



## For economic and racial justice

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# Community Lawyering

## Introduction, Syllabus & General Information

### Summer 2025

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 that benefit from the involvement of all participants.

## SCHEDULE (All activities online)

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
June 23 – 27	June 30-July 4	July 7 – 11	July 14 – 18	July 21 – 25	July 28 – 31
<b>2.25 hours</b>	<b>6 hours</b>	<b>6 hours</b>	<b>6 hours</b>	<b>6 hours</b>	<b>5 hours</b>
Week 1 Webinar	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions	Large + Small Group Sessions
Wed, June 25	Tues. July 1 Thur. July 3	Tues. July 8 Thur. July 10	Tues. July 15 Thur. July 17	Tues. July 22 Thur. July 24	Tues. July 29 Thur. July 31
(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](mailto:coursehelp@povertylaw.org)

### Week 1: June 23 – 27, 2025

Live Session: Wednesday, June 25 <sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 1:30 ET   9:30 – 10:30 PT	Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction to Community Lawyering:</b> 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.</li> </ul>	1 hour
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro survey (10')</li> <li>• Readings &amp; Videos (55')</li> </ul>	65mins

## Week 2: June 30 – July 4, 2025

Live Sessions: Tuesday, July 1 <sup>st</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT	Time
<b>Community Lawyering Stories</b>	2.5 hours
Break	
<b>Community Lawyering – Case Example 1:</b> Experienced community lawyer shares story from their practice that exemplifies community lawyering values and practices.	
Break	
<b>Community Lawyering Tools: Relationship Building &amp; Issue Selection – PART 1.</b> 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”.	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 2 – Day 1 Content &amp; Skills</b>	30 mins

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

<b>Readings + Application of Week 2 – Day 2 Content &amp; Skills</b>	30 mins
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### Week 3: July 7 – 11, 2025

<b>Live Sessions: Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Week 3 Start-up &amp; Action Learning Partners:</b> 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	
<b>Community Lawyering Tools – PART 2:</b> 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	
<b>Community Lawyering Tools – PART 2</b>	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 3 – Day 1 Content and Skills</b>	30 mins

<b>Live Sessions: Thursday, July 10<sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Relationship Building Using One-to-Ones:</b> Introduces practice of one-to-ones and framework for conducting a one-to-one.	2.5 hours
Break	
<b>Relationship Building Using One-to-Ones – Small Groups</b>	
Break	
<b>Relationship Building Using One-to-Ones – Small Groups Debrief</b>	

<b>Week 3 Evaluation &amp; Preparation for Week 4</b>	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 3 – Day 2 Content and Skills</b>	30 mins

## Week 4: July 14 – 18, 2025

<b>Live Sessions: Tuesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Week 4 Start-up &amp; Action Learning Partners:</b> 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	
<b>Identity, Power &amp; Difference:</b> Participants examine issues of difference that arise within the community lawyering context and how to work effectively to respond to and address these.	
Break	
<b>Identity, Power &amp; Difference (cont’d)</b>	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 4 – Day 1 Content and Skills</b>	30 mins

<b>Live Sessions: Thursday, July 17<sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Start-up</b>	2.5 hours
<b>Strategic Communications – Part 1:</b> Introduces framework for strategic framing and communication using VPSA model – Values, Problem, Solution, Action.	
Break	
<b>Strategic Communications – Small Group</b>	

<b>Break</b>	
<b>Review &amp; Discussion</b>	
<b>Week 4 Wrap-up &amp; Preparation for Week 5</b>	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 4 – Day 2 Content and Skills</b>	30 mins

## Week 5: July 21 – 25, 2025

<b>Live Sessions: Tuesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Large Group Check-in</b>	2.5 hours
Break	
<b>Policy Advocacy:</b> Introduces policy advocacy as a tool for the community lawyer to supplement legal, organizing and media tactics to advance the community’s goals.	
Break	
<b>Policy Advocacy:</b> Participants use the policy advocacy action plan to develop a policy campaign to address goals identified in the case scenario.	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 5 – Day 1 Content &amp; Skills</b>	30 mins

<b>Live Sessions: Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Lawyers &amp; Organizers Working Together.</b> 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	

<b>Lawyers &amp; Organizers Working Together – (cont’d)</b>	2.5 hours
<b>Week 5 Wrap-Up &amp; Preparation for Week 6</b>	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 5 – Day 2 Content &amp; Skills</b>	30 mins

## Week 6: July 28 – 31, 2025

<b>Live Sessions: Tuesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Week 6 Start-Up &amp; Action Learning Partners:</b> 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
<b>Panel presentations and discussion</b> addressing community lawyering questions that have arisen during the training.	
Break	
<b>Strategy Development – Part 1:</b> Introduces a suggested approach for developing strategies to achieve community-identified goals.	
<b>ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>Readings + Application of Week 6 – Day 1 Content &amp; Skills</b>	30 mins

<b>Live Sessions: Thursday, July 31<sup>st</sup> / 12:30 – 3:00 ET   9:30 – 12:00 PT</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Strategy Development – Small Groups</b>	2.5 hours
Break	
<b>Action Planning &amp; Close:</b> Participants identify concrete steps for bringing community lawyering tools and approaches back to their organizations and communities.	
Break	

<b>Action Planning &amp; Close (cont'd)</b>	
<b>Wrap-up</b>	