Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic is a non-profit 501c (3) corporation offering pro bono legal services and preventive legal education to low-income families, including immigrant families. The Clinic serves clients in the greater Indianapolis Metro area whose income is at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

**Mission:** To promote the justice through legal representation and education for our low-income neighbors as a way of demonstrating Christ’s love.

**Vision:** Justice for the vulnerable so that all may flourish

**Theme Verses:** “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” –Psalm 82:3-4

**Core Values:** Jesus, Humility, Love, Gratitude, Daring, Wisdom, Flexibility, and Flourishing

The Clinic relies on volunteers to assist in providing high quality legal assistance and education to low income neighbors. Those who are unable to afford legal services have access to justice because of volunteers like you!

**Volunteer Expectations**

Volunteers are expected to fulfill the responsibilities of their volunteer position. Volunteers should be in communication with their supervisor regarding the specific work they will be undertaking and clarify any questions before work begins. Should a volunteer need more time to complete the tasks, duties and responsibilities that come with their volunteer position the volunteer should be in full communication with their supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator.

In the event a volunteer is no longer able to fulfill their assignment, they are asked to provide the Clinic with a reasonable amount of notice before their departure from the Clinic’s volunteer program.

Volunteer work is in fact voluntary and the Clinic retains the right to remove any volunteer who does not properly fulfill the tasks, duties and responsibilities for the volunteer position for which they fill and/or have been assigned. The work of the Clinic, whether voluntary or paid, is legal work and therefore sensitive in nature requiring the utmost respect and proper attitude of responsibility for the clients which the Clinic serves.

**Insurance**

Volunteer Attorneys are covered under the Clinic’s malpractice insurance under the following conditions:

1) Volunteer attorney has been completely truthful about his/her admission to practice law and the status of law license(s) as active and in good standing
2) Volunteer attorney is providing services to a client or prospective client referred by the Clinic to volunteer attorney. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting intakes of prospective clients at one of the Clinic’s intake sites, serving at a one-day event (e.g. Refugee Adjustment Day), and representing a client in a legal matter that has been referred in writing by the Volunteer Coordinator or his/her delegate.

**Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements of confidentiality as paid staff. If a volunteer is found to have disrespected and broken the confidentiality of a Clinic client or Clinic staff member, the volunteer will, depending of the level of confidentiality broken, be given a verbal warning, written warning and may be asked to leave the Clinic’s volunteer program. Potential clients come to intakes to discuss their legal problems. These people often share their hearts regarding personal information. Even if they do not have a legal problem they are coming to intake with the understanding that their personal information will be handled carefully and with strict confidentiality.

It is incumbent upon anyone who is representing the Clinic to keep these matters confidential. Lawyers are bound by the Indiana Rules of Professional Conduct, which provides as follows: “A lawyer shall not reveal information relating to
representation of a client unless the client consents after consultation.” The Comment to the Rules states, “The confidentiality rule applies not merely to matters communicated in confidence by the client, but also to all information relating to the representation, whatever the source.” This is true for all of our volunteers, not just attorneys.

As a non-attorney volunteer, it is imperative that you do not reveal client confidences. Even the name of someone who comes for legal advice is confidential. You may not discuss the information that you have received during intake with anyone outside of the Clinic. If there are ways that you feel you can help the client or potential client, please let the Clinic know, but do not undertake to assist a client or potential client on your own. This is for your protection, as any assistance that you might provide may accidentally constitute the illegal act of practicing law without a license, which would subject you to personal liability.

In addition, it is important that only those who are licensed to practice law in Indiana provide legal advice. At times, it may be tempting to answer a client’s legal questions, particularly if you have heard one of the attorneys answer the same question. Practicing law without a license is a crime. If you are unsure whether the answer to a question constitutes legal advice, please err on the side of caution and do not offer this answer.

If you become aware of the possibility of child abuse or another criminal act, you should immediately contact Chris Purnell cpurnell@nclegalclinic.org or Jodie McClain jodie.mcclain@nclegalclinic.org or you can reach them both at the Clinic: 317-429-4131. Together we can determine what action needs to be taken.

