

Basic Public Benefits Advocacy Trainings



MCLE, the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI), and other Massachusetts legal services programs collaborate to provide annual basic public benefits advocacy training events for the many public and private sector lawyers and community advocates who assist Massachusetts residents to qualify for and receive public benefits. Detailed materials are distributed for all trainings.

1 Assisting Families Experiencing Homelessness

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 No. **2210033WBC** or Wednesday, September 30, 2020 No. **2210033RBC**
9:30 am–3:00 pm; 5.5 Credits

This program focuses on strategies to assist families experiencing homelessness in accessing and retaining shelter, short-term housing, and services from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Trainers provide an overview of the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter and services program, including current restrictions on access to EA shelter. The training also includes advocacy tips regarding the range of issues facing families at-risk or experiencing homelessness as they seek access to EA shelter and the HomeBASE program. The training includes an overview of the system, the application process, denials, terminations, shelter placements, and program requirements. This training is for legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice, social and health services workers, and community activists who want to learn about the nuts-and-bolts of the EA system and the HomeBASE program. Training materials include the *Emergency Assistance Advocacy Guide: A Guide to Emergency Shelter and Rehousing Services for Homeless Families with Children in Massachusetts*.

2 CORI: Basics of the NEW Criminal Justice Reform Law

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 No. **2210036WBC** or Tuesday, October 27, 2020 No. **2210036RBC**
9:30 am–2:30 pm; 4 Credits

This seminar provides an overview of criminal offender record information (CORI) laws as related to employment, driver licenses, housing, and other collateral consequences. Topics include: how to get CORI reports, sealing and expungement of adult and juvenile cases; chapter 151B anti-discrimination provisions; negligent hiring protections for employers and landlords, and other provisions.

Massachusetts keeps “CORI” on every individual who has a criminal case in a Massachusetts state court. CORI is recorded and kept on file even if the underlying case is ultimately dismissed or the accused is found not guilty. CORI is used in screening processes by employers, landlords, government agencies, and others. Clients with criminal records face barriers to employment, housing, benefits and other opportunities for economic stability. This training is for legal services advocates, lawyers

in private practice, social and health services workers, and community activists who want to learn about the new law or get a refresher course on the basics of CORI.

3 SSI & SSDI Basics

Wednesday, December 2, 2020 No. **2210034WBC** or Wednesday, December 16, 2020

No. **2210034RBC**; 9:30 am–4:00 pm; 5.5 Credits
Social Security disability programs continue to be a major source of cash and health benefits for individuals with disabilities. However, dealing with a large federal agency can be daunting and overwhelming, especially for an unrepresented claimant. The program begins with an overview of the two disability programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), with emphasis on eligibility requirements and procedures, including basic disability eligibility standards and non-disability issues such as income, resources, and non-citizen criteria. An explanation of the recently revised evidence submission and analysis rules begins with the afternoon session followed by overview of the appeals process for disability applications. Concluding the program is a review of certain post-entitlement issues, with special emphasis on continuing disability reviews, work incentives rules, and benefits overpayments. The training is for legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice who are thinking of representing clients before SSA, social and health workers, and community activists.

4 SNAP/Food Stamps Advocacy 101

Wednesday, February 3, 2021 No. **2210094WBC** or Wednesday, February 10, 2021 No. **2210094RBC**
9:30 am–12:30 pm; 3 Credits

The federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly called Food Stamps) remains the first line of defense against hunger for thousands of Massachusetts residents. Families and individuals often struggle with getting their SNAP applications and recertifications approved. Collecting all the required proofs and getting through the application process can be overwhelming for an unrepresented household. Some of the most challenging cases involve the rules for immigrant-headed households. Special rules also apply to households with older adults and persons with disabilities.

The training includes an overview of the federal SNAP program, an update on federal and state

SNAP changes during the COVID-19 pandemic, and an in-depth look at the nuts and bolts of SNAP eligibility, benefit amount, online tools, trouble-shooting, and appeal rights. This SNAP 101 training is designed for participants who need the basic rules and advocacy tips including new legal services and community advocates, lawyers in private practice, and social and health services workers.

Please note, the 2020 SNAP Advocacy Guide will not be updated due to the ongoing federal and state policy changes due to COVID. The 2020 is available as a download or e-book on the MassLegalServices website and should be used in conjunction with updated information about SNAP and COVID-19, available at: MassLegalServices.org/DTA-COVID-19.

