EQUAL ACCESS

November 2025

JUST GRATITUDE

CELEBRATING THE IMPACT OF PRO BONO

SPRING INTO PRO BONO

SERIES RETURNS IN 2026

#GivingTuesday

IS DECEMBER 2

PRAIRIE STATE LEGAL SERVICES

PSLEGAL.ORG

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Denise E. Conklin

Dear PSLS Friends and Supporters,

Grateful! I am grateful for YOU – one of PSLS' dedicated supporters – for being there for us in 2025 as PSLS continues to work toward our mission of equal access to justice for the most vulnerable in our communities. We know there is much work to be done, and our neighbors who we serve in Northern and Central Illinois need us. Individuals in our communities can continue to count on PSLS in their time of crisis; and because of partners, like you, PSLS can continue to provide high-quality legal services to our clients in the areas of financial stability, housing and safety.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

PSLS believes that everyone deserves an opportunity to provide for themselves and their family.

HOUSING

PSLS believes that everyone deserves a safe space and decent place to call home.

SAFETY

PSLS believes that everyone deserves to live free from abuse and violence.

We are in this together, and PSLS will continue to serve individuals who without us would be silenced in the justice system. Please consider joining PSLS on Dec. 2 for #GivingTuesday. Your steady support will give PSLS the strength to push forward in 2026.

Scan the QR code below or visit pslegal.org/givingtuesday to learn more about #GivingTuesday.

Join PSLS on #GivingTuesday

GIVING TUESDAY

My very best to you all,

Denise E. Conklin
PSLS Executive Director

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: JUST GRATITUDE

At PSLS, we continue to engage the communities we serve through pro bono clinics, trainings, legal education, outreaches, and donor and funder convenings. In many of these forums, we get asked, “What can I do to help our communities live in a more just society with more access to legal aid?” Our impact areas focus on legal issues faced by Illinois families. More justice for them is our purpose and your support helps us address their needs. As this year winds down we are filled not only with gratitude but a *just* gratitude.

The depth of the civil legal issues can be overwhelming and devastating for families, but when we are able to walk alongside these families to the other side of their legal crises, we also hear: “I wish others knew that justice was possible for them, too.” It is motivating to hear the shared values in these conversations with PSLS donors and clients. We will continue to work toward a more just community and express our just gratitude for your support in November with 30 Days of Thanks and GivingTuesday in December.

GivingTuesday is a movement that unleashes the global power of radical generosity. The idea began with Henry Timms, the Executive Director of the 92nd Street Y in New York in 2012. The idea was simple: a day that encourages people to do good. Radical generosity is the main idea behind #GivingTuesday. PSLS launched its first #GT campaign on Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2016, and with the overwhelming support of our board and staff, we raised over $17,000 in donations.

Since its inception, donors have raised over $514,500 for free civil legal aid during #GT. Thank you to our board, donors, sponsors, and staff for these donations.

On Nov. 1, we began our 30 Days of Thanks social media campaign to recognize donors and community partners. It is with gratitude that we recognize our work is fueled by Illinois neighbors like you. Happy holiday season to you and yours.

Thank you for sponsoring PSLS events this past year.

Spring Into Pro Bono Inaugural Series

Wylder Corwin Kelly, LLP
Deb Goldberg
DuPage County Bar Association
Kane County Bar Association

Pro Bono Expungement & Sealing Clinic

Meyer & Kiss, LLC.

Strike a Chord

Lake County Bar Association and Foundation
Anonymous
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Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard Trial Lawyers
Association of Women Attorneys of Lake County
Collins Family Law
Hon. Fred L. Foreman (Ret.) & Stephanie Foreman
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INB
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Heartland Bank and Trust Company
Bank of Pontiac
Sugar Mama Bakery
Lexington Social

PSLS GEAR

Looking for gear with the PSLS logo? Check out PSLS’ new swag store for polos, hoodies, hats and more. Scan the QR code to visit the store. *PSLS does not receive any dollars from swag store purchases.*

Celebrating the Impact of Pro Bono

PSLS recently participated in the 17th Annual National Celebration of Pro Bono! The weeklong celebration in October spotlights volunteer attorneys who work alongside PSLS staff to provide high-quality legal services to even more community members in need. PSLS' Pro Bono Program has expanded to more than 350 volunteer attorneys, paralegals and other professionals.

