HOW TO ORGANIZE AND PUBLICIZE A VETERANS LEGAL CLINIC

- Form a committee in your organization to plan the clinic.
- Establish support for a veterans legal clinic in your community.
  - Meet with local/county/area leaders, area legal services providers, and local veteran services providers to establish need.
  - Discuss project with leadership of local veterans services providers.
- Request a Clinic in a Box and Veterans Clinic Marketing Tool Kit from the State Bar of Texas Local Bar Services Department. The Clinic in a Box contains everything an organization needs to host a veterans legal clinic – a how to guide, intake forms, substantive law questionnaires, signs, office supplies, and more. We also include a flash drive so you may customize documents to fit your bar’s needs. The Marketing Tool Kit contains tools to help market and publicize your clinic.
- Determine location for the clinic. Local VA facilities are a prime location because veterans already congregate there. If you’re interested in this option, we suggest contacting the Chief of Social Work or Volunteer Services at the specific location first.
- Visit the clinic location to determine the clinic setup logistics.
- Establish date and time for the clinic.
- Decide if clinic will be appointment only or if you will allow walk-ins.
- Decide on other logistics: Will you have coffee/water or other refreshments for volunteers or attendees? Decide who will coordinate this and arrange with the facility.
- Determine volunteer responsibilities for the clinic.
- Market your clinic to potential volunteers.
  - Announce and market the clinic to your bar membership through publications, e-newsletters, emails, and websites.
  - Recruit attorney and intake volunteers. Included in the Marketing Tool Kit is a volunteer sign-up form.
  - Contact corporate legal departments and law firms in your area.
  - Announce the clinic to neighboring local bars or legal organizations (including paralegal organizations) that may be able to assist with recruiting volunteers and veterans.
- Send the State Bar of Texas Local Bar Services Department details about your clinic so the date may be added to the TLTv clinic calendar. The Local Bar Services department receives multiple veteran calls a week, and our department refers them to local bar clinics whenever possible.
- Set up an orientation seminar for volunteers, which can be arranged for the same day as the clinic. A useful alternative to a live orientation is an orientation manual. These can be made available free of cost if you post them online as PDF documents. This can be a very simple and cost-effective way to instruct volunteers in what they should expect, and what they need to know.
● In addition, the Ten Minute Mentor website (tenminutementor.com) can be a useful education tool in preparing your volunteers for what they may face at clinics. It is an ongoing collection of short instructional presentations for the busy lawyer and includes presentations on various topics, including family law, specific veterans issues, wills/probate, and many more. Each presentation is typically short (around 10 minutes or less), and qualifies for MCLE self-study credit only. Go to the home page, click on “View Index by Category,” and see the wide range of topics covered.

● Decide if you want to have information booths from veterans service providers, the Texas Veterans Commission, or mental health providers available at the clinic.

● Coordinate the logistics with those organizations (i.e. where will the booths be located? Who will staff them?).

● Send volunteers final details about the clinic and reconfirm their participation at least two days prior to the clinic. A sample memo to volunteers has been included in the Marketing Tool Kit.

● Prepare signage for the facility.

● Day of the clinic: Set up signage, as well as sign-in, intake, and exit tables, and meeting areas.

● Collect and analyze case statistics.

● Provide feedback on clinic to city/county/VA officials and to your local bar members.

● Don’t forget to send thank you letters to your volunteers and recognize volunteers in bar publications. A sample thank you letter has been included in the Marketing Tool Kit.

● Market your clinic to veterans.
  o Coordinate with legal aid services organizations and VA social workers in your area to recruit veterans seeking legal advice.
  o Develop clinic flyers to distribute to VA offices, American Legion/VFW posts, and other veterans services providers with date, time, location, and who to contact to make an appointment (if necessary). A sample flyer is included in our Veterans Clinic Marketing Tool Kit.
  o Publicize clinic in local media, military publications, American Legion/VFW posts, city and county newsletters and websites, VA offices, Texas Veterans Commission offices, and other veterans resources.
  o Publicize your event on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter).
  o Send letters to civic officials and local veterans organization officials in your area.