5 Utilities—Advocacy for Low-Income Households in Massachusetts

Wednesday, February 3, 2021 No. **2210095WBC** or Wednesday, February 10, 2021 No. **2210095RBC**
1:00 pm–3:00 pm; 2 Credits

This training covers the broad range of topics that arise when low-income households are trying to initiate or protect their utility service, as well as pay their non-utility energy bills (oil, propane). Topics include: how to start service and protect service from termination, how to restore terminated service, how to get on the low-income discount rate, payment plans and arrearage management programs, funding sources that help pay utility bills, helping victims of domestic violence and crimes, and advocating for clients at the Department of Public Utilities. Training materials include *Utilities Advocacy for Low-income Households in Massachusetts*. All materials will be available on the NCLC website. This training is designed for anyone working in the field and helping low-income clients with their utility problems, including social workers, housing search workers, elder advocates, immigration advocates, domestic violence program staff, community action program staff, and lawyers.

6 Overview of the TAFDC Program, Massachusetts’ Cash Assistance Program for Families

Friday, February 12, 2021 No. **2210037WBC** or Friday, February 26, 2021 No. **2210037RBC**
10:00 am–2:30 pm; 4.5 Credits

This training is for legal services advocates,

lawyers in private practice, social and health services workers, and community activists who want to learn about TAFDC (Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children)—the cash assistance program for families. The training provides an overview of program rules, eligibility and information about recent changes, including COVID-19 policy adjustments and issues. The training will also cover applying for and keeping TAFDC benefits, and protections for specific populations including people with disabilities, people dealing with domestic violence, and people with limited English proficiency. In the afternoon, there will be breakout sessions on child care and non-citizen eligibility/public charge.

Materials will include PowerPoint handouts and other resources. With so many rules in flux, we are not updating the *TAFDC Advocacy Guide: An Advocate's Guide to the Massachusetts Welfare Rules for Families*. The December 2019 edition is available free at <https://www.masslegalservices.org/TAFDCAdvocacyGuide>.

7 Health Care Access Programs

Thursday, February 25, 2021 No. 2210096WBC
or Thursday, March 4, 2021 No. 2210096RBC
9:30 am–4:00 pm; 5.5 Credits

This training is designed to help attendees understand Medicaid and other subsidized health programs available to people under age 65 in Massachusetts. The program provides an overview of the eligibility requirements for MassHealth, ConnectorCare and other programs and the process for applying and enrolling in coverage. It also provides an update on any significant changes to health access programs in the prior year. It reviews the way MassHealth beneficiaries obtain access to covered services including changes in the delivery of MassHealth services by Accountable Care Organizations. Trainers also supply troubleshooting tips for resolving common eligibility and access to service problems in MassHealth and the Connector. This training gives outreach workers, social workers, providers, and advocates an up-to-date nuts-and-bolts overview of eligibility issues, and teaches them how to assist their patients and clients in becoming enrolled, maintaining coverage, and using their benefits. The training is designed for new advocates but will also be helpful for experienced advocates looking for a review and update.

8 Income Maximization for the Working Poor

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 No. 2210097WBC
or Wednesday, March 10, 2021 No. 2210097RBC
9:15 am–3:00 pm; 5 Credits

This session is an overview focusing on various supplemental benefits and assistance programs which help working families and individuals to maximize their income and reduce their expenses. This training is designed as an overview of benefits. The subject areas are quite broad. This is not an in-depth analysis of any particular program. This training is for new and experienced legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice, social and health

services workers, and community activists who want to learn about or get an update on this subject in order to help their clients.

9 Unemployment Insurance

Thursday, March 11, 2021 No. 2210098WBC
or Thursday, March 18, 2021 No. 2210098RBC
1:00 pm–4:30 pm; 3.5 Credits

Unemployment insurance (UI) is a critical safety net during periods of joblessness. This seminar provides you with the expertise you need to understand the UI system and to help your clients get the UI benefits to which they are legally entitled. Our expert panel guides you through the entire UI system from eligibility criteria to the appeals process. (Unemployed workers often cannot afford to retain professional services in pursuing their claims, so if you are a non-legal services attorney, you can register to assist someone in need of help, and in doing so, qualify for reduced tuition.) Training materials include the *Unemployment Advocacy Guide: An Advocate's Guide to Unemployment in Massachusetts*. This training is co-sponsored by Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Greater Boston Legal Services, the Volunteer Lawyers Project, and the Labor and Employment Section of the Massachusetts Bar Association.

