

PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM

(ALL SECTIONS IN THIS FORM MUST BE FILLED FOR PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL)

Chapter: University of Toronto

Program year: 2025-2026

Project Name: Newcomer Drop-In Legal Information Clinic

Note: The project name should be concise, distinguishable from other projects, and easily identifiable for volunteers, partners, and clients.

SECTION A – ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. **Name of Organization:** WoodGreen Community Services

2. **Mailing Address of Organization:** 815 Danforth Avenue, suite 100 Toronto, ON M4J 1L2

3. **Website of Organization:** <https://www.woodgreen.org/>

4. **Type of Organization:**

☒ Not-for-profit

☒ Charity

☐ Other please specify

5. **Brief overview of the organization's mandate (2 to 4 lines maximum):**

WoodGreen has been meeting the UNMET needs of Toronto residents for over 85 years. As a leading social services agency, we provide integrated programs such as physical and mental health services, affordable housing, settlement and language services to newcomers, employment support, financial counselling, childcare, seniors and youth programs and more. Every year, WoodGreen provides more than 40,000 Toronto residents with the tools and support they need to thrive.

6. **Organization Contact Person**

Name: Qazi Hasan

Title: Director, Newcomer Programs and Services

Telephone Number: (416) 723-8201 (cell), (416) 405-5161

Email Address: qhasan@woodgreen.org

7. **Preferred mode of contact:** Phone ☐ Email ☒

8. **How often will the organization contact person be available to meet with the student(s)?** Once a week or as often as is necessary.

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9. Lawyer supervisor(s)

Note: For certain projects, students work with a roster of lawyers. In such instances, please include the information of all lawyer supervisors, and indicate who the lead lawyer/key point of contact is.

Type of Lawyer Supervisor:

Lawyer Supervisor - Insured

Name: Cathryn Sawicki

Title: Managing Partner

Organization/Firm: Serotte Law Canada

Telephone Number: 647-210-4100

Email Address: csawicki@serottelaw.com

The lawyer supervisor is:

☐ Click to select drop down option

☒ **Other** Cathryn has extensive experience working in Canadian citizenship and immigration law in Toronto and has agreed to supervise the project.

Type of Lawyer Supervisor:

Lawyer Supervisor - Insured

Name: Robert Isreal Blanshay

Title: Founding Senior Lawyer

Organization/Firm: Blanshay Law

Telephone Number: 416.413.4955

Email Address: robert@apply2canada.com

The lawyer supervisor is:

☐ Click to select drop down option

☒ **Other** Robert has extensive experience working in refugee and immigration law in Toronto and has agreed to supervise the project.

10. How often will the lawyer supervisor be available to meet with the student(s)?

October – November 2025 (Fall Term)

Supervising lawyers will provide virtual assistance as needed to support students and WoodGreen in creating resources and laying the groundwork for the Newcomer Drop-In Legal Information clinic, which is scheduled to launch in January 2026. This will likely mean bi-weekly meetings or emails for check-ins or a pre-determined schedule at the outset of the project to align expectations of lawyers, students, and the organization.

January – March 2026 (Winter Term)

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When the clinic officially launches, supervising lawyers will alternate bi-weekly attendance at the in-person clinic. During “off-weeks,” the supervising lawyers will provide remote support as necessary to assist students with questions and review drafted answers to questions (if required).

Students are encouraged to schedule a time to speak with the lawyers and should not anticipate immediate responses to unscheduled calls.

SECTION B – PROJECT INFORMATION

11. Please describe the project tasks:

Description of Project

The Newcomer Drop-In Legal Information Clinic will pilot a bi-weekly clinic during the 2026 Winter Term (January – March 2026) to provide low-income newcomers with direct legal information assistance. This initiative aims to enhance legal support for immigrants and refugees by streamlining legal application processes.

The Supervising Lawyers and Organization Contact will work together to determine the appropriate services to be provided by the Clinic. Examples of support include:

- **Guidance for preparing Basis of Claim (BOC) forms:** Walking through the different sections of the form; what kind of information each section requires; provide checklists, etc.
- **Assisting with ODSP Appeal Documentation:** Explaining the appeal process; templates for appeal letters without providing clients with arguments; etc.
- **PR card/work-permit renewals:** Explaining the application process; providing a checklist; directing to correct forms; information on navigating IRCC portals; etc.
- **Sponsorship Applications:** Explaining the application process and structure; providing checklists of required evidence; no advice on how much evidence is enough or what documents are stronger; etc.

