't understand the importance of legal services for the poor.

Website. Calling for attorney volunteers on your website can be hit or miss, but there often are caring attorneys looking for opportunities to serve who may stumble upon your site.

If your clinic requires volunteers to sign a statement of faith, you may need to be more selective in how you advertise and recruit volunteers, so you don't end up having to decline people who are not Christians.

Legal Research Resources

One of the biggest objections to new attorneys serving in legal aid is their lack of familiarity with the legal issues that legal aid clients have. While this is a legitimate concern given attorneys' ethical duty of competence, generally all attorneys have a far greater ability to learn the necessary law than legal aid clients have. Having three years of law school training plus additional work experience means that you have the ability to find the answers that clients need.

You will find that many legal aid clients' issues don't require an in-depth knowledge of the law. Often, they just need to understand the basic elements of an issue. In most states, it is fairly easy to find free or low-cost research materials on the basic elements of legal issues.

In most states, the LSC-funded legal clinics have websites that contain much helpful information on basic poverty law issues in your state. (These can be found easily by searching online for "legal aid" plus the name of your state.) Spending a few hours studying these websites will give you a basic understanding of key legal aid subject areas. Two websites that are good starting points are:

- www.probono.net
- www.lawhelp.org



There are also plenty of other resources for learning substantive areas of law, including:

- CLA Resource Library (for clinics in the CLS Christian Legal Aid network)
- private law firm websites on specific subject matters
- legal advocacy organization websites
- other local legal aid programs
- state and local bar association websites
- Westlaw, Lexis, and other legal research sites

Volunteer Training

It is of course helpful for attorneys who have never served in a legal aid clinic to obtain some training. Christian Legal Society's CLA staff, as well as experienced CLA attorneys from other CLA clinics around the country, are often willing to provide live trainings. CLS' Christian Legal Aid Resource Library has a number of recorded webinars for new CLA attorneys.

If you can't find attorneys with experience in serving legal aid clients, don't be afraid to jump in and start advising clients. If you have experience working with any kind of legal clients, you will be able to learn issues unique to serving legal aid clients in a matter of time. Once your attorneys gain experience, you can host informational meetings for volunteers to share best practices with each other over time.

Besides learning general skills in serving CLA clients, it's also helpful to get training in substantive legal issues frequently seen in your clinic. Outside attorneys are often much more willing to provide training to your attorneys than to serve legal aid clients directly. So it is recommended that you get to know attorneys who are to provide occasional training to your in-clinic volunteers. Your jurisdiction's bar organization may also offer free trainings to members and can be an excellent resource.

The Practicing Law Institute (www.pli.edu) is a private legal training organization that provides low-cost or free online seminars specifically on topics of interest to legal aid attorneys (such as "The Art & Science of Interviewing Pro Bono Clients").



Liability Insurance

There are several types of insurance that your clinic should consider obtaining.

Malpractice liability insurance

Malpractice insurance is the most important insurance to obtain. For many prospective attorney volunteers, this is the first question they have. Clinics have several options:

Attorneys provide their own through private practice. This generally works when volunteers are sole practitioners or in small firms that permit serving under their insurance policy.

National Legal Aid & Defenders Association (NLADA) (www.nlada.org). Many large firms don't allow attorneys to serve clients outside of their firms under the firms' policy. And if you have attorneys who are retired, in-house, or have out-of-state licenses, they won't have their own coverage, so most clinics obtain coverage for all their volunteers. The vast majority of CLA clinics obtain malpractice insurance through this nonprofit organization. Clinics that join as NLADA members can obtain malpractice insurance for a reasonable flat fee for virtually an unlimited number of attorneys.⁶

Commercial carriers. A few CLA clinics choose to use other commercial insurance providers.

Other types of insurance

Although malpractice insurance is the most important coverage to have, other policies to consider obtaining include:

Directors and officers. Protects the personal assets of corporate directors and officers in the event they are personally sued by employees, vendors, clients, or other parties, for actual or alleged wrongful acts in managing the organization.

General liability. This insurance is usually carried by a clinic's host facility. But you ought to ask your host organization to add your CLA clinic as a beneficiary.

⁶ As of the time of this writing, the NLADA malpractice insurance fee is approximately \$1,400 per year.

Client Advertisement

Once you form a clinic, of course you'll need to get the word out to clients.

Here are some means of promoting the clinic:

Website. Many clients simply find legal aid clinics in Google searches. Having a website with information about your CLA clinic, as well as substantive legal information, will help potential clients find your clinic.

Churches with low-income congregations or who serve low-income people. If your clinic is affiliated with a church or ministry that already serves the needy, you may already have a built-in base of clients. If not, reach out to local churches that serve this community and ask them to advertise your clinic to their constituents.