10 Immigrants & Public Benefits

Thursday, April 8, 2021 No. 2210099WBC
or Thursday, April 15, 2021 No. 2210099RBC
9:30 am–4:00 pm; 5.5 Credits

This all-day training offers the nuts-and-bolts on how immigration status affects eligibility for benefits for non-citizen immigrants and refugees. The trainers include both immigration lawyers and legal experts in different public benefit programs. It covers basic information about immigrants in Massachusetts, how immigration status affects public benefits in general and an overview of the most commonly seen types of immigration status and documents. It will include the latest information about the proposed “public charge” rule that may change how benefits are treated for immigration purposes in the future as well as a “know your rights” session for community organizations to address fears among immigrants whom they serve. In the afternoon, hear from experts on the immigrant eligibility rules in specific programs including the TAFDC, EAEDC and SSI cash assistance programs, the SNAP (food stamps) program, and MassHealth and other subsidized health programs. Also addressed is immigrant eligibility for state and federal subsidized housing programs and EA shelter.

11 Tenants' Rights

Wednesday, April 14, 2021 No. 2210093WBC
or Wednesday, April 28, 2021 No. 2210093RBC
9:30 am–3:00 pm; 5 Credits

This training is for community and lay advocates, mediators, housing and legal advocates, and others interested in having

a better understanding of tenants' rights in Massachusetts. The training focuses on evictions, getting repairs made, rents, and housing discrimination. While the eviction process part of the program applies to all tenants, the training focuses primarily on rights of tenants in private housing. Materials include *Legal Tactics: Tenants' Rights in Massachusetts*.

12 State & Federal Veterans' Benefits

Thursday, April 22, 2021 No. 2210100WBC
or Thursday, April 29, 2021 No. 2210100RBC
9:30 am–3:30 pm; 5 Credits

This training is for legal services advocates, lawyers in private practice, social and health services workers, veterans, lay advocates, legislative aides, and anyone else who wants to learn about the basics of state and federal veterans' benefits. The training covers state veterans' benefits under M.G.L. c. 115 (administered by the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services), and federal benefits for healthcare, service-connected disability compensation, and non-service-connected pensions (administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs). The session covers the basic application process, eligibility rules for veterans (military discharge status, financial eligibility, disqualifying conditions, refund status), and the disability requirements for benefits. It also covers the basics of filing an appeal and upgrading a less than honorable discharge.

13 Elder Benefits Programs

Wednesday, May 5, 2021 No. 2210101WBC
or Wednesday, May 12, 2021 No. 2210101RBC
9:30 am–4:00 pm; 5.5 Credits

Due in part to the high cost of living, older adults in Massachusetts have the second lowest levels of economic security in the nation. This training provides an overview of the key public benefits programs to help older adults meet their basic needs. Experts review the basic eligibility rules for cash benefit programs like SSI and Social Security Insurance benefits, home-based care services from the Office of Elder Affairs, and health care programs like Medicare and MassHealth. It also provides a brief summary of other public benefits. This program provides legal services advocates, lawyers, paralegals, social workers, case managers and advocates with other community groups with basic knowledge about many of the resources available to elders, with an emphasis on program criteria specific to elders and how to navigate the complexities across programs.

All programs will be available online only.

TUITION each program

\$35 Legal Services Attorneys and
Non Lawyer Advocates
\$125 All Others

Can't attend?

See page 81 of MCLE's Fall 2020 Catalog for a complete list of Basic Public Benefits Advocacy print resources.

Choose from 4 easy ways to register and order!

- ▶ **ONLINE** enter your credit card order at **www.mcle.org**.
- ▶ **FAX** your credit card order 24 hours a day to 617-482-9498.
- ▶ **MAIL** this order form with payment to MCLE, Inc., Ten Winter Place, Boston, MA 02108-4751.
- ▶ **CALL IN** your credit card order to (800) 966-6253, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-5:00 pm

1 CUSTOMER INFORMATION

Year Admitted to MA Bar _____ Title (if any) _____ BBO# _____
 Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____
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 Street Address _____ Suite/Floor _____
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2 PROGRAM REGISTRATION includes written materials

