



For economic and racial justice

67 E. Madison St., Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60603
312.263.3830 | povertylaw.org

Community Lawyering

Introduction, Syllabus & General Information

Spring 2024

Community Lawyering is a process through which advocates contribute their legal knowledge and skills to support initiatives identified by directly impacted people and community groups that enhance their power. The Shriver Center's Community Lawyering training brings a new mindset to legal aid and public interest law advocacy and provides concrete steps to build and sustain strong relationships with and among community members. In this course, you will learn how to activate issues identified by the community, support a successful advocacy campaign and facilitate community leadership.

Course Structure (all activities are online):

- In Week 1, participants attend one webinar (1 hour) and complete a number of self-paced activities (1.25 hours) via the course site.
- In Weeks 2-6, participants attend interactive live sessions and small group activities where they have opportunities to apply new knowledge to prepared scenarios, share challenges with other participants and faculty, and practice specific community lawyering skills.
- Participants complete weekly between-session assignments. They also participate in weekly peer support meetings to share experiences applying new content and skills in their work with communities.
- **Time Commitments:** This training involves a significant time commitment. Since the training takes place over 6 weeks (see table below for details), it is essential that you clear your schedule for the scheduled sessions so you can participate in all activities. This is particularly important since many of the activities involve small groups and paired exercises that require involvement of all participants.

SCHEDULE (All activities online)

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
March 25–29	April 1 – 5	April 8 – 12	April 15 – 19	April 22 – 26	Apr 29-May 3
2.25 hours	6 hours	6 hours	6 hours	6 hours	5 hours
Week 1 Webinar	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions
Tues, Mar 26	Tues. Apr 2 Thur. Apr 4	Tues. Apr 9 Thur. Apr 11	Tues. Apr 16 Thur. Apr 18	Tues. Apr 23 Thur. Apr 25	Tues. Apr 30 Thur. May 2
(12:30-1:30 ET; 9:30-10:30 PT)	(12:30-3:00 ET; 9:30-12:00 PT both days)	(12:30-3:00 ET; 9:30-12:00 PT both days)	(12:30-3:00 ET; 9:30-12:00 PT both days)	(12:30-3:00 ET; 9:30-12:00 PT both days)	(12:30-3:00 ET; 9:30-12:00 PT both days)
Intro Survey (10 mins)	Application of Skills & Concepts (1h)	Application of Skills & Concepts (1h)	Application of Skills & Concepts (1h)	Application of Skills & Concepts (1h)	

- Send your questions re: assignments or course site to: coursehelp@povertylaw.org

Week 1: March 25 – 29, 2024

Live Session: Tuesday, March 26 th / 12:30 – 1:30 ET 9:30 – 10:30 PT	Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Community Lawyering: Introduces community lawyering – what it is, why an essential approach for legal aid and public interest law advocates to use, how it relates to mission, and potential impacts we can have as a result of these approaches. 	1 hour
ON YOUR OWN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro survey (10') • Readings & Videos (55') 	65mins

Week 2: April 1 – 5, 2024

Live Sessions: Tuesday, April 2 nd / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Community Lawyering Stories	2.5 hours
Break	
Community Lawyering – Case Example 1: Experienced community lawyer shares story from their practice that exemplifies community lawyering values and practices.	
Break	
Community Lawyering Tools: Relationship Building & Issue Selection – PART 1. Introduces the case scenario that participants will work with throughout the remainder of the course and specific tools that advocates use to turn large “problems” into discrete actionable “issues”.	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 2 – Day 1 Content & Skills	30 mins

Live Sessions: Thursday, April 4 th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Community Lawyering – Case Example 2: Experienced community lawyer shares story from their practices that exemplifies community lawyering values and practices.	2.5 hours
Break	
Community Lawyering Tools: Relationship Building & Issue Selection – Small Group Application	
Break	
Community Lawyering Tools: Relationship Building & Issue Selection – Small Group Application (cont’d)	
Week 2 Evaluation & Preparation for Week 3	
ON YOUR OWN	

