Chico Consumer Protection Agency

Intern Packet Fall 2012

COMMUNITY LEGAL INFORMATION CENTER

CHICO CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY

Intern Training Packet

Table of Contents

Dear Intern:

Welcome to the Chico Consumer Protection Agency, CCPA. The Community Legal Information Center, established in 1970 as the Public Law Internship Program, is a collection of projects which serve the community by providing free legal information and referrals, presenting seminars, workshops, advocacy and information media to the population of Northern California.

CCPA assists clients by providing legal information (**not advice!**) regarding a wide range of legal issues including: bankruptcy, consumer protection, foreclosure, contract disputes and a variety of miscellaneous questions. Interns will become familiar with handling consumer law cases specializing in civil law, using legal print and electronic resources to research and provide information. As an intern, you will help provide clients with the legal information (**not advice!**) that they need. Our purpose is to provide the client with as much information (**not advice!**) as possible so they may make their OWN informed decision. We do not tell clients what they should do, but instead, what their options are. If CLIC cannot provide the information that the client needs, interns will make every effort to **research the particular problem and/or refer the client** to an organization qualified to assist the client. Our specific goal is to **encourage self-help** in resolving legal problems by **providing legal information and education for the public**, while you as an intern are given an opportunity to learn about the various dispute resolution processes and gain a greater knowledge of the law. Although we are based in Butte County and assist clients in our surrounding area, we have information and referrals available for other counties, and have even handled cases from other states/countries.

Interns must maintain scheduled office hours at the CLIC office in order to provide walk-in and call-in clients with legal information (**not advice!**) or referrals. In addition to office hours, interns will also be expected to fulfill 5 out-of-office hours over the course of the semester to fulfill their **Community Outreach** obligations as stated in the Intern Syllabus. These Community Outreach hours can be satisfied through a number of opportunities over the course of the semester, including BMU information tables, flyer posting, class talks and many more. The outreach you complete will be recorded in the Outreach binder at the front desk. We will have weekly meetings with our **Supervising Attorney, Teodora DeLorenzo**, which consist of substantive training; review of assigned readings, as well as general discussions regarding any issues on any o our cases. Additionally, interns will be required to complete occasional quizzes and projects, administered at the Directors' discretion, which will be graded by the Directors, for the purpose of familiarizing interns with legal research as well as to educate interns on common client questions. Remember, this is an **educational experience** designed for you, which is meant to be meaningful and relevant through direct community service. Not only do you have an opportunity to gain valuable experience and knowledge that few undergraduates ever get, but you will also have the opportunity to assist people whom have been taken advantage of, and have few or no other resources.

Enclosed in this training packet you will find a contract with an attached list of rules, and a course syllabus. Interns are responsible for abiding by the rules and adhering to the terms and conditions in this document. As directors and former interns, we look forward to having a positive learning experience with you and welcome you to the Chico Consumer Protection Agency!

Respectfully yours,

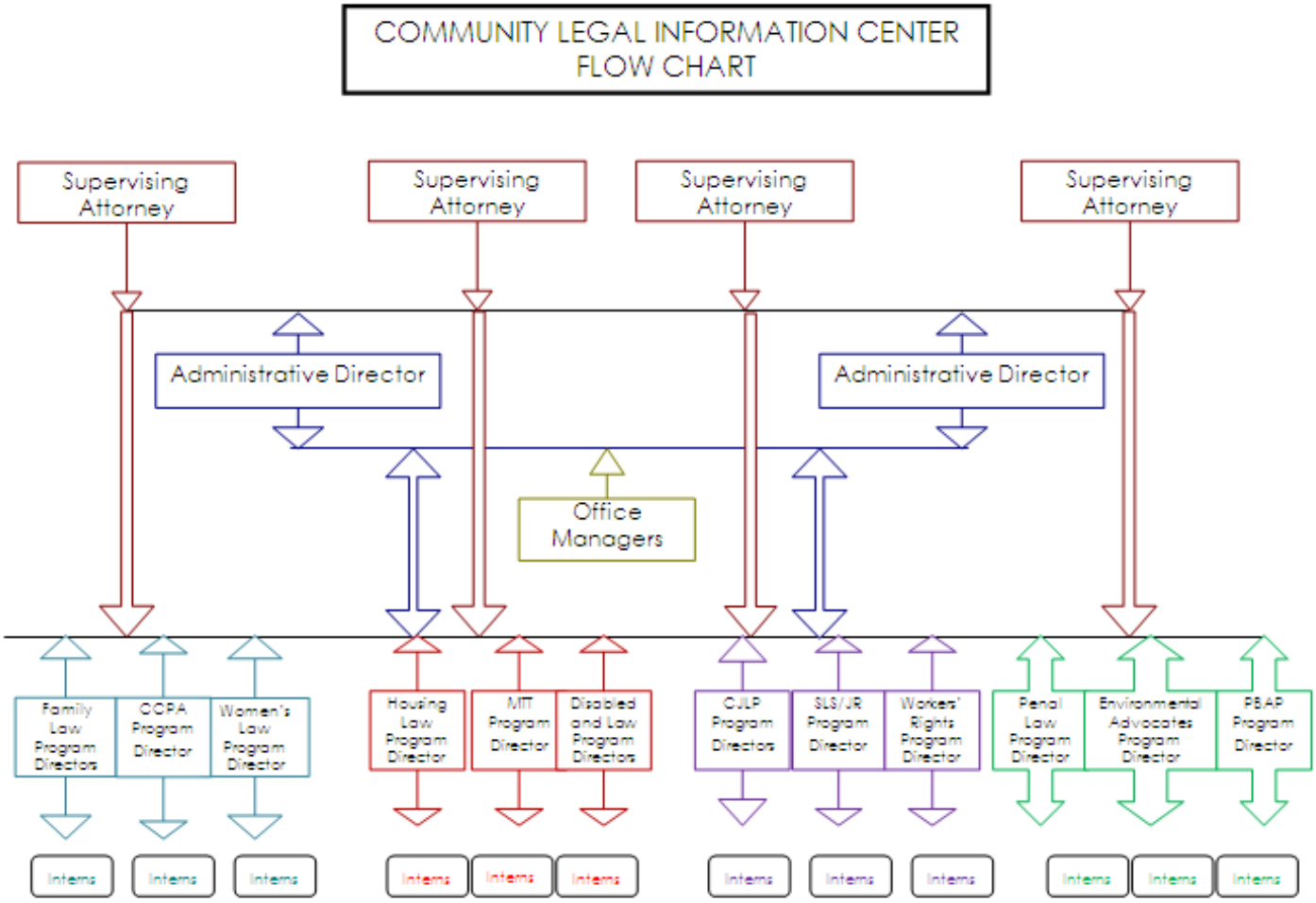
Director **Director** Teodora DeLorenzo **Supervising Attorney**

