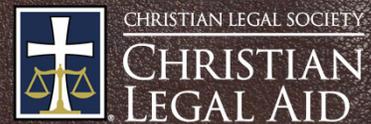


1

*So... you feel called to start
a Christian Legal Aid Clinic*



— Presented by
Ronald L. Foster
B.A.; M.A.Theol.; M.Div.; D. Min.; J.D.



2

The Market and Your Vision

- Why do this?

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

– Matthew 25:35–36 (NIV)



3

The Market and Your Vision

Whom will you be able to serve?



4

The Market and Your Vision

Whom will you be able to serve?

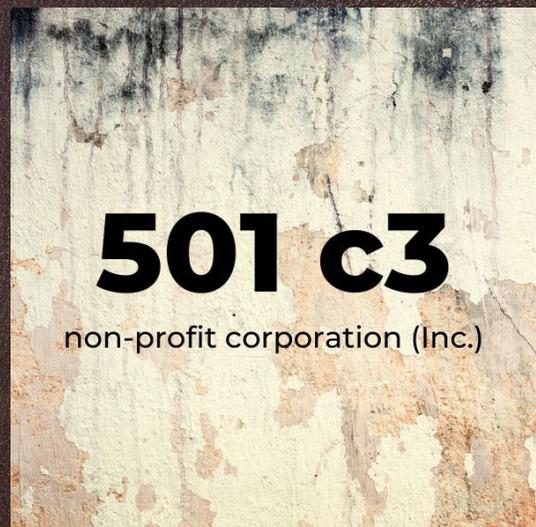
- GEOGRAPHY: Downtown/urban, suburban, rural
- SPECIFIC ECONOMIC CLASS:
1.5 times poverty level; homeless; working poor
- SPECIFIC POPULATION:
 - Immigrants, refugees
 - Elderly
 - Victims of domestic violence/human trafficking
 - Addicts
 - Felons, criminal history



5

The Organizational Setup: *The Pros & Cons*

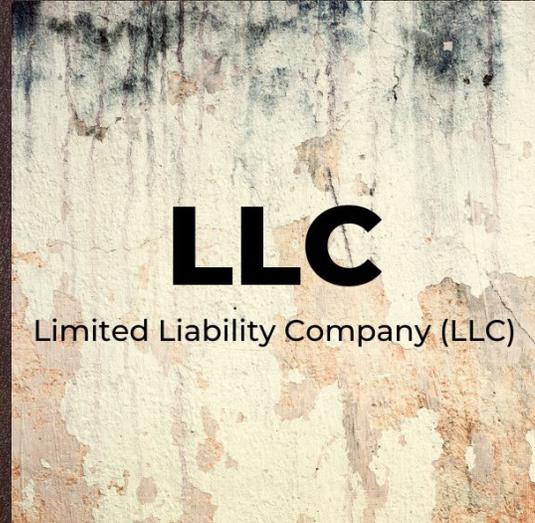
- Advantages of using an independent entity:
 - Incorporation
 - Validity/credibility
 - Control
 - Tax-deductible gifts; fundraising



6

The Organizational Setup:

- Limited Liability Company (LLC)
 - Validity/credibility
 - Control
 - Tax-deductible gifts; fundraising



7

The Organizational Setup:

Basic requirements for an Independent Entity:

- Board of Directors: need 3 to 7 members
- Articles of Incorporation / Organization
- Bylaws (*see IRS template*)
- Employer Identification Number (*EIN*)
- 501c3 application: Online/streamlined on IRS website



8

The Organizational Setup:

Advantages of partnering with another organization: church, rescue mission, etc.:

- Free or reduced cost facility
- Shared fundraising and/or budget; financial support
- “Built in” visibility (*advertising*)



9

The Organizational Setup:

Advantages of partnering with another organization: church, rescue mission, etc.:

Possible readily available spaces:

- Client greeting/waiting room
- Office equipment, files
- Separate rooms for confidential client meetings
- Support of church/organization’s leadership
- Help with recruiting volunteers
- Donation of staff assistance



10

Types of Legal Issues:

- General: anything imaginable
- Specific limited issue focus:
 - ONLY Family Law, Immigration, etc.
 - Volunteer attorneys could choose focus area(s)



11

Types and Focus of Legal Services:

- ABA Model Rules 1.3 and 2.1 (*see handout*)
 - Using all available 'tools' to assist the client
- Advice & Referral: listen, counsel, advise, refer out
- Limited Scope Representation (*see local Bar Association Rules*)
 - Necessity of a written Representation Agreement



12

Types and Focus of Legal Services:

Full representation, including trial court level litigation (not appellate)

- Necessity of a written Representation Agreement

Community legal education events:

- free educational seminars on the types of legal services the organization provides

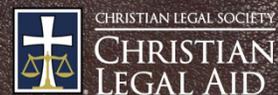


13

Clinic Sessions:

Monthly, Bi-weekly;

- Days/times:
Saturdays, weekdays, weeknights
- In-person; via phone/zoom



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Clinic Session Preparation:

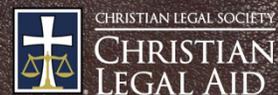
- Appointment-based
- Obtain client intakes in advance by phone, email, or website
- Get client contact info, summary of legal issue, key documents
- Need trained intake coordinator
- Need intake process and forms



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Clinic Session Format:

- Attorneys meet with clients in scheduled meetings
- Pros of appointment based: saves time, attorneys are prepared; able to help clients more readily



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Clinic Session Format:

Walk-in/help desk style --

- Advertise walk-in clinic open hours
- Attorneys advise on whatever issues come in
- Cons of walk-in: wastes time; attorney unprepared; may not be able to assist a client with a specific legal need (*i.e., immigration*)



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Clinic Process and Procedures:

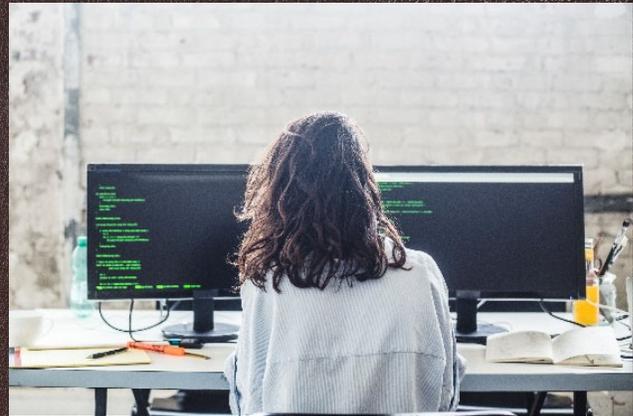
Volunteer & Client Scheduling Procedures

- Client intake process (*forms, etc.*), see Christian Legal Aid (CLA) Resource Library
- Intake Form, Consent /Waiver Form, Client Advice Form
- www.christianlegalaid.org/resources/members-only-resources



18

Technology on Site



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Volunteers Base Needed:

Leadership

- Initial start up team
- Board members
- Advisory board members
- Clinic director



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Volunteers Base Needed

Legal

- State-licensed attorneys
 - Clinic attorneys
 - On-call attorneys (to answer questions as needed)
 - Referral attorneys (to help with ongoing pro bono cases)
- Law students
- Paralegals



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Volunteers Base Needed

Non-Legal

- Administrative volunteers
- Hospitality volunteers
- Ministry volunteers
- Interpreters
- Communications
(*e.g., website, newsletters, etc.*)
- Event coordinators (*e.g., fundraiser dinners, social events*)



22

Volunteer Recruitment and Training:

Recruitment Sources

- Christian Legal Society attorney chapters
- Word-of-mouth, personal contacts
- Churches
- Local Bar Association
- Organization's website



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Volunteer Recruitment and Training:

Volunteer Training

- Formal training sessions on serving clients
- Live sessions by experienced volunteers
- Recorded webinars
(available in CLA Resource Library)
- On the job training
- Informational meeting for volunteers to share best practices with each other



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Volunteer Recruitment and Training:

Formal CLE training on legal issues

- By attorneys experienced in specific legal issues (*either volunteer from within the program or recruited from outside*)
- Partner with secular legal aid programs
- Recorded Webinars
- Online Training (*e.g., Practicing Law Institute with free webinars*)



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Legal Research Resources

National and State Legal Research Sites

- www.probono.net
- www.lawhelp.org
- Local legal aid sites
- CLA Resource Library



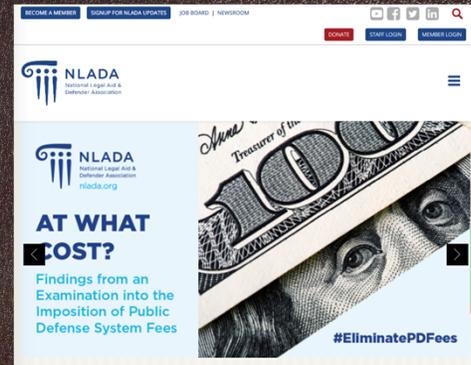
26

Liability Insurance

Malpractice Liability Insurance a MUST.

Options include:

- Attorney provides their own through private practice / law firm
- National Legal Aid and Defenders Association (NLADA)
www.NLADA.org
- Commercial carriers
- State Bar



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Liability Insurance

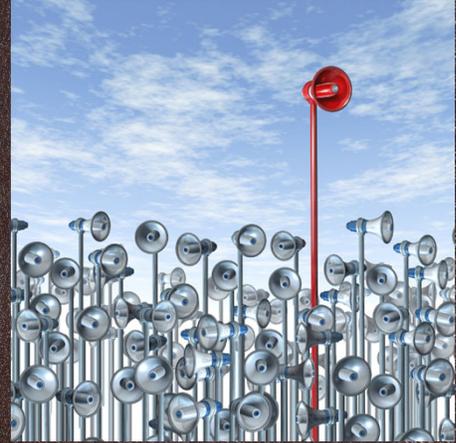
- Directors and Offices (D & O) — optional
- Errors and Omissions (E & O) — optional
- General Liability (usually carried by host facility and/or organization)



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Advertisement and Communications

- Website; email; text
- Churches
- Ministries to the poor (e.g., shelters, food pantries, clothing ministries)
- Social service agencies
- Community charity databases
- Post flyers
- Law firms and local bar associations



CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY
CHRISTIAN
LEGAL AID

29

Ministry Aspects:

Require a Statement of Faith:

- PROS:
clearly explains Christian foundation of the clinic and its workers
- CONS:
some people may object to the Christian emphasis instead of a “secular” one



CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY
CHRISTIAN
LEGAL AID

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Ministry Aspects:

Who would have to agree to a Statement of Faith?

- Organization's board and leaders only; Only attorneys; everyone?
- Attorneys encouraged to pray, give spiritual advice, and/or share the Gospel?
- ABA Model Rules re: advice, diligence, Rule 2.1



31

Ministry Aspects:

Counselor

In representing a client, a lawyer shall exercise independent professional judgment and render candid advice. In rendering advice, a lawyer may refer not only to law but to other considerations such as moral, economic, social and political factors, that may be relevant to the client's situation.



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Ministry Aspects:

- Volunteers to pray, give spiritual advice, and share the Gospel
- Referrals to churches and other ministries (social work)



33

Fundraising:

- Events
(e.g., prayer breakfasts, dinners, etc.)
- Solicitation letters and emails
- Website
- Churches
- Foundations
- Individuals



34

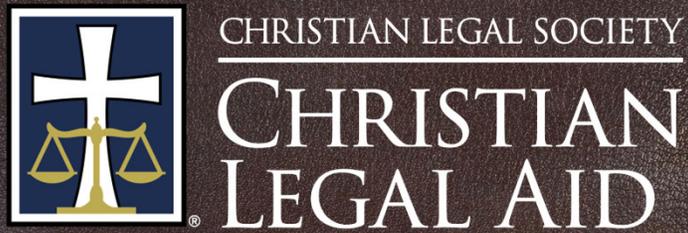
Are you ready?



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