**Code of Ethics**

- I will be conscious of the fact that everything I do, directly or indirectly, has the potential to reflect upon the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic as a whole. I will conduct myself at all times with openness, forthrightness, and honesty in dealing with people and organizations, both internally and externally.
- I will hold myself to the highest possible standard of conduct reflective of the work I do, always striving to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
- I will treat everyone with dignity, worth, respect, concern, courtesy and fairness. I will not discriminate against any client on the basis of age, race, religion, sex, gender, national origin, creed, or other individual characteristic. I will not employ corporal punishment or physical force, subject clients to any form of physical or mental abuse, or demean or intentionally humiliate clients. I will be sensitive to and seek solutions for all instances of discrimination and social injustice I observe. I will respect and comply with all applicable laws and regulations and the defined standards of conduct of my own profession. I will not violate or disobey established rules, regulations, or lawful orders of a supervisor.
- I will not endanger the well-being of others or myself through intent or neglect. I will not perform duties under the influence of intoxicants or consume intoxicants while on duty. I will not bring any type of weapon(s) or items(s) declared as contraband into the facility.
- I will accept no gifts or favors that might influence the performance of my responsibilities. I will avoid all conflict of interest relationships with Board members, staff, suppliers, those we serve, and other organizations with whom I deal, unless disclosed and approved. I will not engage in any kind of inappropriate social contact with clients except as a part of a staff member’s approved Job Duties and as authorized supervisory staff.
- I will exercise prudent stewardship of all resources of the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic.
- I will not engage in critical discussion of staff members or clients in the presence of other clients, divulge confidential information without proper authorization, or withhold information, which, in so doing, threatens the security of the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic, its staff, clients, visitors, or the community. A release of information form must be signed by the client or his or her guardian before any information about a client may be released to anyone other than a staff member of the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic.

**Equal Opportunities**

It is the policy of the Clinic not to discriminate against any volunteer or employee on the basis of race, color, religion (except as required to fulfill duties of a particular position), age, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, genetic information or veteran status. All employment-related decisions are based solely upon legitimate, job-related factors such as skill, ability and past performance.
Note: The Clinic is very sensitive to the need for diversity in staff given that its target populations, including inner-city residents, domestic violence victims, and immigrants from all around the world, are diverse and we believe diversity of staff will increase our effectiveness and credibility with our target populations. Therefore, the Clinic seeks to ensure that our full-time staff, part time staff, and our volunteers are representative of the diverse populations we serve.

References
The Clinic does not respond to oral requests for references. All requests must be in writing. In the event you leave the Clinic we may be able to provide references to potential employers, depending upon the circumstances, your volunteer history, etc. However, you must first sign a “reference release” waiver, allowing us to release reference information beyond merely confirming that you volunteered at the Clinic for a specific period of time and your position.

Volunteer Grievance Policy
The Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic aims to create a fun, creative and engaging work environment where volunteers feel valued, safe and heard. The Clinic recognizes that there may be occasions when volunteers have concerns or grievances and this procedure enables individual volunteers to raise grievances formally should the need arise.

Informal Discussions
If any volunteer has a grievance about their volunteer work, or about a fellow volunteer or paid staff member, the volunteer should discuss it informally, as soon as possible, with their volunteer supervisor. If the grievance involves the supervisor, the Volunteer Coordinator will review the grievance. The volunteer supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator will take the grievance seriously and ensure that everything is done to try and resolve the issue informally. It is hoped that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage.

Formal Procedure

Stage 1
If a volunteer feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, they should put the complaint in writing to their supervisor. If the complaint involves the volunteer supervisor the complaint should be put in writing to the Volunteer Coordinator. A meeting will be held between the volunteer and supervisor to respond to the complaints raised. Following the meeting, the supervisor will give a written response outlining how the complaint(s) will be responded to. If the complaint is against another member of staff or volunteer or requires further investigation, the supervisor will need to carry out further meetings or investigations with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Stage 2
If the volunteer feels the issue has still not been resolved satisfactorily, the volunteer must raise the matter, in writing, with the Volunteer Coordinator, Director of Operations, and/or Director of Legal Services. The Volunteer Coordinator, Director of Operations, and/or Director of Legal Services will invite the volunteer to a meeting where they can discuss the matter and establish how best to resolve the situation. The volunteer has a right to be accompanied to the meeting. Following the meeting, the Clinic’s Volunteer Coordinator will give a written response outlining the Clinic’s response to the complaint. If the complaint is against another member of staff or volunteer, or requires further investigation, the Clinic’s Volunteer Coordinator will need to carry out further meetings or investigations.

