

**BET TZEDEK LEGAL SERVICES
THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE
ACADEMIC YEAR INTERNSHIPS**



BET TZEDEK LEGAL SERVICES – THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Main Office: 145 S. Fairfax Ave., Ste. 200, Los Angeles, CA 90036, 323.939.0506
Valley Bet Tzedek: 12821 Victory Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91606, 818.769.0136
Wilshire Office: 435 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 470, Los Angeles CA 90010, 213.384.3243
Self-Help Conservatorship Clinic: Downtown Courthouse, 111 N. Hill St., 4th Flr., Los Angeles, CA 90012

www.bettzedek.org

OFFICE HOURS: 9AM – 5PM, MON-FRI

Bet Tzedek—The House of Justice— sets the standard for innovation in public interest law. Bet Tzedek’s pioneering projects combine direct legal representation with powerful outreach, education, and legislative advocacy. The result is a vital lifeline – equal access to justice for over 12,000 low-income Angelenos annually. With a staff of over 60 and plans to expand, we are one of the top legal services agencies in Los Angeles. The over 600 volunteers who donate over 30,000 hours a year to serving the poor, elderly and disabled at our offices help us deliver meaningful access to justice for those in need.

YOU CAN BECOME A BET TZEDEK VOLUNTEER

Bet Tzedek law clerks conduct client interviews, attend weekly case review meetings, and carry a supervised caseload. Casework may include drafting briefs, correspondence and research memoranda, helping staff legal clinics, attending community outreach meetings, preparing witnesses for depositions, administrative hearings or trials and more. Students receive direct supervision from attorneys in each of our main legal practice areas (see below) and are welcome to attend monthly MCLE trainings. Non-certified students may participate in administrative hearings with our public benefits and employment rights practice groups. Certified students may participate in deposition and trial work with our landlord-tenant, kinship care and conservatorship attorneys. (For more information on certification, go to www.calbar.org.)

Students interested in pursuing internships (unpaid), academic externships and work-study programs are welcome. Limited fellowship opportunities are often available. Interns must commit a minimum of 8-10 hours per week for the semester.

APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED ON A ROLLING BASIS

TO APPLY: Email a cover letter, resume and short legal writing sample to volunteer@bettzedek.org (Attn: Elissa Barrett, Pro Bono Director). Please provide at least one-two references.

QUALIFICATIONS: Demonstrated empathy and compassion for low-income, disabled and elderly people; commitment to public service; strong legal writing & reasoning skills; foreign language proficiency needed (Spanish, Russian, Asian-Pacific and others)

BET TZEDEK PRACTICE AREAS

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

In Los Angeles some 130,000 children are in foster care, about 60,000 of who live with grandparents. In response to this growing need, Bet Tzedek launched the Kinship Care Project in 2002. As its first project, the Kinship Care Project produced a comprehensive guide for relative caregivers in Los Angeles, called *Caring for a Relative’s Child*. Annually, the Kinship Care Project helps keep together nearly 100 families through assistance with guardianships and public benefits.



JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY

Bet Tzedek is the exclusive provider of free legal services to the low-income elderly in the City and County under the federal Older Americans Act, visiting 30 senior citizen centers on a rotating basis. Through funding from The Jewish Federation’s Alleviating Jewish Poverty Initiative, Bet Tzedek also collaborates with SOVA and several other agencies to help clients at all three SOVA Resource Centers in L.A. County with legal services, food, job training, health screening and other social services.

JUSTICE IN HOUSING

Since 1992, Bet Tzedek has successfully combated consumer fraud in many forms. Our Real Estate Fraud Project brings extensive litigation on behalf of fraud victims, and also focuses on educating clients to help them avoid victimization. Our current work includes: litigation against home equity scam artists who literally steal seniors' homes; education and services on identity theft and mistaken identity cases; and debt counseling with clients who are considering bankruptcy.



The Sydney M. Irmas Housing Conditions Project works with tenants and other organizations to create and preserve affordable housing in Los Angeles. Bet Tzedek's efforts have resulted in vast improvements to housing and health conditions, prevented evictions and homelessness and obtained damage awards for tenants. Recently, Bet Tzedek attorneys helped to shape the Primary Renovation Ordinance, a new City law protecting apartment residents from evictions during building renovations.

Our Eviction Defense Team works tirelessly to preserve affordable housing by defending tenants from unlawful evictions. Our work focuses on meritorious cases involving families with dependent children, as well as disabled and elderly people for whom eviction may mean homelessness. Certified law students are eligible to conduct depositions and supervised trial work.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC BENEFITS

With over 20 years experience in the field, our public benefits attorneys assist clients with applications and appeals involving a wide range of public benefits programs, including SSI, CalWorks, CAPI and more. Students have the opportunity to participate in the preparation of cases before the Office of the Administrative Law Judge, draft hearing briefs and work closely with clients and medical professionals to prepare cases for hearings.

JUSTICE FOR SENIORS

Originally established in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Association as part of the "El Portal" service consortium, Bet Tzedek's Family Caregiver Project provides legal counseling, advice and representation to English- and Spanish-speaking adults who are caring at home for a family member afflicted with Alzheimer's Disease, dementia or some other debilitating illness. The project conducts community legal education presentations in Spanish and English for health-care professionals, social workers and caregivers themselves to provide information about programs and services that support caregivers and the severely disabled family members they care for.

Self-Help Conservatorship Clinic Program: In partnership with the Los Angeles Superior Court and a grant from the State Bar of California, our Self Help Staff Attorney and volunteers assist pro per litigants who need conservatorships for family members (predominantly developmentally disabled children or seniors with mental capacity issues). The clinic is held from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in the downtown Los Angeles Superior Courthouse, 4th Floor.

JUSTICE FOR SURVIVORS

Bet Tzedek is one of the few organizations in the world that assists survivors of the Holocaust free of charge in pursuing reparations, restitution and pension payments. Each year, Bet Tzedek helps more than 500 survivors with reparations from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and various governments and restitution from insurance companies and Swiss banks. We look to the future, developing new proposals for reparations and restitutions programs to help indigent Holocaust survivors live in dignity.



JUSTICE FOR WORKERS

Eighteen percent of L.A. County's 9.5 million residents live below the federal poverty line, with the majority of those individuals holding full-time jobs. Bet Tzedek has been a longtime advocate of working families. Founded in 2001, the Employment Rights Project provides legal representation to workers who have been illegally denied wages. ERP has helped more than 750 workers since its founding, winning more than \$2,000,000 in back wages for our clients. ERP also works to eradicate human trafficking (modern day slavery) with federal court litigation and legislative advocacy. **The Workers Rights Clinic:** ERP holds a clinic every Wednesday evening, 5:30-7:30 pm. (Spanish and Asian-Pacific language speakers needed.)

Other Services

We also assist clients with simple wills, powers of attorney (health care), and advocacy on behalf of nursing home residents.