



Senior Legal Hotline

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www.seniorlegalhotline.org

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS -- PARALEGALS AND OTHER ADVOCATES

The Senior Legal Hotline is seeking paralegals and professionals with other law-related knowledge. We are a small, friendly office of attorneys, paralegals, clerical/intake staff and various volunteers and student interns. We provide free legal advice and brief services by phone to California residents over 60.

The job involves taking client calls, collecting demographic information and -- under supervision of an attorney -- offering legal advice regarding the client's problem, sending written information and in some cases, providing additional brief service. It is an excellent opportunity to gain experience actually working with clients and to obtain substantive knowledge about many highly practical areas of law.

Other possibilities include outreach and community education work, both inside and outside the office, the latter at presentations to groups of seniors or to staff at other agencies, and preparing written, audio-visual or on-line client education material.

Skills needed include:

§ ability to speak clearly and succinctly when gathering or giving information over the phone to a wide range of senior clients.

§ ability to work independently and follow through with assignments.

§ ability to remain calm in the face of busy phones and difficult situations or clients.

§ a caring attitude toward seniors of all ability levels.

§ cultural sensitivity to lifestyles, language, and disabling conditions.

§ ability to strictly respect the confidentiality of clients.

Formal paralegal training is not required, though substantive knowledge in one or more areas we commonly address is mandatory in lieu. Fluency in a foreign language is especially valuable.

Hours and days:

Hours of work are extremely flexible during regular daytime hours, but we need to know at least a day in advance when advocates are coming in order to make phone appointments for them. Regular office hours are 8:30 to 5, and we have evening hours -- to 8 p.m. -- every Thursday, snacks provided -- so people with full-time day jobs can volunteer.

Time commitment is negotiable, though to allow for the best training and orientation, a minimum of 12 hours a month for at least a year is suggested, preferably more -- especially at first. Students doing a semester or summer internship only would be expected to work more hours over a shorter time period.

To sign up or for more information, please call (916) 551-2145 or e-mail from the SLH web site, www.seniorlegalhotline.org.