

## HOMELESS ADVOCACY CLINIC (HAC)

### Background

Housing is a human right. However, in California, the failure to recognize the right to housing has led to the crisis our State currently finds itself in. In California, the number of people experiencing homelessness grew 7% between 2019 and 2020. In Sacramento alone, 5,570 people experience homelessness on a given night and that number is likely to grow as emergency COVID-19 pandemic protections continue to expire.

Students in the Homeless Advocacy Clinic provide legal services to help eliminate barriers to housing and employment for criminal justice-involved people experiencing homelessness. Students represent real clients in cases related to:

- public benefits;
- expungement of criminal records;
- reduction of traffic fines & fees;
- child support; and
- credit repair.

HAC student attorneys employ a barrier-free, holistic, and client-centered representation model designed to empower their clients. Through their casework, students develop and hone fundamental lawyering skills including client interviewing, fact investigation, research and writing, client counseling, and oral advocacy. Moreover, students receive extensive training in the provision of trauma-informed lawyering.

Interdisciplinary collaboration is central to the HAC's service model and student attorneys collaborate closely with case managers in our partner organizations. The HAC has an ongoing medical-legal partnership with WellSpace Health, a local community health center, that allows student attorneys to collaborate with health professionals to address social determinants of health and racial disparities in health outcomes. Other community partners include the Office of the Federal Defender, the Sacramento County Public Defender, and the Exodus Project, an interfaith nonprofit providing mentorship and other services to returning citizens from the Sacramento County jails.

### Structure of Clinic and Limit on Enrollment

- This is a one-semester clinic for three graded units. Students attend weekly seminars and represent real clients in real cases for 150 hours over the course of the semester.
- **Students are encouraged to enroll for two semesters to fulfill their experiential learning requirement and to gain additional skills working on cases with more complexity.**
- HAC is part of McGeorge Community Legal Services on the campus of McGeorge School of Law.
- Enrollment in the Homeless Advocacy Clinic is limited to twelve students.
- Priority is given to graduating students.

### Prerequisites for Enrollment & Fees

Students must apply for certification under The State Bar of California's Practical Training of Law Students (PTLS) program. To be eligible for certification, a student must be enrolled in, or have successfully completed Evidence and Civil Procedure. Students must pay to the State Bar the student registration fee and certified law student fee. Students must also enroll in Poverty Law (Law 701), which will be offered during the Spring 2024 semester.

### Professor

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