Thank you to all the pro bono attorneys who have worked on a case in the past 12 months:

David Agay
L. Kathryn Allen
Frank Andreano
James Andreoni
Steven Balk
Peter Barclay
Robert Baron
Cliff Bartholomew
Brandon Baseman
Michael Bean
Joshua Bedwell
Andrew Bell
Jessica Bell
William Beneke
Kelly Bennett
Robert Bennett
Greta Berna
Robin Berry
Kathryn Bettcher
Hallie Bezner
David Black
Brent Blair
Trisha Blake-Millar
Logan Blank
Donna Blatchford
Jennifer Bonesteel
Colleen Boraca
Deanna Bowen
Karen Boyd
Michael Brandt
Mark Brent
Maria Bries
Ashley Broadstone
Maxwell Brooks
Charles Brown
Joel Brown
Anne Burton
David Butler
Janet Buttron
Deborah Cain
Paul Cain
Mayanna Callas
Luke Carlson
Morgan Carr
Emily Carrara
Peter Carroll
Kathleen Carter
Andrew Cassidy
David Castegnaro
Richard Claahsen
David Clark
Maggie Clark
Rachel Conley
Laura Conroy
Nina Cosentino
Chris Crawford
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George Cuonzo
Douglas Cuscaden
Floyd Dailey
John Danenberger
Susan Danial
Spencer Daniels
Kenneth Davies
Alex Davis
Dean Davis
Claire de Chazal
Joseph Dehn
David Del Re
Olivia Dirig
Timothy Divis
Aimee Dluski
Terry Dodds
Kimberley Donald
Ted Donner
Eileen Dorchinecz
Kathleen Doyen
Don Driscoll
Blake Dunlap
Suzanne Eagle
Maribeth Egert-Dura
Michelle Eggert
Penny Eilers
Charles Eisner
Hannah Eisner
Elizabeth Ellis
James Engelman
Dustin Essig
Todd Fanter
Rita Farrell
Vanessa Favia
Mary Field
David Fish
Michael Fitzgerald
Gary Flanders
Michael Fleck
Katrine Fleishman
Abigail Fleming
Adam Fleming
Michael Fleming
Jean Fletcher
Raquel Flores Vera
Peter Follenweider
Patricia Fong
Curtis Ford
Jonathon Fox
Eric Frobish
Christine Gale
Aaron Galloway
Robert Gates
Robert Geiger
William Gerber
Eduardo Gil
Mitch Gilfillan
Kelly Giraudo
Deborah Goldberg
Neil Goltermann
James Greenwood
Victor Gryniewicz
Timothy Gulbranson
Michael Gulo
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James Hannon
Marissa Hanson
Daniel Hardin
Debbie Harper
Holly Harris
Daniel Harrod
John Harry
Katharine Hatch
Robert Hauser
John Heil
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Shelly Johnson
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David June
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Jenna Kearns
Roger Kellerman
Mary Kelly
Jan Kempe
Casey Kepple
Andrew Keyt
Jennifer Kincaid
Evan King
Timothy Kirk
Anne Knight
Donald Knuckey
Kathleen (Katy) Kraft
Tammie Krauskopf
Jeff Krumpe
John Kunze
Claudia Kupiec
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Maureen Lawson
Cinthya Lee
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Nancy Schilling
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Joseph Sell
Lidia Serrano
May Sethaphanich
Matthew Shaw
Catherine Sheehan
Marjorie Sher
Kenneth Shiner
Brian Shoemaker
Alexis Simmons
Ravi Sinha
Joel Skinner
Jack Slingerland
Caroline Smith
Craig Smith
Bill Spiro
Jeremy Spitzer
Kirsten Steeves
Jacob Steinfink
Brian Stevens
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Mary Taradash
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Brody Woods
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Yeena Yoo
Alonzo Zahour