What Is CLIC?

Supervising Attorneys

Administrative Directors (ADs)

Office Managers (OMs)



CLIC Contact List

Administrative Directors (AD)

Contact List

Administrative Directors

CCPA Supervising Attorney

Teddy DeLorenzo 530.898.6478 tdelorenzo@csuchico.edu

CCPA Department Directors

CLIC Office Managers (OM)

@ CLIC Office: 530.898.4354

Fall 2012 CCPA Interns

Intern Name	Phone Number	Email

CCPA Office Rules and Procedures

1. If you are the first one in the office, your duty is to turn both computers on and make the office accessible and clean. If you are the last one to l eave the office make sure to turn the computers and lights off and don't leave a mess.
2. Journals, Assignments, Projects & Weekly Pending Case Intakes
    a. Every Intern shall maintain and complete assignments, research projects and weekly case intakes each week.
    b. If a client has a particular question, which needs to be answered interns must complete a pending case intake, research the client's question and either call the client back, or mail/email the requested information to the address provided by the client.
    c. If the Intern has no intakes to research, or has completed their work for the day before their scheduled hours are completed the intern will be expected to research a particular point of consumer law and prepare a brief summary for that week's scheduled meeting with the Supervising Attorney. Alternatively, Interns may work on weekly quizzes, and research as necessary to promote CCPA knowledge.
    d. All research Projects, Quizzes and Pending Case Intakes must be turned in at the weekly meeting.
    e. Each intern shall maintain a daily journal logging in their activities of their daily activities.
3. Failure to turn in weekly project/quizzes may result in Disciplinary Action. Assignments are due by 4:30PM on their assigned due dates. They are to be turned into the CCPA in-office inbox. Late work will not be accepted without permission from a director *prior* to the due date.
4. Answering the Telephone
    a. Identify yourself by your first name **ONLY**.
    b. Acknowledge that the caller has reached the Chico Consumer Protection Agency.

    "Hello, I am (intern's name), I am not an attorney and therefore I cannot provide you with legal advice, I am a paralegal intern and can provide legal information only; how can I help you."

    c. If a client is requesting advice, explain that we are not licensed Attorneys, only **Paralegal Interns** and can only provide legal information, not legal advice. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you KNOW and UNDERSTAND.
    d. Take notes. Making sure to COMPLETELY fill out the ENTIRE intake form, front and back. This is very important because CLIC is funded based on the number and quality of intakes we process each month, leaving an intake form incomplete may result in loss of funds and you do not want to be responsible for that.
    e. Get into the habit of taking all information from the client and researching CORRECT and UPDATED information before answering any questions you think

you may know the answer to. Do not hesitate to tell a client that you will research their issue and contact them in an appropriate amount of time.

5. It is important to provide CORRECT and UPDATED information and if you cannot find an answer, do not hesitate to ask a Director, or call the Supervising Attorney. Our weekly meetings will provide a forum for discussing any issues with intakes that may arise over the course of the week and you will be expected to come prepared with questions.
6. You must call the client or caller back. Calling the client back is not the responsibility of the Directors. Never simply ignore a client, intake or missed call. This reflects poorly on CLIC, CCPA, the Directors and you as the Intern.
7. Setting Appointments
    a. If a client wishes to come into office, schedule an appointment for a time when you know you will be there, or if you happen to mention a time to come in when you will not be there, but another intern will be, make sure you okay this with them before the client would come in. We do not want a client to come into our office and find that we will be unable to help them at the current time due to lack of communication, once again this reflects poorly on everyone.
    b. Check Conflict of Interest *(see below)*
    c. Complete a General Intake
8. Conflict of Interest
    a. The ethical rules relating to conflict of interest fall into three main categories.
        i. The duty not to represent or provide information to a client if that representation would be directly adverse to another client.
        ii. The duty to avoid conflict with the interests of former clients
        iii. The duty not to represent a person when the Lawyer's or Paralegal's own financial business, property, or personal interests can interfere with professional judgment.
    b. This duty also includes the duty to avoid the appearance of a conflict.
    c. The following is a representative, although not exhaustive, list of relationships causing potential conflicts.
        i. Clients with interests adverse to one another, for example a consumer and the business the consumer has a complaint against.
        ii. Husband and wife dissolution
        iii. Landlord - Tenant
        iv. Employer - Employee
        v. Professional Organizations
        vi. Social Organizations
        vii. Spouses
        viii. Friends
        ix. Roommates
        x. Family
        xi. Supervising Attorneys, Directors, Interns, and Office Managers
9. Disciplinary Action
    a. Failure to comply with the rules and regulations of CLIC or CCPA will result in counseling notice which will contain corrective action necessary to cure the violation.
    b. All Counseling Notices will be kept on file.
    c. Any intern receiving three Counseling Notices will receive "NO CREDIT."
10. Barred Clientele
    a. If a client has missed three scheduled appointments, he or she may no longer be helped. In the case of a barred client, possible reasons an intern can give the client are:

i. "Your case is too complicated for CLIC's interns. We apologize for initially scheduling your case."
ii. "There is a conflict of interest in your case that has arisen at this time."
iii. "Your case involves issues that we cannot assist you with."