Stage 3
In extreme situations where the volunteer does not feel the issue is being addressed or resolved satisfactorily the volunteer should put their grievance in writing and send the grievance to the Executive Director. Depending on the nature of the grievance the Executive Director will consult with the chair of the Board of Directors on how best to resolve the problem. This step should only be followed under extreme circumstances and as a last resort.
Open Door Policy & Counseling
Normally, with the exception of complaints of discrimination or harassment, you will be expected to use the procedure outlined above to resolve a problem. However, if the problem or complaint is of a personal nature, or a very delicate matter, you may meet first with any member of the leadership team, including the Executive Director, to discuss it. He or she will decide if you should first discuss the problem with your immediate supervisor. If so, you will be directed to use the procedure above. If the complaint, suggestion, or question is of such a nature that resolution would be hampered by the above procedures, the leadership team member you contact will take the appropriate action.

Progressive Disciplinary System
1. Verbal Warning
If you fail to follow the Clinic’s policies regarding volunteer performance and conduct, you are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. For other than major offenses, which can result in immediate termination, you will first be verbally counseled about the problem with the intent of clearing up any misunderstanding and establishing behavior expected in the future. This oral warning will be documented by your supervisor, noting that the discussion took place, the date, and the subject. Continued violation of policies will result in levels of written notification to you of unacceptable action, and can lead to ineligibility for your merit increases, probation, suspension, or termination.

2. Written Warning
The second step in the counseling procedure will be a written warning. The written warning is a tool to help the Clinic communicate more effectively with you. It may be used to advise, warn, or otherwise notify you of performance or conduct that is not acceptable. If you receive a written warning about unacceptable performance or conduct, you are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to improve, in order to avoid the need for further disciplinary action.

3. Probation
Continued violations will necessitate the next step to be taken, which will be probation. A letter advising you of the reason and length of probation will be given to you. The memo will also indicate that unless performance improves or compliance with policies is met, the next step will be termination.

4. Termination
The final step will be termination. Without improvement, this most drastic step must be taken. It is hoped that the progressive counseling procedures as outlined above will assist you in developing as a supportive volunteer.

Exceptions
The above procedures are intended to be a guide. It is important to note that the severity of the offense might warrant not following the usual sequence set out above, and that the disciplinary action taken may begin at any level, solely at the Clinic’s discretion.

The Clinic’s provision of a progressive disciplinary system in this section is not meant or intended to limit or waive any right of the Clinic to terminate the volunteer relationship at will or without notice or to stop the Clinic from terminating a volunteer at will or without notice.

Alcohol, Drugs and Controlled Substances
The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being “under the influence” of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances when on duty, on the Clinic property is prohibited. In addition, off duty conduct, which may adversely affect the reputation or interests of the Clinic is prohibited. “Under the influence” for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well-being of the affected volunteer, employees, the public, or the Clinic property.
Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

**Smoking**
The Clinic is a workplace free of exposure to hazardous substances, and therefore established our facility as a smoke-free workplace. All volunteers are expected to abide by this policy while present in our facility and also when acting as a representative of the Clinic. All volunteers are also required to follow the policies of all other facilities that host the Clinic’s services. For example, a volunteer is prohibited from smoking at any of our intake sites.

**Personal Appearance**
Please dress in a professional manner appropriate for your volunteer position and not distracting to other volunteers, employees, clients or visitors. Remember, you will be seen at all times as a representative of the Clinic.