- ASSISTING FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
 Live Webcast, September 23, 2020 No. 2210033WBC Recorded Webcast, September 30, 2020 No. 2210033RBC \$ _____
- CORI: BASICS OF THE NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM LAW
 Live Webcast, October 20, 2020 No. 2210036WBC Recorded Webcast, October 27, 2020 No. 2210036RBC \$ _____
- SSI & SSDI BASICS
 Live Webcast, December 2, 2020 No. 2210034WBC Recorded Webcast, December 16, 2020 No. 2210034RBC \$ _____
- SNAP/FOOD STAMPS ADVOCACY 101
 Live Webcast, February 3, 2021 No. 2210094WBC Recorded Webcast, February 10, 2021 No. 2210094RBC \$ _____
- UTILITIES—ADVOCACY FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS
 Live Webcast, February 3, 2021 No. 2210095WBC Recorded Webcast, February 10, 2021 No. 2210095RBC \$ _____
- OVERVIEW OF THE TAFDC PROGRAM, MASSACHUSETTS' CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES
 Live Webcast, February 12, 2021 No. 2210037WBC Recorded Webcast, February 26, 2021 No. 2210037RBC \$ _____
- HEALTH CARE ACCESS PROGRAMS
 Live Webcast, February 25, 2021 No. 2210096WBC Recorded Webcast, March 4, 2021 No. 2210096RBC \$ _____
- INCOME MAXIMIZATION FOR THE WORKING POOR
 Live Webcast, March 3, 2021 No. 2210097WBC Recorded Webcast, March 10, 2021 No. 2210097RBC \$ _____
- UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
 Live Webcast, March 11, 2021 No. 2210098WBC Recorded Webcast, March 18, 2021 No. 2210098RBC \$ _____
- IMMIGRANTS & PUBLIC BENEFITS
 Live Webcast, April 8, 2021 No. 2210099WBC Recorded Webcast, April 15, 2021 No. 2210099RBC \$ _____
- TENANTS' RIGHTS
 Live Webcast, April 14, 2021 No. 2210093WBC Recorded Webcast, April 28, 2021 No. 2210093RBC \$ _____
- STATE & FEDERAL VETERANS' BENEFITS
 Live Webcast, April 22, 2021 No. 2210100WBC Recorded Webcast, April 29, 2021 No. 2210100RBC \$ _____
- ELDER BENEFITS PROGRAMS
 Live Webcast, May 5, 2021 No. 2210101WBC Recorded Webcast, May 12, 2021 No. 2210101RBC \$ _____

PROGRAMS SUBTOTAL . . . \$

3 PAYMENT METHOD

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Basic Public Benefits Advocacy Trainings

Policies and Information

Register early!

For course agendas, hours, fees, and discounts, please refer to the respective seminar pages. The fee includes program instruction and all written materials unless otherwise noted.

To gain early access to online materials, please register in advance of the program.

Upon registration, MCLE will e-mail a confirmation.

Day-of-the-program registrations are welcome, with the exception of limited enrollment programs, or as otherwise noted.

We accept cash, checks, MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover.

Need special assistance?

If you are a person with a disability or special needs, please let us know in advance so that we can make your experience as convenient and comfortable as possible. Call Customer Service at 800-966-6253 to make arrangements.

For your convenience, MCLE also offers closed captioning  and written transcripts of all recorded webcast programs, available to you online two weeks after the program date.

Mandatory CLE credits

Individual attorneys are responsible for checking with their particular state CLE accreditation authority about whether and how much credit will be granted. Although MCLE does not pursue state-based credit, MCLE programs are regularly approved in many jurisdictions. It is the responsibility of the individual attorney to submit the information and certifications required under the respective state rule to the appropriate authorities in the jurisdictions in which they seek credit.

Depending on the jurisdiction, lawyers can satisfy their mandatory CLE requirements online with MCLE's webcasts, which feature periodic attendance prompts, online written materials, and the opportunity to receive a certificate of attendance.

If your plans change

If you're unable to participate in a program on the date for which you registered, you will receive an email about how to access the program on demand via webcast and/or downloadable mp3 file, including the written materials in electronic form, in full satisfaction of the tuition paid. If you prefer a refund, let us know by the end of the business day prior to the program and we'll refund your tuition after deducting a \$25 processing fee. Note that limited enrollment programs are an exception, cancellation of which require two weeks notice and are subject to a \$45 processing fee.

Discounts for new lawyers—new lawyers always pay the lowest price

For the first three years of practice, MCLE offers new lawyers a 25% discount on all of its products, including programs, books, audio CDs and mp3 recordings. If you were admitted to the bar after 2018, you can take advantage of the new lawyer prices listed throughout the catalog.

Pending admittees, law students and paralegals are eligible for a 25% discount on most MCLE programs.

Attorney scholarships

Attorneys with financial need who certify that they are unable to attend a program without financial aid may request a partial tuition scholarship in confidence by writing or emailing scholarships@mcle.org at **least two weeks in advance of the program**.

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MCLE Sponsorship runs for 12 months beginning September 1. The fee for firm, corporate law department, or agency membership is calculated based on the number of Massachusetts admittees within the organization. Benefits of membership extend to all lawyers and non-lawyer professionals associated with the organization.

- Solo Practitioners \$95
- Firms by number of Massachusetts attorneys:
 - 2-5 \$ 150
 - 6-10 250
 - 11-25 500
 - 26-75 1,000
 - 76-150 \$ 2,500
 - 151-250 3,500
 - 251+ 4,500