11. Be wary when explaining what the law means. Do not be afraid to research or ask questions before answering a question or giving information.

Information vs. Advice

We cannot at any time offer legal advice. We are not attorneys, and therefore can only offer legal information. Providing legal advice is an event that will trigger the issuance of a Counseling Notice. Providing legal advice by a non-attorney is also a civil wrong and possibly a misdemeanor.

INFORMATION
Information is when you offer more than one option to a client and provide them with enough information about those options so that the client can make a decision. Remember that "information" is when you tell a client about the law.

ADVICE
Advice is given when a client is told what to do, when all of the other options are eliminated. The interpretation of the law can sometimes be construed as advice.

PROTECT YOURSELF
There are a few things you can do to protect yourself from giving advice.

1. Make sure the client understand that you are not a lawyer, but rather a paralegal intern.
2. Explain that you cannot advise them on what to do, but only give them options.
3. Make sure that the information that you have provided the client has been taken only as information and not as advice.

DO SAY	DO NOT SAY
"Often, what seems to work…"	"I think you should…"
"You have a choice of…"	"If I were you, I would…"
"The possibilities are…"	"It seems to me that your only option is to…"
"The situation could be handled by…"	"Of all your alternatives option 'A' is best…"
"You have a number of options available to you…"	"This is what you should do…"
"Here is a copy of the code section that might address your question…"	"My supervising attorney says you should…"

"Here is a copy of an article from a resource book that we consult that might help you."	

Attendance Policy

Attendance is an important factor in determining whether or not you will receive units for your internship. Attendance is kept for all CLIC staff, interns, program directors and administrative directors. Attendance is recorded by the Office Managers Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm during regular school months and Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am to 3:00 during intersession, spring break and summer. Attendance is reported to all directors and attorneys on a regular basis and is used as one factor in determining how to grade CLIC interns and directors.

Please take attendance seriously and make sure that you understand CLIC's Attendance Policy. Please resolve any attendance disputes with your program directors rather than an office manager. While the directors and attorneys establish the Attendance Policy, the Office Managers record attendance; please do not ask the OMs to make changes to your attendance, the program directors should do so; please do not ask the OMs for special favors in ignoring absences or tardy attendance, it is not fair to ask them to cheat for you. The time clock system will record an accurate account of when you are in and out of the office. Make sure to be on time and leave on time whenever you are scheduled. Disputes and corrections to attendance records for all intern and directors must be made within one month of the attendance event otherwise the record will be deemed accepted. Do not wait until the last week of the semester to counter your attendance.

SCHEDULING YOUR HOURS

You will find that your CLIC hours will often be between your class and work schedule. You should schedule your hours so that you have sufficient time to get to class or work. You may have to schedule yourself at 45 minutes after the hour rather than on the hour to give yourself enough time to take care of business (i.e. get coffee and use the rest room). Do not use CLIC as an excuse to be late to class. Remember the time clock program keeps time to the exact minute that you clock in or out. In the end every minute will add up. Remember to monitor your hours so that you are on track to accomplishing your required 115 in-office hours.

NO SHOW POLICY:

A "No Show" is defined as an intern not coming in for their scheduled office hours, not calling to inform the Office Manager that they will not be in for their office hours, or missing a scheduled appointment during their office hours. A called-in "No Show" may also be given if you are absent from a mandatory CLIC event without prior approval from the program director.

First No Show: Intern will receive a warning signed by his/her director the week following the No Show.

Second No Show: Intern will receive a second written warning signed by his/her director and that director will notify the program's Supervising Attorney regarding the individual.
Third No Show: The Supervising Attorney will be notified and measures will be taken to remove the intern from the CLIC program.

ABSENT/CALLED POLICY:
An "Absent/Called" is defined as an intern calling in to notify the OM that they will not be present for their office hours. The absence will only be accepted if the intern calls no later than one ½ hour before their office hours are scheduled to begin for that day (otherwise a No Show will be given). Hours should be made up promptly, but the absence will not be removed unless under certain circumstances (i.e. illness, jury duty, and emergency) you are able to provide written documentation. After an intern has called in three unexcused absences, they will be turned into a "No Show." **Three absent called events will be counted as one No Show.**

An Absent Called (AB/C) will be given in the event that

- An Intern/Director calls in absent for their hours
- The Intern/Director leaves 10+ minutes early
- The Intern/Director arrives 10 minutes late for their scheduled office hour
- The Intern/Director leaves the office without signing out, leaves the office when they are not qualified to take a break, or takes a personal break that they are qualified to take but does not return by their 10 or 30 minute deadline

An Excused Absence (AB/EX) will be given in the event that

- The Intern/Director provides the Office Managers a **written note or e-mail**, verifying the absence due to work, illness, doctor's appointments, or certain school activities
- An Excused Absence may also be given to the Intern/Director due to special circumstances and only after speaking with their director(s) and the Office Manager and providing written documentation. These Excused Absences will be evaluated and determined on an individual basis.
- An excused absence does not count toward a No Show; however, consistent absences may require the intern to adjust their schedule.

AMENDING ABSENT CALLS
By doing outreach events you can erase an absent called off of your attendance record. You may do up to one hour of outreach per event to erase 1 absent called. You may use outreach events to make up a maximum of 3 absent calls, and each time they must be at different events. Please note, you cannot double count your required outreach hours with your absent amendment outreach hours. In other words, you must complete the 5 required outreach hours, on top of whatever outreach hours you used to make amendments to your attendance.

