



ALCC

AIDS LEGAL COUNCIL of CHICAGO

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AIDS Legal Council of Chicago Collaborates with LAF and Howard Brown Health Center on Joint Medical-Legal Clinic to Advance LGBTQ Health

AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC), and LAF (formerly Legal Assistance Foundation) are proud to announce the debut of our joint Medical-Legal Clinic.

Held at HBHC's Sheridan location, this clinic aims at providing civil legal assistance for HBHC clients and patients who make an appointment or who are referred by their medical provider, therapist, or case manager.

"Our staff has long known that the serious civil legal matters that many of our patients and clients face also has a direct impact on their overall physical and mental health," said Michelle Wetzel, HBHC's Senior Vice President of Policy, Strategy, and Business Development.

She adds, "For those experiencing eviction or having their electricity shut off, having to choose between paying your bills or paying for your medicine is a dilemma that no one should have to face. And we know that choosing the former can have disastrous health consequences. Having the medical-legal clinic in-house gives our providers the resource to help their patients meet these challenges."

Open every Wednesday from 1-5 pm, a legal advocate sits with patients for a 30-minute appointment offering high-quality and culturally competent review of their legal matter. Depending on the type of case, the patient will receive immediate legal advice, legal representation by ALCC or LAF, or a referral to another specialized legal resource.

For patients who cannot make Wednesday appointments or who have pressing legal matters that cannot wait, there is a direct access referral process between HBHC and ALCC/LAF in place.

"We know that by addressing the legal needs of our patients and helping them resolve legal matters that are weighing on them, we will further strengthen the health and lives and all of the patients who access this program," Wetzel stressed.

For LAF and ALCC, this type of collaboration is incredibly important in the

Chicago-area LGBTQ community and beyond.

"Working on site will allow us to develop strong relationships with clinic participants in an environment that is comfortable and supportive. And through robust collaboration and relying on each other's strengths, LAF and ALCC are committed to working together to provide the highest-quality legal advice and legal representation possible," says Diana White, Executive Director of LAF.

Ruth Edwards, HIV Project Director and Senior Attorney at ALCC, emphasizes that this clinic has incredible potential.

"We are confident that this program will strengthen and grow, ensuring that no one falls through the gaps. We believe that everyone deserves equal access to legal assistance."

The legal clinic at HBHC adds to ALCC's growing number of free legal clinic sites around the city, which include locations on the South, West, and North Sides. To make an appointment at the HBHC legal clinic, call 773-338-1600.

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[AIDS Legal Council of Chicago](#) uses the power of the law to secure health, dignity, and stability for people impacted by HIV and other life-changing health conditions.