Ministries to the poor. Other organizations (e.g., shelters, food pantries, clothing ministries, etc.) that serve the needy are great sources of clients. Many of these organizations won't necessarily understand that their own beneficiaries may have legal needs, so you may need to educate them on why low-income people have legal needs.

Social service agencies. Public social service agencies often have constituents with legal needs. Alerting these agencies of your clinic enables them to direct their constituents to your clinic.

Businesses frequented by low-income clientele. Because many legal aid clients don't have access to the Internet, sometimes low-tech forms of advertising reach people who wouldn't otherwise find you. Try posting paper signs in businesses frequented by low-income people, such as public housing, laundromats, grocery stores, etc.

Immigrant populations. Many immigrant communities are tightknit. Once a few people in those communities learn of your clinic (especially if it provides immigration law representation), word often gets around in those communities quickly about your services.



Ministry Aspects

Although there is wide latitude in what defines a "Christian" legal aid clinic, generally clinics in the CLA network share a desire to serve clients holistically, i.e., not merely providing legal services but also some kind of spiritual care. This can include:

- providing compassionate listening and spiritual advice
- suggesting biblical solutions as alternatives to legal remedies, including Christian dispute resolution (see e.g., Ambassadors of Reconciliation, Peacemaker Ministries, etc.)
- providing referral to churches and Christian ministries
- sharing the gospel to clients who are open to it
- praying with clients

CLA clinics have different levels of requirements for volunteers' faith commitment:

- All volunteers must sign a statement of faith (SoF).
- Only board members and paid staff must sign a SoF.
- Only attorneys must sign a SoF.
- No SoF required, but it is generally expected that all participants be Christian.
- Only leaders need to be Christians; non-attorneys can serve alongside them.

There are valid reasons for all of the above policies. Generally, clinics that require all participants be Christians do so in order that everyone shares a similar mindset in serving clients from a Christian perspective and are able to minister to clients and pray together. The ones that permit anyone to serve believe that, so long as all participants know the clinic is faith-based, it's valuable to both clients and participants to have more people willing to help. Furthermore, it is also a ministry to the non-Christians in allowing them to see the Christian participants pray and be a blessing to clients.

Ideally, the clinic founders should decide on a policy at the outset so all leaders are on board and communicate the policy in the recruitment of volunteers.

Some clinics encourage and even train all volunteers to give spiritual care and prayer to clients as part of the attorney/client meetings, while others leave it to the volunteers' discretion. Some clinics may invite pastors or specially trained lay persons to provide spiritual care and prayer to clients separately from the attorney meetings.

Client Forms & Fundraising

Forms

See CLA Resource Library.

As a clinic grows, you will likely have an increasing number of forms, but initially the basic forms you may want to use are:

- volunteer information and confidentiality form
- volunteer statement of faith
- client intake form
- client consent/waiver form
- client advice form

Members of CLS' Christian Legal Aid network can find sample copies of these and other forms in the CLA Resource Library. New volunteer-based clinics usually don't require much in the way of funds. The largest expense is generally malpractice insurance. Other expenses may include website hosting, various software apps, and perhaps office equipment and supplies.

Fundraising

Major fundraising is beyond the scope of this booklet, but some basic means of raising small amounts of money include:

- donation from host organization
- friends and family of initial leaders
- board member donations
- churches of board members and initial leaders
- simple events, e.g., prayer breakfasts or wine and cheese gatherings

Appendices



Appendix I: Outline

- I. Clinic Models
 - A. Volunteer-based clinic
 - B. Staffed clinic
 - C. Low bono law firms
- II. Initial Recruitment & Vision-Casting
 - A. Get the word out about plan to create Christian Legal Aid clinic
 - B. Cast a wide net
 - 1. Local CLS chapter members
 - 2. Larger churches
 - 3. Ask everyone to share with their contacts
 - C. Organize an initial interest meeting of attorneys and non-attorneys, including church leaders, to learn what Christian Legal Aid is all about
 - D. Find a core group of volunteers, at least 3-4 attorneys willing to start
- III. Find a Clinic Partner/Host Organization
 - A. Type of host organization
 - B. Location
 - C. Facilities
 - D. Support of church leadership
 - E. Help with recruiting volunteers
 - F. Donation of church staff assistance
 - G. Financial support
- IV. Organizational Setup
 - A. Informal association
 - B. Program of existing ministry
 - C. Independent organization
 - 1. Board of directors
 - 2. Articles of Incorporation
 - 3. Bylaws
 - 4. Employer Identification Number (EIN)
 - 5. 501(c)(3) application
- V. Client Demographics
 - A. Geography
 - 1. Downtown/urban, suburban, rural
 - 2. Specific areas
 - B. Populations