LATE/CALLED POLICY:
An intern may call in to say they will be late for their scheduled office hours. When they call, they must notify the OM of approximately how late they will be. Attendance will be taken off these figures accordingly. If the intern will be later than 10 minutes for their office hours, this is considered an Absent/Called.

SCHEDULE CHANGES:
Permanent schedule changes must be made one week in advance. If you need to permanently change your weekly schedule, please notify the OM at least a week in advance so the program schedule can be adjusted appropriately. You are still responsible for all of your scheduled hours until the program's weekly schedule is updated. Absences of more than two consecutive days

must have notice of at least one-week prior written notice, and must contain the written approval of the Program Director.

LOGGING IN AND OUT ON THE COMPUTER

When you come in for your office hours the first thing you will do is clock in on our time clock program located on the laptop at the OM desk. Clocking in and out of the time clock program is how you will track your hours to ensure that you complete the required number of hours for your internship. Every two weeks your director should give you a printout notifying you of your hours.

If you fail to clock in or out for any reason you will need to fill out a Time Amendment form which the OMs or ADs will have. Once your amendment sheet has received all of the necessary signatures then that time will be added or subtracted to your overall time.

TIME CLOCK VIOLATIONS

A time clock violation, "TCV" is an event such as failing to log in and log out for your shift. A TCV can result in a penalty such as an absent called, an additional outreach requirement or loss of hours for that day.

BREAKS AND PERSONAL TIME

Interns/Directors may leave for personal reasons only if they are scheduled to work **four or more consecutive hours**. Interns/Directors working over **FOUR** consecutive hours may leave for no longer than **10 minutes** (Industrial Welfare Commission Order, Sec. 12). Interns/Directors working **FIVE** consecutive hours may take a **30-minute break** (IWCO, Sec. 11). Interns and Directors scheduled to work less than a FOUR-hour block in the office should not be signing out for personal breaks. **They are expected to remain in the office for the duration of their scheduled shift.** 7-11 runs are considered personal breaks. SMOKING BREAKS are considered personal breaks. Meter runs and bathroom breaks should not exceed 5 minutes. Please notify the OM before leaving the office for these reasons. An Absent Called will be issued if the break is longer than 5 minutes and the Administrative Director and/or Supervising Attorney will be notified.

NOTE: All interns must comply with the CLIC General Attendance Policy, as well as any individual program requirements stated in the Intern Contract. **ANY FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE ATTENDANCE POLICY MAY RESULT IN A NO CREDIT!!!**

CHANGES TO INTERN ATTENDANCE RECORD

If either of the following attendance events occurs:

- An absence is excused or unexcused or
- There is a No Show.

And the intern requests that an amendment be made to the attendance record; the procedure below is to be followed.

1. The intern will talk with his/ her director. The director will then talk to the OM to determine why either of the events above was entered.
2. The director will then make the final decision on the attendance issue, and make any corrections to the attendance record reporting it to the OM using the Attendance Problem form.
3. Any amendments must be made within one month of the absence.

Note: The directors, administrative directors and supervising attorneys have authority over attendance issues; please do not ask the OM's to make judgment-based decisions. It is the directors' jobs to make decisions; it is the OM's job to record the attendance events.

Changes to the attendance record must be recorded using the proper forms:

ATTENDANCE CHANGE FORM

Date: _____ Date of Attendance Issue: _____

Intern/Director Name: _____

Program: _____

Original		**Amended**	
Attendance Event:		Attendance Event:	
[ ]	Absent Called	[ ]	Absent Called
[ ]	Absent Excused	[ ]	Absent Excused
[ ]	No Show	[ ]	No Show
[ ]	No Change, Original Event Confirmed		

Explanation for Change:

_____

_____

_____

Intern Signature: _____

OM Making the Change: _____

Director/AD Name and Signature: _____

CLIC TIME CLOCK AMMENDMENT FORM

Name:_____ **Department:** _____

Did you fail to clock in or out? In_____ Out_____ Date _____

Reason (REQUIRED):

Corrected Time IN: _____ **Corrected Time OUT:** _____

Total Number of Hours Worked _____

Director Signature _____Date:_____

Intern Signature_____Date:_____

OM Signature _____Date:_____

Information Resources

In Electronic Format

The computer will be one of your most valuable resources here at CLIC. You will primarily be using two online sources; however there will be many other valuable sources you will use as well. The two main sources you will be using are **www.leginfo.ca.gov** and **www.buttecourt.ca.gov**.

Before going into these two sources it is necessary to know how to log on to the computer. First, press the power button on the computer, and eventually a login screen will pop up. In this login screen under user name, type in: asccpas1, and then type in the current password. This will log you on to the computer.

The website **www.leginfo.ca.gov** is useful for looking up the exact language of a statute, and will lead you to further questions to ask your client. As the semester progresses, we will work on how to more effectively use West Law to track down pertinent statutes. In order to search for a statute for which you know the code numbers, first click the CA Law section. This will bring you to a page with many different bodies of law. Select the one in question, and do either a key word or statute number search in the search bar.

If a Butte County client wants to know anything about their record (i.e. is there a judgment against me? / I was sued but don't know my court date… etc.) You can use the Butte County Courthouse website, **www.buttecourt.ca.gov**. Please note that this will only be helpful for anyone in Butte County, where the information is provided as public knowledge. Not every county has this information available online. To find case information or a criminal record click the "case information" tab on the left side, search the "online case index", and enter the client's information as requested on the site. If the client has their specific Case Number available, simply type it into the bottom box and click display. This website is also helpful for Court Calendars, Fee Schedules, Phone numbers, and location information.