2025 DISTINGUISHED PRO BONO ADVOCATE

As part of our annual pro bono week celebration, PSLS honors one volunteer as its Distinguished Pro Bono Advocate for truly going above and beyond to make a difference for PSLS clients. Thomas McClure was honored as PSLS' 2025 Distinguished Pro Bono Advocate! Tom, an attorney and retired Illinois State University (ISU) professor, began taking pro bono divorce cases from PSLS' Bloomington Office in 2011. In fall 2020, Tom launched the Expungement Clinic at ISU which allowed PSLS to transfer expungement and sealing clients directly to Tom, who then assigned their cases to his ISU Legal Studies students. Since the clinic's launch, Tom and his former students helped 114 clients request to seal or expunge their criminal records and contributed more than 376 hours of service to their community. In a remarkable act of generosity, Tom and his wife donated $100,000 to the ISU Foundation to establish the Thomas E. McClure Pro Bono Endowment, which now provides the majority of the clinic's funding. Thank you, Tom, for your dedication and for advocating tirelessly for individuals in need!

PSLS Bloomington Office Managing Attorney, Adrian Barr (right), presents the 2025 Distinguished Pro Bono Advocate award to Thomas McClure (left).

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY PRO BONO HONOREES

In addition to the Distinguished Pro Bono Advocate Award, PSLS recognizes an outstanding individual or firm from each of PSLS' 11 offices and the Telephone Counseling Unit. These honorees truly embody the idea of "Supporting Communities" by volunteering their time and talent within their local community.

Congratulations to PSLS' 2025 Outstanding Community Pro Bono Honorees:

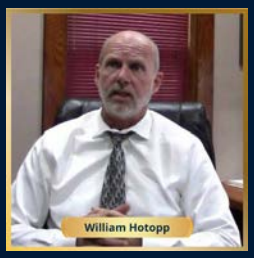
Bloomington

Galesburg

Joliet

Kankakee

Moline



Ottawa

Peoria

Rockford

Telephone Counseling

Waukegan

West Suburban

West Suburban

Woodstock

Learn about the Distinguished Pro Bono Advocate and Outstanding Community Pro Bono Honorees on pslegal.org/news.

Interested in joining PSLS' Pro Bono Program?
Please email probono@pslegal.org.

SPRING INTO PRO BONO SERIES RETURNS IN 2026!

PSLS' Spring Into Pro Bono Series returns for a second year in 2026 and will continue to focus on representing families experiencing legal issues affecting their financial stability, housing and safety. The series offers attorneys *free* virtual CLE trainings in exchange for accepting a pro bono case. PSLS volunteer attorneys have access to resources on PSLS' pro bono portal which launched at the beginning of this year. The virtual trainings from the 2026 series will be recorded and added to PSLS' pro bono portal to continue to support our volunteer attorneys. Attorneys who attend the series commit to a short-term or extended representation opportunity through an individual case referral or within one of our projects: Eviction Negotiation Project, Family Law Advice Clinic, Criminal Records Relief, Advanced Directives for Seniors and Telephone Advice.

The 2026 series topics and dates will be announced in January 2026!

Want to help PSLS Spring Into Pro Bono in 2026?

Consider joining us as a sponsor or speaker! Visit pslegal.org/Spring-into-Pro-Bono or scan the QR code to learn more.

DO YOU NEED LEGAL HELP?

The Illinois Equal Justice Foundation manages four state-funded programs that offer free legal help, advice and information to people who can't afford a lawyer.

ILLINOIS Equal Justice FOUNDATION

25 YEARS ★ Powering Legal Aid, Championing Justice for All

ILAO ILLINOIS LEGAL AID ONLINE

FOR HELP WITH ISSUES SUCH AS FAMILY LAW, CONSUMER FRAUD, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

Cook County Residents
Call CARPLS Legal Aid Hotline at 312-738-9200

Northern and Central Illinois Residents
Call Prairie State Legal Services at 800-531-7057

Central and Southern Illinois Residents
Call Land of Lincoln Legal Aid at 877-342-7891

Anyone in Illinois can visit IllinoisLegalAid.org to find simplified legal information, forms and other resources.

NEW LEAF ILLINOIS clearing cannabis convictions

FOR HELP **CLEARING CANNABIS RECORDS**

Illinois residents can register with New Leaf Illinois to find out if they qualify for cannabis expungement.

