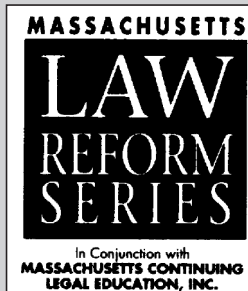


# MLRI Basic Public Benefits Advocacy Trainings

A series of 11 trainings for legal, social and health services, and community advocates who assist low and moderate-income individuals and families.



MCLE and the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI) are collaborating to make annual basic public benefits advocacy training more accessible to the many public and private sector individuals and lawyers who assist Massachusetts residents in qualifying for and receiving public benefits.

## 1 SSI & SSDI Basics

Wednesday, September 22, 2010  
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
5.5 Credits

Program No. 2110040P01

Social Security disability programs continue to be a major source of cash and health benefits for individuals with disabilities. However, dealing with a large federal agency can be daunting and overwhelming for an unrepresented claimant. The program begins with an overview of the two disability programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), with emphasis on eligibility requirements and procedures, including basic disability eligibility standards and non-disability issues such as income, resources, and non-citizen criteria. A brief overview of the appeals process for disability application starts the afternoon session. Concluding the program is a brief review of post-entitlement issues, with special emphasis on work incentives and overpayments. The training is for legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice who are thinking of representing clients before SSA, social and health workers, and community activists. Participants receive detailed training materials.

Faculty: Linda L. Landry, Esq., Disability Law Center, Inc., Boston; Svetlana Uimenkova, Esq., Disability Law Center, Inc., Boston

## 2 CORI Basics

Thursday, October 7, 2010  
9:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.  
2.75 Credits

Program No. 2110038P01

Massachusetts keeps criminal offender

record information, known as “CORI,” on every individual who enters the state’s criminal court system. CORI is recorded and kept on file even if the underlying case is ultimately dismissed or the accused is found not guilty. CORI is used in screening processes by employers, landlords, and government agencies. The increased use of CORI by employers and others has resulted in more and more people with criminal records being denied employment, housing, benefits, and other opportunities for economic stability that others take for granted. This program provides “nuts and bolts” instructions on how to seal a client’s criminal record. You learn how to obtain a copy of a client’s CORI, read and understand it, correct errors, determine if it can be sealed, and how to seal it.

Faculty: Pauline Quirion, Esq., Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston; Stephen A. Russo, Esq., Legal Advocacy Resource Center, Inc., Boston

## 3 Representing Unemployed Workers at Unemployment Insurance Hearings

Thursday, October 7, 2010  
1:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
3.25 Credits

Program No. 2110039P01

An unemployment insurance (UI) hearing is a high-stakes endeavor for your client and his or her family. UI, a critical safety net during periods of joblessness, is especially important now to help workers and their families during this recession. This seminar provides you with the expertise you need in order to help your clients get the UI benefits to which they are legally entitled. Our expert panel guides you through the intricacies of the entire UI system from

eligibility criteria through the appeals process, and you have the opportunity to observe a mock UI hearing.

Faculty: Monica Halas, Esq., Cochair, Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston; Margaret E. Monsell, Esq., Cochair, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston; Elba Aviles, Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston; Brian Flynn, Esq., Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston; Audrey Richardson, Esq., Greater Boston Legal Services; Tom Smith, Esq., Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston; Ellen Wallace, Esq., Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston

Training materials include *2010 Unemployment Advocacy Guide: An Advocate’s Guide to Unemployment in Massachusetts*.

This training is supported in part by the Massachusetts Bar Foundation.

## 4 Assisting Families Experiencing Homelessness: Emergency Assistance Shelter & Benefits

Wednesday, October 27, 2010  
9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
3.5 Credits

Program No. 2110037P01

This program focuses on strategies to assist families experiencing homelessness in accessing and retaining shelter and services from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Trainers provide an overview of the recent major changes to the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter system, as well as advocacy tips regarding the range of issues facing families at-risk or experiencing homelessness as they seek access to EA diversion, prevention, shelter, housing, and stabilization resources. The training includes an overview of the system, the application process, denials, terminations, shelter placements, and program requirements.

Faculty: Kelly B. Turley, MSW, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Lynn; Steven J. Valero, Esq., Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston

Training materials include *the 2010 Emergency Assistance Advocacy Guide: A Guide to Emergency Shelter and Rehousing Services for Homeless Families with Children in Massachusetts*.

## 5 Health Care Access Programs

Wednesday, November 10, 2010  
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
5.5 Credits  
Program No. 2110199P01

The 2006 Massachusetts health reform law and the MassHealth waiver have created programs that offer affordable health coverage for almost all low-income state residents, but navigating the eligibility system has gotten a lot more complicated. This program gives outreach workers, social workers, providers, and advocates a nuts-and-bolts overview of the eligibility requirements of the main health care programs and advice on how to assist their patients and clients in becoming enrolled and maintaining coverage.