Readings + Application of Week 2 – Day 2 Content & Skills	30 mins
--	---------

Week 3: April 8 – 12, 2024

Live Sessions: Tuesday, April 9th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Week 3 Start-up & Action Learning Partners: Participants meet in small groups with their assigned “action learning partners” to review experiences applying new concepts and skills introduced during Week 2.	2.5 hours
Break	
Community Lawyering Tools – PART 2: Introduces power-mapping, a tool for identifying institutions and individuals who have power in relation to an issue identified by community groups, how these institutions and individuals are related to each other, what their networks look like, and how we can leverage these relationships to achieve the community’s desired result.	
Break	
Community Lawyering Tools – PART 2	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 3 – Day 1 Content and Skills	30 mins

Live Sessions: Thursday, April 11th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Relationship Building Using One-to-Ones: Introduces practice of one-to-ones and framework for conducting a one-to-one.	2.5 hours
Break	
Relationship Building Using One-to-Ones (cont’d)	
Break	
Relationship Building Using One-to-Ones (cont’d)	

Week 3 Evaluation & Preparation for Week 4	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 3 – Day 2 Content and Skills	30 mins

Week 4: April 15 – 19, 2024

Live Sessions: Tuesday, April 16th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Week 4 Start-up & Action Learning Partners: Participants meet in small groups with their assigned “action learning partners” to review experiences applying new concepts and skills introduced during Week 3.	2.5 hours
Break	
Identity, Culture, Power & Difference: Participants examine issues of difference that arise within the community lawyering context and how to work effectively to respond to and address these.	
Break	
Identity, Culture, Power & Difference (cont’d)	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 4 – Day 1 Content and Skills	30 mins

Live Sessions: Thursday, April 18th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Start-up	2.5 hours
Identity, Culture, Power & Difference – PART 2: Participants examine issues of difference that arise within the community lawyering context and how to work effectively to respond to and address these.	
Break	

Lawyers & Organizers Working Together. Introduces methodology and core practices that organizers use to build power and take action to address issues identified by impacted communities. Also explores opportunities and challenges that legal advocates and organizers face when working together.	
Break	
Lawyers & Organizers Working Together (cont'd)	
Week 4 Wrap-up & Preparation for Week 5	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 4 – Day 2 Content and Skills	30 mins

Week 5: April 22 – 26, 2024

Live Sessions: Tuesday, April 23rd / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Week 5 Start-up & Action Learning Partners: Participants meet in small groups with their assigned “action learning partners” to review experiences applying new concepts and skills introduced during Week 4.	2.5 hours
Break	
Policy Advocacy: Introduces policy advocacy as a tool for the community lawyer to supplement legal, organizing and media tactics to advance the community’s goals.	
Break	
Policy Advocacy: Participants use the policy advocacy action plan to develop a policy campaign to address goals identified in the case scenario.	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 5 – Day 1 Content & Skills	30 mins

Live Sessions: Thursday, April 25th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Strategic Communications – Part 1: Introduces framework for strategic framing and communication using VPSA model – Values, Problem, Solution, Action.	2.5 hours
Break	
Strategic Communications – Part 2: Using VPSA model, participants work in small groups to frame the central message based on the case scenario.	
Break	
Strategic Communications – Part 2 (cont'd)	
Week 5 Wrap-Up & Preparation for Week 6	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 5 – Day 2 Content & Skills	30 mins

Week 6: April 30 – May 3, 2024

Live Sessions: Tuesday, April 30th / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Week 6 Start-Up & Action Learning Partners: Participants meet in small groups with their assigned “action learning partners” to review experiences applying new concepts and skills introduced during Week 5.	2.5 hours
Panel presentations and discussion addressing community lawyering questions that have arisen during the training.	
Break	
Strategy Development: Introduces a suggested approach for developing strategies to achieve community-identified goals.	
ON YOUR OWN	
Readings + Application of Week 6 – Day 1 Content & Skills	30 mins

Live Sessions: Thursday, May 2 nd / 12:30 – 3:00 ET 9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
Strategy Development – (cont’d): Introduces a suggested approach for developing strategies to achieve community-identified goals.	2.5 hours
Break	
Action Planning & Close: Participants identify concrete steps for bringing community lawyering tools and approaches back to their organizations and communities.	
Break	
Action Planning & Close (cont’d)	
Wrap-up	