**Housekeeping**
Neatness and good housekeeping are signs of efficiency. You are expected to keep your work area neat and orderly at all times. It is a required safety precaution. Please report anything that needs repairing or replacing to the Director of Operations immediately.

**Personal Phone Calls & Mail**
Emergency calls regarding illness or injury to family members, changed family plans, or calls for similar reasons may be made at any time. Incoming urgent calls will be directed to you. Please do not use the Clinic as a personal mailing address, and do not put personal mail in the stacks that are to be run through the postage meter.

**Security**
Maintaining the security of the Clinic buildings and vehicles is every volunteer’s responsibility. Develop habits that ensure security as a matter of course. For example:
- Always keep cash properly secured. If you are aware that cash is insecurely stored, immediately inform the person responsible.
- Know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers, and familiarize yourself with the proper procedure for using them, should the need arise.
- When you leave the Clinic's premises make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured.

In order to provide a secure work environment for volunteers, the Clinic reserves the right to inspect a volunteer’s desk, vehicle, packages, or any personal items brought to the Clinic at any time while on the Clinic’s property or while on duty. Such an inspection would be conducted by a member of the leadership team and a witness. Failure to comply with a request for an inspection may be grounds for termination.

**Solicitations & Distributions**
Volunteers are prohibited from soliciting and/or distributing certain materials to prospective clients, clients, other volunteers, and staff members. by volunteers is not permitted. This includes but is not limited to marketing offers, political or campaign materials, and advertising materials for private businesses. Volunteers may distribute materials about Christian ministries and churches that identify with historic, orthodox Christianity. Volunteers may distribute materials about supportive resources they think will help the individual in some manner.

**Inclement Weather**
The Indianapolis office will follow the Indianapolis Public Schools closures if those closures are for the purposes of snow and/or ice. The Ft. Wayne office will follow the Fort Wayne Community Schools closures if those closures are for the purpose of snow and/or ice.

**Business Expense Reimbursement**
You must have the Executive Director or Volunteer Coordinator’s authorization prior to incurring an expense on behalf of the Clinic. To be reimbursed for all authorized expenses incurred on behalf of the Clinic, you must submit an expense report accompanied by receipts to the Director of Operations.

Personal Vehicle Use Policy
- **Federal Tax Deduction:** The volunteer should feel free to claim any mileage as a deductible business-related expense on their federal tax returns at the applicable federal mileage reimbursement rate, if appropriate.
- **Carpooling Provision:** To limit travel expenses, volunteers should strive to carpool to Clinic business-related events.
- **Accidents:** If you have an auto accident while on Clinic business, please contact your insurance company and the Volunteer Coordinator and Director of Operations immediately.
- **Traffic fines:** Any traffic fines imposed while on Clinic business are the volunteer’s responsibility.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

**Purpose**
The Clinic’s policy is to promote a respectful work environment. In addition, the Clinic intends to maintain a workplace free of sexual and other harassment and intimidation, including harassment based on race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex (with or without sexual conduct), religion, national origin, protected activity (i.e. opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process), age, disability, genetic information or any other protected categories. Harassment will not be tolerated by the Clinic. The Clinic is also committed to ensuring that its employees are not subjected to harassment by non-employees. Accordingly, this policy applies to management, non-management employees, clients, vendors, and others with whom we have a relationship.

**What is Harassment?**
Sexual and other harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Harassment is not only offensive, but it may also harm morale and interfere with our effectiveness and our ability to fulfill our responsibilities to our fellow coworkers and clients. All employees must be allowed to work in an environment free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtones and harassment in any form. It is also important to recognize that the workplace travels with us wherever we go (including conferences, meetings, casual get-togethers after work). Accordingly, harassment is not tolerated on Clinic property or any other location. Sexual harassment, for purposes of this policy, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

**Examples of Conduct That Constitute Harassment**
Sexual harassment does not mean occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. However, sexual harassment does include, but is not limited to, actions such as:
- sex-oriented verbal "kidding" or abuse, crude or offensive language, jokes, or pranks.
- possession, display, or distribution of photographs, drawings, objects, or graffiti of a sexual nature (volunteers should keep in mind that this type of material may not be placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on Clinic property, nor should it be circulated in the workplace).
- subtle or other pressure for sexual activity.
- epithets, slurs, put-downs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts.
- physical conduct such as patting, pinching, or constant brushing against another's body.
- explicit demands for sexual favors, whether or not accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats concerning an individual's employment status.
• offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions.
• any other offensive, hostile, intimidating, or abusive conduct of a sexual nature.

