

Acknowledgements

Without the support of CDEL's distinguished Board of Directors, its Young Professionals Board (YPB) and all of its dedicated volunteers, CDEL would not be able to offer high-quality, legal services, without charge, to Chicago and Cook County's most vulnerable and underrepresented residents, low-income seniors and persons with disabilities.

CDEL would also not be able to accomplish its mission without the generous support of its charitable funders.

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Email: info@cdela.org

What We Do

How We Do It

How to Volunteer

ASSISTANCE TO PRO SE LITIGANTS

The Pro Se Adult Guardianship Help Desk

CDEL provides self-help assistance in adult guardianship proceedings. The Help Desk is administered in partnership with, and located at, the Cook County Circuit Court; and is open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Volunteers assist *pro se* petitioners with legal procedures required to petition for appointment of a personal guardian for an adult who is disabled. If an estate guardian will be required and/or if the petition is likely to be contested, referral information is provided to appropriate organizations or private attorney referral services.

FOSTERING THE PRO BONO CULTURE

CDEL fosters the spirit of, and commitment to provision of legal services, *pro bono*, by offering volunteer attorneys, law firms and other legal professionals a variety of opportunities and services, including:

- representing clients, *pro bono*, in individual cases;
- acting as a mentor for volunteer attorneys in a specific legal area;
- offering accredited continuing legal education (CLE) seminars, at no cost, on a range of legal topics;
- providing primary professional liability insurance coverage;
- screening, preparing and electronically transferring files;
- offering the option to meet with, and provide legal services to, clients at CDEL's office; and
- networking opportunities.

Interested in volunteering?
Email us at volunteer@cdelaw.org

INITIATIVES

CDEL also provides legal services through initiatives- programs developed to target a specific legal issue or concern which has a significant impact on CDEL's clientele. Current initiatives include:

Senior Center Initiative (SCI)

SCI presentations are offered at community locations including senior residences and senior centers, which provide important information regarding a range of legal issues to seniors. The SCI is designed to protect seniors from abuse and financial exploitation by affording them the opportunity to meet with an attorney at in a convenient setting, at no cost, and prepare durable Powers of Attorney for Health Care and Property and Living Will Declarations, if appropriate. CDEL often partners with law firms and corporations to offer the SCI Workshops.

Senior Tax Opportunity Program (STOP)

STOP was developed to prevent seniors from losing their homes due to property tax delinquencies; and, is administered in partnership with the Cook County Assessor's and Treasurer's Offices. Volunteer attorneys contact affected seniors; inform them of their tax status; and advise them of the tax assistance programs available, including the Senior Citizen and the Senior Freeze Exemptions; to assist them in taking advantage of these important exemptions to lower their property taxes and keep seniors in their homes.

Learn more about CDEL and our services at
www.cdelaw.org

The Center for Disability and Elder Law (CDEL), is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3), legal services organization, which serves vulnerable residents of Cook County through its mission to:

- Provide free legal services to low-income persons who are either elderly and/or who have permanent disabilities; and,
- Foster the culture of *pro bono* service throughout the Chicago and Cook County legal communities.

CDEL focuses its legal services on systemic issues which have a disparate impact on our clientele, including financial stability, housing, end of life planning and financial exploitation; and provides services in three ways, through: (1) representation in civil matters; (2) Initiatives; and, (3) assistance to *pro se* litigants.

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

CDEL provides representation to clients in a range of civil legal areas, which include:

- **Housing:** landlord/tenant, eviction, property tax and title issues; and mortgage fraud;
- **Financial:** collections defense, consumer fraud, public utilities, contracts, and financial exploitation;
- **Estate Planning:** powers of attorney, living will declarations, simple wills;
- **Probate:** adult guardianship of the person; small decedent's estates-holding title to real estate;
- **Divorce:** if uncontested; with no minor children and/or substantial real or personal property.

Center for Disability and Elder Law (CDEL)
Providing free legal services to low-income Seniors and People with Disabilities since 1984