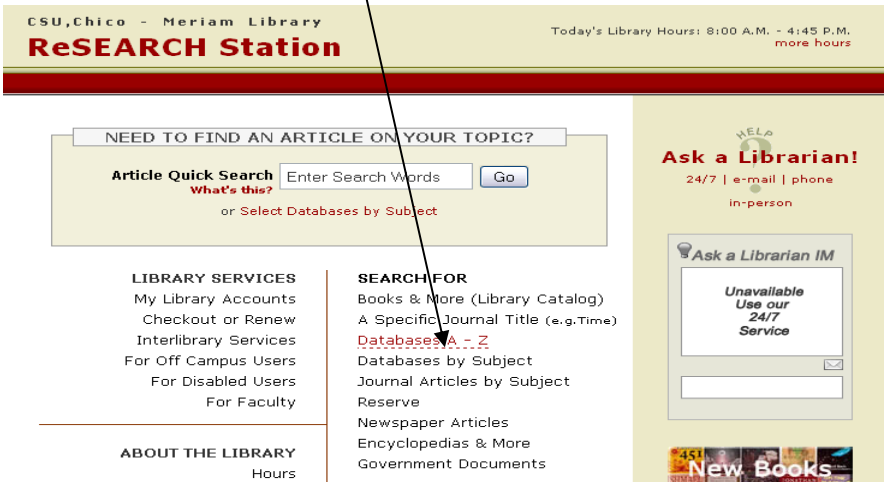
Another helpful website is **www.courtinfo.ca.gov**. This can be used to find a directory of every court house in California. If a client was has an issue in LA or Santa Barbara and you need to find the contact information for a particular courthouse in that county, this is an excellent resource. This website has a great **"legal self help" section** at the bottom, as well as online versions of nearly any court document that is available. When informing clients of this resource it is better to direct them to the site rather than offering to print off documents for them. This protects us from liability claims resulting from mistakes.

In addition to this, there is a selection of informational packets available on the computers in the "information for clients" folder on the desktop, with hard copies in the bottom drawer of our file cabinet. These cover all CCPA topics from Attorney complaint forms to wills.

To access Westlaw and LexisNexis:

We also have access to West Law and LexisNexis, through the Chico State library site. In your binders you will find a handout outlining the most effective ways to conduct West Law and LexisNexis searches.

1. Go to the Meriam Library home page @ http://www.csuchico.edu/library/
2. Click on "Databases A-Z"
3. Then Click on the "Westlaw (Campus Research)" or "LexisNexis Academic" links.



Commonly Used CCPA Online Resources

- Judicial Council of California (www.courtinfo.ca.gov)
- CA Dept. of Consumer Affairs (www.dca.ca.gov)
- CA Dept. of Insurance (www.insurance.ca.gov)
- CA Dept. of Real Estate (www.dre.ca.gov)
- CA Attorney General (www.ag.ca.gov)
- Federal Trade Commission (www.ftc.gov)
- Housing and Urban Development (www.hud.gov)
- Official CA Legal Information www.leginfo.ca.gov
- CA Agency Directory (http://www.ca.gov/directory.html)
- Publications from Gov Printing office www.gpoaccess.gov
- Westlaw/LexisNexis

In Print Format

To answer client's questions you will need to become familiar with the books in our office. The books we use the most are *Nolo's Guide to California Laws*, *How to File for Chapter 7 Bankruptcy* (Nolo Paperback 15th Edition), *How to File for Chapter 13 Bankruptcy* (Nolo Paperback 9th Edition). These easy-to-read guides are good books but should only be used as a starting point for your research. Our department also has a number of other books on a range of topics, by Nolo and other publishers, to help with your research.

Printer/Copier Training and Procedures

Interns are not allowed to print without the assistance of a Director, Office Manager, or Administrative Director. Please put all documents that you need to be printed in you respective folder in the "To be Printed" file on the desktop.

Intakes

In CCPA whenever you interact with a client, even if it is only for a minute, you **MUST** record that information on an intake sheet. Intake sheets serve three functions. One, they keep track of the work you have been doing for the Directors to see. Two, they allow you to look back at what you have already done to help you with future work. Lastly, they are used to fund CLIC, because the stats you record are seen by the AD's and from time to time CLIC is audited to see if we are doing what are supposed to be doing. It is extremely important that the intake sheets are filled out thoroughly.

Filling out intake sheets is very simple. The first thing you will want to do is ask the client their full name. Next fill out the date you started. Write your name and a phone number at which you can call your client back. The clients address is important but a client may not want to give this out. **You can explain to them that our stats are completely confidential** and will not be shared with anyone else; they are simply for CLIC records.

Next, check the appropriate line in the top right corner to indicate the proper city. Next indicate whether they are a student, alumni, or non-student. Next ask them who they were referred to us by, and circle one of the options. If they have a case number or court date, record that as well. The next step requires you to fill out the facts of the case. Below this you will find the section "Legal Questions." These are the questions you will be answering.

Make sure to ask if the client has an e-mail address we can send them information to, this helps us save on paper costs, and makes our dept. more sustainable.

On the back of this paper, write the information given to the client, and be sure to include where you got your information. Also, make sure they are relevant sites such as government sites, or other official legal sites. In the graph below this record the date again, the action completed such as research or phone call, the time of the actions, how much time you spent, for example .1 hr, .2 hr, .3 hr, and your initials. Under action completed there is the section Administration, this is how long it took you to fill out the intake sheet. Lastly, write the total time you spent with the client. If there was more than one interaction, add them together and write them.

Finally, on the top right hand corner of the front of the intake you will see selections for "City," "Student Status," "Total Time," and "Intern Name." Please double check to make sure every step of intake is filled out correctly. Consistent failure to do so will have hamper relations with your fellow interns, potentially affect CLIC's funding and have a severely negative impact on the Directors' moods.

Interviewing a Client

When interviewing a client the purpose is to collect as much useful information from them as possible. If you do this successfully you will not have to continuously call the client back, or ask dead end questions. There are several things you should remember when interviewing a client. You should always maintain eye contact, check yourself on your body posture, use active listening, and encourage your client to disclose information.