Keep in mind that this Policy applies not only to sexual harassment, but to harassment in general. Therefore, the above activities or conduct that relate to an individual’s race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, national origin, disability, and any other protected category may also violate our Policy. For example, written or graphic material that defames or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including religious groups) violate this Policy.

**Complaint Procedure**
We have adopted a complaint procedure that assures a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation of all complaints, followed by swift and appropriate corrective action where warranted. We encourage volunteers and employees to report harassment and other inappropriate conduct before it becomes severe or pervasive. While not all incidents of harassment violate the law, we intend to prevent and correct harassment and other inappropriate conduct before it rises to the level of a violation of law. Any volunteer or employee who believes that he or she has been a victim of some form of sexual or other harassment or other inappropriate conduct or behavior should report the incident immediately in writing to the Director of Operations. No one will be subject to adverse treatment or retaliation because they report harassment or provide information concerning such reports.

**Responsibility of Supervisors, Managers and Others**
All supervisors and other members of management are held accountable for the effective administration of this Policy. If a supervisor or other member of management is advised of any alleged violation of this Policy, or if he/she independently observes conduct which may be prohibited by this policy, he/she must immediately report the matter to the Executive Director or the Director of Operations so that an appropriate investigation can be initiated. Under no circumstances will the individual who conducts the investigation or who has any direct or indirect control over the investigation be subject to the supervisory authority of the alleged harasser.

In addition to the above, any volunteer or employee who is aware of any conduct or other circumstances that may violate this Policy must report this to the Executive Director, the Director of Operations, or the volunteer or employee’s supervisor.

**Confidentiality**
The complaint and information collected during such an investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible and will not be disclosed unnecessarily or to persons not involved directly in conducting the investigation and determining what action, if any, to take in response to the complaint. Complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed because an effective investigation usually requires revealing certain information to the alleged harasser and potential witnesses.

**Remedial and Corrective Action to be taken by the Clinic**
Following the receipt of a complaint, management will initiate a prompt investigation. Typically, this investigation will involve an initial interview with the complainant and interviews with any other individuals who are involved, including the accused employee. If, following a complaint of sexual or other harassment, an investigation reveals that some act of sexual or other harassment, or other inappropriate conduct or behavior, has occurred, prompt and appropriate corrective action will be taken. If no determination can be made because the evidence is inconclusive, the parties will be informed of this result and of any preventive measures that will be undertaken, which may include counseling, training, and/or monitoring.

The person who engaged in inappropriate conduct or behavior in violation of this Policy will be subject to sanctions or penalties, up to and including suspension and/or immediate termination of employment. If the offender is not a Clinic employee, we will take reasonable measures to the extent we can exercise any control over the problem.
Acknowledgment of the Clinic Volunteer Handbook
This Volunteer Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with the Clinic. This Handbook will serve as a guide. It is not a contract. The contents of this Handbook may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Clinic.

I am aware that during the course of my volunteering, confidential information will be made available to me. I understand that this information must not be given out or used outside of the Clinic’s premises. In the event of termination, whether voluntary or involuntary, I hereby agree not to utilize or exploit this information. I understand that the attorney-client privilege applies to the Clinic, and that the Clinic and its attorneys are regulated by the Indiana Supreme Court and ethical rules, and, therefore, information about or relating to the Clinic’s clients must not be given out or used outside of the Clinic’s premises. I understand and agree that my failure to preserve the confidentiality of information I learn or perceive during the course of my time at the Clinic about or relating to the Clinic’s clients constitutes cause for dismissal. In the event of termination, whether voluntary or involuntary, I hereby agree not to divulge, utilize, or exploit any such information I have learned or perceived.