

for the public good.



ASCEND JUSTICE

A photograph of two young women with long dark hair, smiling and looking at each other. They are wearing denim jackets and sunglasses. The woman on the left is holding a large, colorful pinwheel. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with other people and structures visible in the distance.

work with survivors

Ascend Justice offers many opportunities for attorneys, paralegals, students, and other professionals to do meaningful work on behalf of survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, trafficking, stalking, and the child welfare system.

Ascend Justice volunteers, interns, and fellows provide critical legal and holistic services directly to our clients, helping them achieve safety and stability during some of the hardest times in their lives. Our volunteers do interesting, important work that ranges from discrete, limited client services to full representation litigation, and everything in between. If you are an attorney, student, or administrative professional who wants to do good, chances are there's someone you can help at Ascend Justice.

attorneys & paralegals

Attorneys and paralegals who want to work pro bono with Ascend Justice clients have several avenues from which to choose. At our walk-in Order of Protection clinic in the Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse, we offer opportunities for volunteer attorneys/paralegals to work directly with people seeking protective orders. Volunteers help by interviewing clients and preparing petitions for Emergency Orders of Protection, including client affidavits and other necessary court forms. We provide training for interested individuals and groups on our website, and CLE credit is available for Illinois attorneys. Small groups and individuals can sign up for shifts in our clinic, which runs from 9:00am–4:00pm Monday through Friday.

We also provide opportunities for attorneys to take on full representation cases through our Family Defense and Incarcerated Survivors programs. Through our Family Defense Program, we provide training and ongoing case supervision for representation of parents and child care professionals in appeals of indicted findings in the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Administrative Hearings Unit. No experience is necessary. Our Incarcerated Survivors Program places post-conviction relief cases with experienced firms. Occasionally, we also have litigation pro bono opportunities available in other practice areas. Volunteer qualifications and requirements vary by program.

interns

We provide unpaid internships for students interested in working with survivors in all of our practice areas, including our Client Support Program. Our interns can get school credit for their work, provided they work a minimum of 12 hours per week during the semester, or full time during the summer. For law students, our typical internships involve interviewing and communicating with clients; performing legal research; drafting motions, pleas, subpoenas, and client communications; and working directly with attorneys on cases. Client Support interns must be currently enrolled in an MSW or BSW program. Client Support interns must also be bilingual (English/ Spanish or other language commonly spoken in Chicago). Interns in the client support division typically work on client intake, outreach, and crisis prevention.

fellows

Ascend Justice fellows are law school graduates who work with us for a set period of time to provide legal advocacy for our clients. Our fellows join us through school-based post-graduate fellowships, as well as external fellowship programs such as Equal Justice Works or Skadden Fellowship Foundation, which accept applications with various deadlines throughout the year. Applicants for fellowships must submit a letter outlining their area of interest in one or more of our practice areas. Please see our website for fellowship application deadlines.

other volunteers

As a legal aid agency, our primary volunteer needs are for people with some legal experience. However, we occasionally need volunteers for other discrete projects. If you are interested in working with Ascend Justice in a non-legal capacity, contact us at volunteerservices@ascendjustice.org.



ASCEND JUSTICE

legal advocacy. transforming lives.



Apply to Volunteer

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Chicago, IL 60601

ascendjustice.org

555 W Harrison St
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