Faculty: Neil F. Cronin, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston; Victoria Pulos, Esq., Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston

*Training materials include 2009 MassHealth Advocacy Guide: An Advocate's Guide to the Massachusetts Medicaid Program.*

## 6 Income Maximization for the Working Poor (Families & Individuals)

Wednesday, December 8, 2010  
9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
3.5 Credits  
Program No. 2110142P01

This session focuses on various supplemental benefits and assistance programs which help working families and individuals to maximize their income and reduce their expenses. The first part of the session is presented in a lecture format and the second part utilizes small break-out groups and case hypotheticals.

Faculty: Laura R. Gallant, Esq., Neighborhood Legal Services, Lynn; Ellen J. Shachter, Esq., Cambridge & Somerville Legal Services, Cambridge

## 7 Cash Assistance for Massachusetts Families & Individuals: TAFDC & EAEDC

Tuesday, January 11, 2011  
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
5.5 Credits  
Program No. 2110139P01

This training is for legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice, social and health services workers, and community activists who want to learn about or get an update on the basics of the two main cash assistance programs in Massachusetts: TAFDC (Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children)—the cash assistance program for families, and EAEDC (Emergency Aid to Elders, Disabled and Children)—the cash assistance program for

elders and disabled and some children.

Faculty: Deborah Harris, Esq., Chair, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston

*Training materials include 2011 TAFDC Advocacy Guide and 2011 EAEDC Advocacy Guide.*

## 8 Food Stamps/SNAP

Thursday, February 3, 2011  
9:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.  
2.75 Credits  
Program No. 2110141P01

The federal Food Stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the first line of defense against hunger for thousands of Massachusetts residents. The state has implemented numerous policy changes and received federal approvals of waivers to both increase participation and increase the value of the monthly benefit. However, many individual households still struggle with getting their applications approved at overburdened local offices. Dealing with a food stamp office or getting emergency (expedited) benefits can be overwhelming for an unrepresented family or individual. This training begins with an overview of the federal Food Stamp/SNAP program, the caseload dynamics over the years, and the major federal changes implemented in the past year.

Faculty: Patricia J. Baker, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston; Laura R. Gallant, Esq., Neighborhood Legal Services, Lynn

*Training materials include the 2011 Food Stamp/SNAP Advocacy Guide.*

## 9 State & Federal Veterans Benefits

Thursday, February 3, 2011  
1:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
2.75 Credits  
Program No. 2110138P01

This training is for legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice, social and health services workers, veterans' lay advocates, legislative aides, and anyone else who wants to learn about the basics of state Veterans Services benefits (Chapter 115 benefits) and federal Veterans Services and non-service-connected disability compensation and pensions. The session covers the basic application process, eligibility rules for veterans (military discharge status, financial eligibility, disqualifying conditions, refund status), and the disability requirements for federal benefits. It will also cover the basics of filing an appeal. There is also a brief presentation on the issues and strategies involved in seeking an upgrade of discharge.

Faculty: T. Richard McIntosh, Esq., South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Hyannis; Anna Schleelein, Esq., Sehler Legal Services, Newton

## 10 Elder Benefits Programs

Tuesday, March 1, 2011  
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
5.5 Credits  
Program No. 2110140P01

In these hard times, elders in Massachusetts depend on a variety of benefits programs to meet their income, health, heat and nutrition needs. These include income supplement programs, retirement benefits, food and nutrition services, home-based care services, and health care programs. This program provides legal services advocates, lawyers and paralegals in private practice, social and health services workers, and community activists with an overview and basic knowledge of the resources available to elders, with an emphasis on program criteria relevant to elders and how to navigate the complexities across programs.

Faculty: Deborah H. Thomson, Esq., Chair, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston

## 11 Immigrants & Public Benefits

Tuesday, March 22, 2011  
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
5.5 Credits  
Program No. 2110255P01

This training offers the nuts-and-bolts on immigration status and benefits for non-citizens. Massachusetts is one of the top states with a significant immigrant population. This training guides you through the basics of immigration and public benefits rules to help you understand which benefits are available for specific immigrant populations. It covers any recent changes in Department of Transitional Assistance, MassHealth, and Social Security Administration policy on immigrant eligibility.

Faculty: Patricia J. Baker, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston; Virginia Benzan, Esq., Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston; Victoria Pulos, Esq., Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Boston

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- ▶ **CALL IN** your credit card order to 800-966-6253, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- ▶ **WALK UP** on the day of the program or **DROP IN** to MCLE’s bookstore, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

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**IN-PERSON BOSTON PROGRAM: Health Care Access Programs; 2110199P01** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**IN-PERSON BOSTON PROGRAM: Income Maximization for the Working Poor (Families & Individuals); 2110142P01** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**IN-PERSON BOSTON PROGRAM: Cash Assistance for Massachusetts Families & Individuals: TAFDC & EAEDC; 2110139P01** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**IN-PERSON BOSTON PROGRAM: Food Stamps/SNAP; 2110141P01** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**IN-PERSON BOSTON PROGRAM: Elder Benefits Programs; 2110140P01** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**IN-PERSON BOSTON PROGRAM: Immigrants & Public Benefits; 2110255P01** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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