

# Legal Line Clinic Training

FOR PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

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# What's Ahead

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- Get an overview of the **Legal Line Clinic process**



- Description of **clinic resources**



- How to use **Legal Server**



- **Best practices** during a Legal Line Clinic call





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# Clinic Process

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CLINIC PROCESS

# Intake Specialists

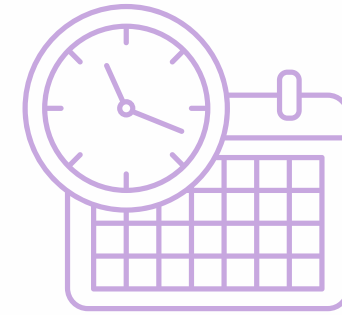
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- First Point of Contact
- Assess Eligibility
- Collect Basic Information

## CLINIC PROCESS

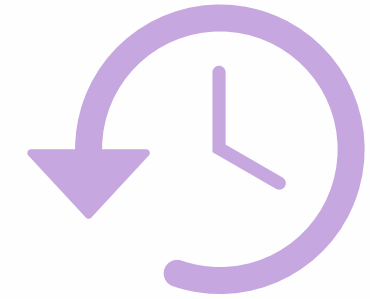
# Scheduling the Call



- Cases will be assigned to a **Staff Attorney or Legal Line Clinic** based on client needs.
- **Clinic-appropriate cases** will avoid emergencies, high-lethality cases, and language needs.
- Clients are **prepared and informed** about availability, expectations, and representation limits.

## CLINIC PROCESS

# The Day Before the Clinic



- You will be sent the **case numbers for your two assigned clients**.
  - Run **conflicts check** if your firm requires it.
- Only **basic details** and a brief description of their **legal concerns** in the case file.
- **Review the law** and prepare for consultation.



## CLINIC PROCESS

# Call Guidelines



- Calls should be made during the designated **4-hour clinic block**.
- For privacy, **dial \*67** before the number you are calling.
- If the client does not answer, please **leave a message if the file indicates that it is safe to do so**.
- Please try to **reach the client at least 3 times** during the clinic block.



## CLINIC PROCESS

# During the Call

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- Introduce yourself and explain why you are calling.
- Discuss confidentiality and limited scope
  - **It is imperative that the client acknowledges they understand our services and consent to the confidential nature of the advice provided.**
- Feel free to put client on hold if you need to consult with the TAP attorney in the Zoom Room.

After the call, **document background and advice provided** in Legal Server.





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# Clinic Resources

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## CLINIC RESOURCES

# Tools to Guide You

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- Family Law Book
- Legal Line Script & Issue-Spotting Tool
- TAP attorney in Zoom Room during clinic
- Opportunity to shadow Staff Attorney on Legal Line prior to clinic





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# Legal Server

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# Best Practices

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## BEST PRACTICES

# Introduction & Disclosures



- Is now still a good time to talk?
- Are you in a safe and private space to have this conversation?
- *...purpose of this call is to provide free legal advice...*
- *...I am not your personal attorney...*
- *...conversation is protected by attorney-client privilege...*
- *...confidential unless there is a third party present OR unless you are recording our conversation...*
- *...I am a mandatory reporter for child abuse...*



## BEST PRACTICES

# Disqualifying Factors



- *...I cannot offer specific advice if you are currently represented by an attorney...*
- *...our services at TAP are available only to survivors of abuse...*
- **ATTORNEY NOTE:** If client hears the above and does not have any further questions, add a case note to say, **“Client understands and consents to confidential nature and limited scope of services provided.”**

## BEST PRACTICES

# Gathering Details



For this portion of the call, **it is helpful to follow a template**, as applicable:

- AP:
  - DOM:
  - DOS:
  - CIC:
  - Custody Orders:
  - Community Property:
  - Criminal history:
  - CVC/VINE:
  - Forms of abuse:
  - Last incident of abuse:
  - Fear of Safety:
  - LEGAL ISSUE:
- **ATTORNEY NOTE:** Issue spotting
  - If you're unsure of the answer to a question, put the client on hold while you research or ask one of our staff attorneys for guidance.

BEST PRACTICES

# Social Work Consult



## When a client may need a social work consult:

- Homeless or seeking shelter, lacking basic needs
- Needs to process emotions
- Advanced safety planning
- Lease termination letter, the CVC application, therapy, or support groups

**TAP Social Workers have a scheduling grid.**



## BEST PRACTICES

# Remember to...

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- Lead with empathy
- Practice active listening for challenging calls
- Gently redirect
- Summarize what you've heard
- Ask for clarification
- Be prepared to de-escalate if needed
- Remain empathetic and nonjudgmental
- Empower the client

## BEST PRACTICES

# Ending the Call

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- If a client is interested in filling out their own legal forms, refer them to **TexasLawHelp.org**.
  - You can offer to send links to these forms via text.
- Remind clients to call the **TAP Legal Line at 1-800-374-HOPE (4673)** for subsequent appointments, if they have new legal questions.