- 1. Immigrants, refugees
 - 2. Elderly
 - 3. Victims of domestic violence/human trafficking
 - 4. Specific ethnic group
 - C. Specific economic class
 - 1. Below poverty line, homeless, working poor
 - D. Getting to know your types of clients
- VI. Types of Legal Issues
 - A. General versus specific issue focus
 - B. Common CLA issues
 - VII. Types of Services
 - A. Legal advice
 - B. Coaching pro se litigants
 - C. Community legal education
 - D. Limited representation
 - E. Full representation
 - 1. Paid staff attorneys
 - 2. Trained in-house volunteers
 - 3. Referrals to network of pro bono attorneys
 - F. Referrals to pro bono attorneys
 - G. Referrals to other organizations and resources
 - VIII. Clinic Format
 - A. Walk-in model
 - 1. Advertise walk-in clinic open hours
 - 2. Attorneys advise on whatever issues come in
 - B. Appointment model
 - 1. Do client intake in advance
 - 2. Get client contact info, summary of legal issue, key documents
 - 3. Attorneys meet with clients in scheduled meetings
 - C. Virtual clinic meetings
 - IX. Clinic Sessions
 - A. Frequency: monthly, biweekly, weekly
 - B. Days and times: Saturdays, weekdays, weeknights
 - X. Facilities Setup
 - A. Client greeting/waiting room
 - B. Client meeting rooms
 - C. “War room” for equipment, files, and volunteer preparation
 - D. Technology on site
 - 1. Computers

- 2. Printer/scanners
 - 3. Wi-fi
- XI. Logistics
 - A. Volunteer and client scheduling procedures
 - B. Client intake process
 - C. Document storage
- XII. Volunteer Base
 - A. Leadership team
 - 1. Initial start-up team
 - 2. Board members
 - 3. Advisory board members
 - 4. Clinic directors
 - B. Legal volunteers
 - 1. State-licensed attorneys
 - 2. Non-licensed attorneys
 - 3. Law students
 - 4. Paralegals
 - C. Non-legal volunteers
 - 1. Admin volunteers
 - 2. Hospitality volunteers
 - 3. Ministry volunteers
 - 4. Interpreters
 - 5. Communications
 - 6. Event coordinators
- XIII. Volunteer Recruitment
 - A. Christian Legal Society attorney chapters
 - B. Word-of-mouth, personal contacts
 - C. Churches
 - D. Local bar associations
 - E. Website
- XIV. Legal research resources
 - A. National and state legal research sites
 - B. Local secular legal aid websites
 - C. CLA Resource Library
- XV. Volunteer Training
 - A. Formal training sessions on serving clients
 - B. On-the-job training
 - C. Volunteer sharing of best practices
 - D. Formal CLE training on legal issues

- XVI. Liability Insurance
 - A. Malpractice liability insurance options
 - 1. Attorneys provide their own through private practice
 - 2. National Legal Aid & Defenders Association (NLADA) - nlada.org
 - 3. Commercial carriers
 - B. Other insurance
- XVII. Client Advertisement
 - A. Website
 - B. Churches with low-income congregations or who serve low-income people
 - C. Ministries to the poor (e.g., shelters, food pantries, clothing ministries, etc.)
 - D. Social service agencies
 - E. Businesses frequented by low-income people
 - F. Immigrant populations
- XVIII. Ministry Aspects
 - A. Statement of Faith
 - B. Spiritual ministry
 - 1. Suggest biblical solutions as alternatives to legal remedies
 - 2. Compassionate listening ear
 - 3. Referral to churches and Christian ministries
 - 4. Present the gospel to clients who are open to it
 - 5. Prayer
- XIX. Client Forms
 - A. Volunteer forms
 - B. Client forms
- XX. Fundraising
 - A. Events
 - B. Solicitation letters and emails
 - C. **Churches**
 - D. **Foundations**

Appendix II

Language required by the IRS in governing documents of tax-exempt organizations²

1. The Corporation, being irrevocably organized exclusively for tax-exempt purposes, may make distributions to organizations and individuals in furtherance of its exempt purposes and in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.
2. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth above.
3. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
4. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (1) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code or (2) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
5. Upon dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation, exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious, educational, or charitable purposes, as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the appropriate court of law of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes.

² Please check IRS regulations for any new developments in this area of the law.

We hope that this manual has been helpful for you in starting a Christian Legal Aid clinic. The need for legal help among the poor will always be great, but the workers are few. So we thank you for your desire to start a CLA clinic and or being the hands and feet of Christ to those in dire need of help on crucial life issues. God bless!



ChristianLegalAid.org
cla@clsnet.org