

Pro Bono Opportunities

In Court Experience • Direct Client Contact
Finite Commitment • Changing Lives

Coalition Legal is one of the largest restorative justice projects serving Lake County, IL.

Our Services

- Expungement/Sealing Petitions for Criminal Records
- Driver's License Reinstatement
- Healthcare Waivers allowing individuals to work in healthcare despite a criminal record; often filed for clients to earn income while waiting for their expungement/sealing hearing

Our Staff

- 2 full-time & 3 part-time pro bono attorneys
- Paid staff who run day-to-day operations

Our Clients

- Struggling to overcome distant criminal past and access better jobs and more stable housing
- Mostly indigent or low-wage workers
- Nearly 80% live below the poverty line
- More than 90% are minorities

“

Often our clients walk out of court with tears of joy. They are overwhelmed with relief and gratitude and excited to pursue new opportunities. As an attorney, what could feel more fulfilling?

Daniel Kaplan, ESQ
PRO BONO ATTORNEY



Interested?

Email: Julie Weinberg, Interim Executive Director
jweinberg@coalitionlegal.org



Opportunity 1: Expungement/Sealing Petitions for Criminal Records

What: Lake County requires, in most cases, a brief in-person hearing before a criminal court judge at the Lake County Courthouse in downtown Waukegan.

- Expungement cases are heard on Wednesdays at 9 am
- First Wednesday of the month is Zoom-optional for downstate or out-of-state clients

Your Role:

- Learn from experienced trial attorneys how to prepare witness, make short opening statement, conduct direct and redirect examination, make closing statement (Our paid staff prepare expungement petitions and related paperwork.)
- Work with client to tell their life story (i.e. how they got in trouble, what they did to change, how an expungement will help them become a productive citizen)
- Represent client in court

Time Commitment:

- 2-3 hours to review file and prepare client
- 3-4 hours to appear in court with client
- Process takes 6-8 months from filing petition through hearing



Opportunity 2: Driver's License Reinstatement

What: Assist clients whose driver's licenses have been suspended or revoked, typically for many years

Your Role:

- Guide clients through IL Secretary of State requirements to reinstate a license including:
 - Evaluation by a trained professional from an independent organization like NICASA, a social service agency
 - Document attendance at support group meetings
 - Other steps such as obtaining insurance and letters of support
- Appear with client for an informal hearing at the Secretary of State's office in Waukegan

Time Commitment: 30-50 hours across approximately six months



Interested?

Email: Julie Weinberg, Interim Executive Director
jweinberg@coalitionlegal.org



Opportunity 3: Healthcare Waiver

What: Healthcare Waivers from the Illinois Department of Public Health allow individuals with eligible criminal convictions to work in the healthcare industry. We often prepare Healthcare Waiver applications when a client applies for expungement services and is waiting for their expungement hearing to occur.

Your Role:

- Use a client's criminal record (documented by our team) and work with a staff attorney to determine a client's eligibility for the Healthcare Waiver
- Assist client in getting an FBI fingerprint criminal background check from an approved vendor
- Help client write a narrative about their crimes and their changed behavior
- Not a complicated process, but requires organizational skills and resources that some clients do not possess

Time Commitment: Approximately 8-10 hours for one month, from client intake to application submission



Interested?

Email: Julie Weinberg, Interim Executive Director
jweinberg@coalitionlegal.org