**The Volunteer Lawyers Project is a non-profit legal aid organization that provides free legal information, assistance, and representation to people with low incomes facing civil legal issues**.  The VLP's legal services are provided entirely by community and attorney volunteers supported and supervised by a small staff. Our mission is to make "justice for all" a reality in Maine by giving people the knowledge, tools, and support to be equal participants in our justice system.

Interns provide the critical link to services for clients in Maine who cannot afford legal assistance through intake support, clinic coordination, and data entry. VLP programs that interns may support include:

**1. COURTHOUSE ASSISTANCE PROJECTS:**   Family law clinics provide services for income eligible clients dealing with family law matters, and clients who qualify can meet with a lawyer for up to half an hour for legal advice. The intern helps to run the clinics efficiently by providing structure, information, and intake before and after the client meets with a lawyer. Through an initial training, and then through the client interviewing process, the intern learns how to determine eligibility, effectively manage difficult conversations, gather critical legal information and prepare clients for their family law consultations. This experience provides an introduction to actual attorney/ client interactions and legal analysis particular to family law matters. CHAPs are currently running via zoom and may return to in person courts as it becomes safe to do so.

**2. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PRO BONO PANEL COORDINATION AT COURT:** Volunteer lawyers provide representation for clients on the Protection from Abuse docket. The intern coordinates communication between the domestic violence agencies, clients and lawyers to insure the client receives assistance. The intern will be trained on domestic violence issues, eligibility concerns, and proper documentation of cases. The student will also be able to observe actual protection from abuse hearings and discuss the process and outcomes with VLP staff and volunteer lawyers. Currently the domestic violence panels run in Lewiston and Portland courts.

**3. CLIENT INTERVIEWING ON OTHER AREAS OF LAW:** This experience highlights other areas of unmet civil legal needs faced by the low-income community in Maine.  With particular focus on unemployment, disability and probate matters, the intern will interview the client for intake, provide essential legal information and discuss next steps as directed by the staff supervisor. Interns may also provide intake for the VLP’s Workers Rights, Small Claims, or Small Business Legal Clinics.

**4. MEDIA & ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES:** The intern may be asked to assist staff with web and social media work, as well as various administrative tasks including data entry.

**5. PROJECTS**: Interns are encouraged to assist staff with various projects that would be useful to the intern, staff, client and/or project. Discussion and guidance are provided when choosing a research or other type of project, with emphasis on the student taking a substantial lead.

**EXPECTATIONS:** The VLP internships must include a minimum of 5 hours per week commitment, up to 10 hours per week available. The VLP provides training and supervision to accepted interns. To apply, please complete the application form and forward form and required materials to: sleafsong@vlp.org

Thank you for supporting the work of the VLP to increase Access to Justice for all Mainers.