Eye contact is key to interviewing your client. Keeping eye contact assures your client that you are interested and engaged in the dialogue between you two. People that perceive the other person as caring, truly listening, or entertained will disclose much more information than if they feel like you are not paying attention. Facial expressions function similarly to eye contact, in that they can influence a person's perception of how you are receiving the information. Expressions indicating sympathy will get more information out of the person, because they feel more comfortable and confident that you understand what they are telling you. In other words, the more personal you can be without crossing the professional boundary, the more they will divulge to you.

Your body posture is important as well. Never slouch, rest your head on your hand or do any other bodily movements which can be perceived as you being bored, tired, or disinterested. Do, however, look relaxed, and focus on the client. Taking notes is important but should be balanced with maintaining eye contact and portraying yourself as a good listener.

Part of being an active listener is being able to interpret what the other person is saying. You can show your speaker that you are paying attention by paraphrasing what they are saying. By doing this you can make sure your client meant what they said, you correctly heard what they said, and that you understand what they are saying. You may want to use non-verbal gestures such as head nods, "mm-hmm's," or others. Conversely, you can use verbal expressions such as yes, okay, and wonderful. Use open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are those that do not have yes-no answers to them. Open-ended questions define an area of discussion without confining the client's answers. These are extremely beneficial but sometimes you will get a client that will ramble if you let them. If this happens, gently intervene by asking a related question without completely changing the subject.

If you are not interviewing the client but are in the office, remember that your behavior is still important. If you are speaking to another intern or are on the phone, keep your voice low. Make sure you are working on CLIC related activities, keeping all information confidential. One other thing you should always remember when talking to clients is that many of our clients have few resources, and no one else to talk to about their issues. You should attempt to promote a sense of empathy, understanding, and patience. There will be times when you feel like the person may have got what they deserved, but remember we are not here to judge our clients,

only to assist them in gathering information, and they will only come back or recommend us if they had a positive experience with us.

Telephone Training and Procedures

"Hello, I am (intern's name), I am not an attorney and therefore I cannot provide you with legal advice, I am a paralegal intern and can provide legal information only; how can I help you."

As an intern in the Chico Consumer Protection Agency, you will be making and receiving many phone calls. It is important for you as an intern to be comfortable, professional, and articulate in your telephone interactions. Many of the clients you will be working for have few resources and no one to tell their side of the incident to; therefore, you should **ALWAYS** treat your clients with a sense of understanding, respect, and empathy; they are the reason we are here.

Your conversation with them will have a direct effect on their perception of CLIC and the reputation of our organization. It will also tremendously affect whether they choose to use CLIC again or refer others to our program. Many of those we help do not have others to talk to about their problem, and many times they will call more to explain and be listened to, than to actually fight their case. Your job is to treat every one of them with respect.

It is important to never give advice, under any circumstances, even when asked to by a client. You must inform the client that you are a paralegal intern, not an attorney, and thus you cannot give advice, but only information. The information you do give a client must also be well researched, meaning it is current, accurate, and useful.

Almost every time a client calls and requests information you will want to research the question(s) first, before giving them an answer. By doing this you can ensure the accuracy of your response, and be prepared to accurately inform them of their options, and the information you have researched. There will be times when you will want to simply tell the client information off the top of your head. You will be very knowledgeable about specific laws, but it is important to cite your information and make sure it is still correct.

When you do give information to a client, it may bring up other questions from them. You can call them back after researching this additional question as well. Never feel pressured to answer a question right then and there. Also, many clients will have an upcoming court appearance, and will want the information right away, and although you may feel obligated to help this person by providing a quick response, it is best to do a thorough and accurate job, than a quick and sloppy one. There will be times when you simply cannot find the answer to a question. If all other resources have been exhausted, you may call the Director and ask for help, or the Supervising Attorney. If a Director cannot help you, the Supervising Attorney will be able to. Sometimes we will be given calls that are not within our field of law, and/or the question is too complex for a CLIC intern. If you feel this is the case, please call one of the Directors and ask.

Whenever you feel like the caller or walk-in has a question that does not pertain to CCPA, it is best to ask someone in a different department if they deal with it rather than try to answer it

yourself. Remember your specialty is CCPA and anything beyond that we are not allowed to help with, and it should be transferred to the applicable department.

To Call A Client:

1. Pick up the phone and press 9 to exit our internal phone system, then dial the client's phone number.
    a. If the client's number is out of our local area code (530)- press 9…then 1…and then the client's #.
    b. CLIC's phone #s are anonymous, and some clients won't answer when you call, to un-block our number press *82 first.
2. If your call is answered,
    a. "Hello this is the Legal Information Center calling for (Client's name)." If you have reached the client continue ask them what you can help them with.
    b. If you have not reached the client, ask if they are available and if not leave a message.
    c. If it is a wrong number, please note it on the call log.
3. Never give information or discuss client issues with people other than your client; this would be a violation of CLIC Confidentiality policy and California law.
4. If you are leaving a message,
   "Hello, this is the Legal Information Center returning your phone call. If you are still in need of our services we are here to assist you Mon-Thu 9-5 and Fri 10-5.
   Our number is (530) 898-4353"

To Transfer A Client To Another Dept. on the Phone:

1. Inform the client you are transferring them, and that they will be put on hold.

2. Inform the other dept. that you are transferring a call to them.

3. Press the transfer button on the telephone, then dial the correct 4 digit dept. extension and hang up. A list of extensions can be found above department phones.

Using the Call Log

Every day you are interning at the CCPA office, you should check the call log, located on the desktop. Here you will see the names and numbers of all those who have asked for CCPA assistance.