Call 855-963-9532 | Visit newleafillinois.org

Eviction Help Illinois — Legal Solutions for Your Housing Issues

FOR HELP WITH **EVICTION-RELATED ISSUES**

Illinois tenants and landlords can contact Eviction Help Illinois to see if they qualify for free legal help.

Call 855-631-0811 | Text 'Eviction' to 85622

Visit evictionhelpillinois.org

Reply 'Stop' to cancel or 'Help' for help. Message and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies.

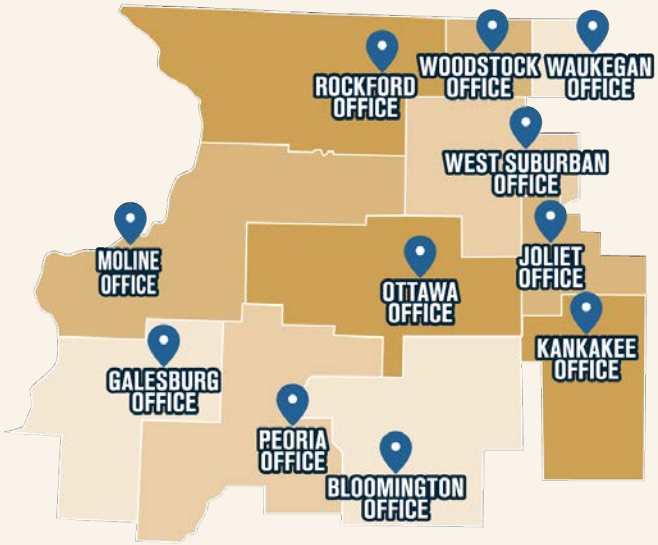
ILLINOIS ARMED FORCES LEGAL AID NETWORK

FOR HELP WITH **VETERANS LEGAL ISSUES SUCH AS DISCHARGE UPGRADES AND BENEFITS**

Illinois veterans, active-duty military and their families can contact the Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network (IL-AFLAN) to see if they qualify for free legal help.

Call 855-452-3526 | Visit ilaflan.org

Civil Legal Aid Programs, the Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network and New Leaf Illinois are funded through the Office of the Illinois Attorney General. Eviction Help Illinois is funded through the IL Department of Human Services.



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Toll Free: 800-874-2536

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General Telephone Counseling
800-531-7057

Fair Housing Project
855-347-7757

Domestic Violence Legal Advice Line
844-388-7757

Legal Help for Homeowners
888-966-7757

Legal Assistance for Older Adults
888-965-7757

Low-Income Tax Clinic
855-829-7757

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LSC
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UNITED WAY

JOIN PSLS ON #GIVINGTUESDAY!

GIVING TUESDAY

National Philanthropy Day on Nov. 13 is a moment to reflect on and celebrate giving. Thanks to our many generous supporters, PSLS is able to continue its work of making access to justice a reality. In a few weeks, please consider joining PSLS on **Tuesday, Dec. 2 for #GivingTuesday**! Our goal this year is to raise $100,000 to help PSLS build brighter futures for communities across Illinois. Consider setting up a Facebook fundraiser page and engaging your friends and family on our behalf.

After you set up your Facebook fundraiser, please email PSLS' Annual Giving Specialist, Katey Frederking, kfrederking@pslegal.org. Instead of Facebook, you can give online at pslegal.org/givingtuesday or mail your donation to 303 North Main Street, Suite 600, Rockford, IL 61101. *PSLS is a charitable not-for-profit organization and gifts are tax deductible under IRS section 501(c)(3).*

Scan Me for Facebook Fundraiser Instructions

Scan Me to Set Up Your Facebook Fundraiser

Thank you,
#GivingTuesday Sponsors*!

Champion - $2,500
PELLIS LAW GROUP, LLP
CHICAGO • NEW YORK

Leader - $1,000
Deb Goldberg
Brown Law Group, LLC.

Friend - $500
Law Office of Christi Alexander

*These are the sponsorships PSLS received by Oct. 22, 2025. Please visit pslegal.org/givingtuesday for a current sponsorship list.

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