Each Sheet has slots for:

- Client's name
- Client's phone number
- Date they called CLIC
- Attempts to reach client
- Status of case

1. Start with the oldest case where the client has not been successfully contacted.

2. We call back people in the order we receive them, unless there is a special exception.

3. We call people back three different times on three different days in order to make sure they know we want to help them. After calling three times with no responses in a reasonable amount of time, we close their case.

    A. On the first call write whether you reached the Client or left a message. **Initial and date** your action.

    B. Similarly, record the **second and third** cal with initial and date, **make sure to call on different times & days.**

    C. If you are unable to reach the client after the third call please mark it "Closed"

4. Each time you receive a call slip from the CCPA box, immediately input that call slip into the call log and "stab" the slip on the spindle. Always cross reference the new slip against all un-contacted clients.

5. In the case that we receive a message from the client on the same issue, we must reset that call in the log. This means we must try and contact them three more times, even if we have already tried and failed to reach them twice before we close their case.

My Service Counts

In honor of Chico State's 125th Anniversary, and to recognize service as an essential part of the Chico experience, Chico State has created an exciting opportunity. My Service Counts challenges the campus community- students, faculty, alumni and staff- to perform 125,000 hours of service in 2012. As interns at the Community Legal Information Center, each hour that is completed for the internship can be logged on the My Service Counts website to reach the goal of 125,000. It is encouraged to log completed hours at the end of each week. Please see your director for more information or visit www.myservicecounts.com

Letter Format and Procedures

All letters are to be typed on letterhead, using our "**mail out form letter**" found in "CCPA Correspondence" and on the desktop. It may be useful to copy this to your own folder for future use. Fill out the "sender's name and address", which should be lined up on the left margin. Please use the margins set on the template.

Do not indent paragraphs, but do place a space between each paragraph. Place one space between the last line of the letter and the closing. Use three spaces between the closing and your name.

Below your name at the close of the letter, place your title (Paralegal Intern), then your program (CCPA). Put any carbon copies, enclosure(s), and initials (which should always be included if you are typing this letter for someone else) on the left margin: double space between each of these items, which are typed below the signature.

All correspondence must be proofread, and checked by a program director before leaving the CLIC office. Double-check all the mailing addresses and salutations in your letter, print two (2) copies of your letter to the client, paperclip that to the information you want to send, and then **place it in the proofreading box**.

If there are any corrections to be made the directors will note them on the letter and return it to you for correction. After you have corrected any mistakes please place it back in the proofreading box and the directors will mail it out.

Always include the legal disclaimer footer on your letters!!!

When sending E-mails:

All e-mails sent must also be proofread by the directors before leaving the office.

1. Write up a standard e-mail using the e-mail letter template located on the desktop.
2. Make sure to:
    a. specify where you got your information,
    b. what attachments you are sending,
    c. and where links to other organizations/pages go to!
    d. **Include the e-mail we are mailing to! Make sure it is correct.**
3. **Please put all out-going e-mail letters in the "TO BE EMAILED" folder on the desktop.**
4. If you are sending attachments please include **a copy** of them, along with the letter to be e-mailed, in a new folder inside "TO BE EMAILED".
   Name this new folder after the client.
5. Place the intake sheet for the e-mail in the proofreading box.

E-mails are only to be sent out by directors.

EXAMPLE LETTER

COMMUNITY LEGAL INFORMATION CENTER

CHICO CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY

http://www.aschico.com/clic

Phone: (530) 898-4354 Fax: (530) 898-4911

25 Main Street, Suite 102, Chico, CA 95929-0190

August 10, 2090

Joe Schmoe
9999 Ninth Ave.
Cheeko, CA 99999

Dear Mr. Schmoe,

On August 9, 2090 you requested information regarding Small Claims, and the fees involved.

Enclosed is our small claims packet, including information on the small claims process and related fees, from the California Department of Consumer Affairs. (Whenever you enclose information to your client, make sure to identify specifically what that enclosure consists of.)

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact us at our offices.

Sincerely,

John
Paralegal Intern
Chico Consumer Protection Agency
Community Legal Information Center

Encl: Small Claims Booklet, Copy of Civil Code section 1234

(As a Footer)
Enclosed is the information that you requested regarding your case. The information should not be considered legal advice; this information provides just one of what may be several options to resolve your case. As always, the Community Legal Information Center recommends consulting an attorney before making any serious legal decisions.

EXAMPLE E-MAIL

E-mail= jschmoe@sbcglobal.net

August 10, 2080

Joe Schmoe
9999 Ninth Ave.
Cheeko, CA 99999

Dear Mr. Schmoe,

On August 3, 2010 you requested information regarding restitution for stolen property, and lost tax return checks.

For information on restitution, please visit: http://www.boc.ca.gov/restitution/victim.aspx

>Please see the RestVictimsBrochure.pdf attachment from the CA Victims Compensation Board, which includes their county office contact information.

>For information and aid with lost tax return checks, please contact the local Chico IRS Office at

1395 Ridgewood Dr.
Chico, CA 95973

Monday-Friday - 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.
(Closed for lunch 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.)

(530) 343-2324

And visit the IRS Website at http://www.irs.gov

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact us at our offices.

Sincerely,

John
Paralegal Intern
Chico Consumer Protection Agency
Community Legal Information Center

Walk-Ins

Often clients will walk in the office seeking legal information. Chances are they will be asking a question that is not quickly answerable, and will require extensive research. It is perfectly acceptable to research in front of them. You may feel uncomfortable making the person wait in the office while you are researching, but you must remember and you may tell them that the answers to questions we give our clients must be as accurate as possible, and achieving this standard of quality may be time consuming. If you anticipate the answer will take more time than the person may wish to spend in the office ask them if they would like to come back later, or you can mail them a packet.

Clients who walk in may be agitated for many different reasons. Always stay calm regardless of their disposition. If a client becomes extremely agitated you may either step out of the office and inform one of the Directors, or Administrative Director, Office Manager or immediately call 911 if you think that someone's safety is at risk. Also, to avoid confrontation and in the event that you do not feel comfortable talking to a client, you may tell them "thank you for coming in, I've taken notes on your situation and I will have my Director call you as soon as he is available."

To ensure privacy and confidentiality you should always close the office door when a walk-in needs assistance. The office may be crowded and this may make your client uncomfortable or unsure of the confidentiality of the interaction. If you feel like this may be the case, you have several options. You can move to another office assuming there isn't a client in that one as well. You can kindly ask if other interns could step out for a few minutes, or you can simply explain to your client that everyone in the room is a CLIC paralegal intern and we are all bound by the laws of confidentiality and ask them if it is okay for several people to be in the office.

Make your client feel comfortable. Always provide your client with a chair to sit on when they enter, and inform them of what you are doing. For example, if they ask you a question, don't just turn around and start researching it, but tell them, "I'm going to search leginfo.ca.gov to see what this statute means exactly."

Another thing that is important is to speak to your client in an informative way, rather than as if you were in their situation. Make sure your client knows your boundaries early on in the interaction so they do not construe anything you tell them as advice. Lastly, it is professional to walk your client out of your office and to the lobby.

It is impossible to predict how each encounter you have with clients is going to be, so you must be adaptable and use different approaches in different situations. Some ways of explaining things to some people will be different with others. You should never tell a client to break any law, encourage them to do so, give them information which would aid them in breaking any law, or break any law yourself in aiding a client.

After you have finished speaking with the client, ask them if they will take our client survey, which can be found at the OMs desk. It helps us obtain statistical information for funding, and is confidential. If they decline, wish them a good day and move on to the next case.

Handling Difficult Clients and Crisis Situations:

From a Presentation by Dr. Stephanie Chervinko
Psychological Counseling & Wellness

- **Strategies for Handling Difficult People**
  - Listen seriously and attentively
  - Stay Calm

- **Reasons Clients May Be Angry**
  - Personal Losses
  - Having little food or money
  - Living in less than satisfactory conditions
  - Feeling unsafe
  - Concern for the welfare of others
  - Delays in receiving assistance
  - Having been treated rudely by other helpers
  - Little sleep
  - Increased family tension
  - Feeling humiliated
  - Belief that screaming wheel gets the grease

- **Strategies**
  - Acknowledge and validate feelings and concerns
  - Identify specific sources of anger
  - Focus on the problem and its resolution
  - Remain respectful

- **Other Tips**
  - Let them have the last word if they need to
  - Don't be afraid to ask for help
  - Remember what drew you to this job in the first place

- **Unrelenting Abuse**
  - You do not need to allow yourself to be abused ruing this process.
    - Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable.
    - Emphasize that you did not cause the problem, but you need their cooperation to resolve it.

- If possible, have someone else take over.
- If you decide to hang up, give one warning.

CHICO CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY
Syllabus Fall 2012

Program Directors:

Supervising Attorney
Teddy DeLorenzo (530) 898-6478 tdelorenzo@csuchico.edu

Course Description
Chico Consumer Protection Agency assists members of the community with a variety of consumer related concerns, contract disputes, and small claims, but also offers limited informational services in areas of financial concern, like bankruptcy and foreclosure.

Course Objective
To open a line of communication between businesses and consumers and to provide an objective analysis of consumer problems. To provide a clinical experience for students.

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the program directors or supervising attorney privately to discuss your specific needs. Please also contact the Disability Support Services office to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Required Assignments & Activities: (Returning Interns-Contact Directors for Instruction) *Please note that regardless of whether the meeting topic is noted in a week's activities, CCPA meetings are held each Wednesdays at 10:00 unless otherwise announced by the Directors.*

Semester Schedule	**This Syllabus Is Subject To Change**
Week One: August 27th	1. Sign up for office hours. 2. Enroll in course with the Political Science Dept.

Week Two: September 3rd	1. CLIC closed Sept. 3rd- Labor Day 2. CLIC Orientation Wednesday Sept. 5th 6:30-8:30 PM Colusa Hall Room 100B 3. Training Packet
Week Three: September 10th	Mass Intern Meeting Wednesday Sept. 12th 6:30-8:30 PM Colusa Hall Room 100A
Week Four: September 17th	1. Mass Intern/Small claims quiz 2. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 3. Intern schedules finalized 4. Intern forms (registration and contract) due 5. Phone, Professionalism, Ethics, Confidentiality Training at meeting
Week Five: September 24th	1. Mass Intern/Training & Small Claims Quizzes due in Directors' Box 2. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned.
Week Six: October 1st	1. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 2. Contract/Property Ownership training at meeting
Week Seven: October 8th	1. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 2. Schedule Mid-Semester Review 3. Estate Succession/Credit Collection training at meeting 4. Small Claims Court Trip (TBA)
Week Eight: October 15th	1. Mid-Semester Reviews 2. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 3. Repossession training at meeting
Week Nine: October 22nd	1. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 2. Power of attorney/Bankruptcy training at meeting 3. Intern Hours Update
Week Ten: October 29th	1. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 2. Consumer complaint/Foreclosure training at meeting
Week Eleven: November 5th	Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned.
Week Twelve: November 12th	1. CLIC closed November 12th Veterans Day 2. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned.
Week Thirteen: November 19th	Thanksgiving break Nov. 19th-23rd

Week Fourteen: November 26th	Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned.
Week Fifteen: December 3rd	1. Continue taking calls, assisting clients and working on projects as assigned. 2. Projects Due, December 7
Week Sixteen: December 10th	Continue taking calls, assisting clients.
Week Seventeen: December 17th Finals Week	1. Good luck on your finals! 2. **December 21st last day to obtain CLIC hours