To prepare the clinic for launch, the Fall term (October – November 2025) will be used to prepare the templates and educational resources required for the student clinic. The goal is to launch the clinic during the Winter term. If there are any changes to timelines and/or the program, a revised project description form / email will be shared with the Pro Bono team to reflect these changes.

All involved parties must attend a virtual meeting at the beginning of the project, to be coordinated by the Chapter’s Program Coordinator.

Tool Development: Fall Term (October – November 2025)

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Early October – The organization, lawyers, and volunteers will collaborate to establish a work plan for the programming year, establishing deadlines and checkpoints to ensure the Clinic’s success.

October – November 2026

- Volunteers will create a Legal Resource Hub with the required documents, including intake forms, referral pamphlets, step-by-step guides for PR renewals, etc.
- Volunteers will also ensure that the clinic process is established for launch in January, including scheduling of clients, booking of rooms, subsequent client follow-ups, etc.
- Volunteers may also create marketing materials, provided they have the capacity

Clinic Launch: Winter Term (January – March 2026)

Student volunteers and lawyer supervisors will lead a bi-weekly clinic in-person (exact dates TBD; likely Fridays, 10 AM – 2 PM) to support 6-10 clients per session. Student volunteers will be assigned a maximum of two (2) clients at any one time unless they have the express consent of the lawyer supervisor to take on more than two clients.

The Supervising Lawyers will alternate bi-weekly attendance at the Clinic. The Organization Contact will ensure to schedule clients or facilitate drop-ins based on the available lawyer’s expertise:

- Cathryn Sawicki – Citizenship and Immigration Law
- Robert Blanshay – Refugee and Immigration Law

Students will provide legal information to clients during the drop-in and collect any legal questions that require further examination. During the “off-weeks” from the clinic, students will research the question and draft an answer for the client. The lawyer supervisors will approve the accuracy of the information and then the student will set up a phone call or in-person meeting with the client to deliver the legal information (may occur at a subsequent Clinic session).

Role of Student Volunteers

As outlined above. Students will play a critical role in developing the clinic for launch.

Important Note: Students must be mindful of scheduling a time to speak with the supervising lawyers and should not anticipate immediate responses to unscheduled calls. Ensure to be proactive and communicative.

Fall Term (October – November 2025): Support development of templates and tools to be used in the Clinic. Establish Clinic processes for launch in January.

Winter Term (January – March 2026): Attend bi-weekly clinics to provide clients with legal information and gather legal questions requiring research. Conducting follow-up research and

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drafting an answer for clients. Obtaining lawyer supervisor approval and communicating answers to clients.

Role of Supervising Lawyers

As outlined above.

Fall Term (October – November 2025): Support development of templates and tools to be used in the Clinic. Establish Clinic processes for launch in January.

Winter Term (January – March 2026): Alternate bi-weekly attendance at clinics to supervise student volunteers and support the Clinic. Our volunteers are law students and are not authorized to give legal advice. As such, all produced materials and information provided must be reviewed by a lawyer supervisor for accuracy before being published.

Role of Organization Contact

As outlined above.

The Organization Contact will play a critical role in facilitating the Clinic and ensuring its success. Responsibilities include:

- Collaborate with lawyer supervisors and volunteers to establish the most appropriate services to be provided by the Clinic
 - Establish a secure WoodGreen Legal Resource Hub to store produced materials for the Clinic and ensure confidentiality of Client documents
 - Leveraging internal resources to support the Clinic, as needed
- Program Outreach and Advertising, including:
 - Developing a webpage for the Clinic on the WoodGreen website to establish the Clinic's credibility. Emphasize that the clinic will provide legal information (not legal advice) and highlight the expertise of the supervising lawyers. Example of language to be used below:
 - Our Clinic is supported by vetted law student volunteers from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law and runs under the supervision of qualified, registered Law Society of Ontario (LSO) lawyers
 - May also include a short bio and headshot of the supervising lawyers and student volunteers, with their consent
 - Leveraging clients from the Settlement Counsellor team and language education centre
 - Client referrals from community visits, etc,
- Scheduling Clients and Booking Rooms:
 - Booking rooms and ensuring materials and supplies are present at each client meeting space (ex. water, tissues, computer use, access to a printer, etc.)
 - Scheduling clients to students and lawyers on applicable clinic dates, ensuring to be mindful of the available lawyer's expertise

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- Distributing intake forms to clients and PBSC Client Impact Survey
- Liaising with and receiving reports/feedback from supervising lawyers
- Providing oversight for lawyer volunteers and students present at WoodGreen
- Communicate with Clients as necessary
- Carry-out post clinic debrief sessions with student volunteers & receive regular feedback via PBSC's client impact survey
- Carry-out check-ins with each pro bono student volunteer at least once per semester

Which types of law are used in this project?

Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship Law

12. What is the main project deliverable?

- A. Creating produced content (e.g. research memos, brochures, podcasts, etc.)
- B. Completing client intake and assistance (e.g. completing client intake, providing client referrals, helping clients with their ID documents, etc.)

13. What is the project delivery format?

Hybrid

Please provide details (e.g. volunteers will attend the clinic once a week on Friday afternoons or weekly virtual bi-weekly meetings with the team):

Fall Term (October – November 2025): Can complete work remotely.

Winter Term (January – March 2026):

Must attend bi-weekly clinics as scheduled on Friday mornings (exact time TBD, most likely 10 AM – 2 PM); research on legal questions will be completed remotely.

14. If you checked boxes A or C in question 12, above, do you consent to the Student Volunteer(s) sending to PBSC a copy of the project deliverable? Please note it is your responsibility to collect and retain any project deliverable or documentation required to carry out the work set out in this Form. If you consent to PBSC saving a copy of the project deliverable (this strictly applies to Research and Public Legal Education projects), the documents will be securely saved and used solely for the purposes of monitoring the progression of the project, informing project development, and offering efficient continuity to returning projects, and will not be reproduced, shared, or used outside of these stated purposes.

- A. ☒ I consent to PBSC saving a duplicate of the project deliverable.
- B. ☐ I do not consent to PBSC saving a duplicate of the project deliverable.

15. If you checked boxes B or C in question 12, above, what is your plan for distribution of PBSC's Client Impact Survey?

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Note: PBSC's Client Impact Survey is an important tool that allows our organization to measure client satisfaction and impact, report to stakeholders, and improve our programming. The Client Impact Survey is available through Qualtrics, which meets all federal and provincial privacy and security laws (data is stored in Canada).

☒ For client intake and assistance projects, the student volunteers will set aside time to share the Client Impact Survey hyperlink and QR Code at the end of client meetings. Volunteers will be provided with the hyperlink and QR Code at the start of their placements. Where appropriate, printed copies of the survey may be used as long as there is a protocol in place to safeguard client confidentiality.

☐ Other. If neither of the above options are an appropriate means of distributing PBSC's Client Impact Survey for this project, please explain your plan for distribution.

Enter text

16. A work plan is required for this project: Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, the student(s) must reach out to the lawyer supervisor, draft a work plan, and submit it by email to the Program Coordinator and the lawyer supervisor by November 1st at the latest. Please note that workplans are required for all legal research and writing projects.

In early October, the Project Lead will work closely with the Lawyer Supervisors to develop a work plan for all student volunteers. This includes establishing agreed upon deadlines, anticipating workflows to meet deliverables, delegating responsibilities to volunteers, and establishing checkpoints for check-ins.

17. Is this a joint project with students from any other PBSC chapters?

If yes, please indicate details: which sections, the division of work, and the model of supervision, etc.

No.

18. What type of training will the organization provide to the student(s)?

19. Note for University of Toronto volunteers: *All first year PBSC volunteers and all volunteers working on research projects are highly encouraged to attend Bora Laskin Library's research training sessions for both West Law and LexisNexis.*

WoodGreen will host a two-hour training and orientation session for all its student volunteers at the start of their engagement as an *Introduction to Newcomer Services*. This session is designed to help students feel prepared for client-facing roles and an orientation to WoodGreen's newcomer wellbeing model.

Topics may include newcomer wellbeing, trauma-informed practices, managing client and volunteer expectations, and understanding the broader significance of their work.

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20. How many students would you like assigned to this project?

Total 3-4 students, of which 1-2 may act as Project Lead (at least one Project Lead is required).

21. How many hours per week will the student volunteer(s) be expected to work?

Note: PBSC students are expected to volunteer 3-5 hours per week. Additional hours are at the students' discretion, but at no time should the student be volunteering more than 10 hours per week.

3-5 hours per week.

Including client meetings and research times, each student can expect approximately 3 hours of work per client. **Students may not take on more than two clients without the express consent of the supervising lawyer to do so.**

22. Will the student(s) be expected to show up for regular shifts each week, or is the schedule flexible?

Shift work will be coordinated and agreed upon by the WoodGreen Team, supervising lawyers, and the students. WG will make efforts to have students in at times that work with WG schedule and the students' academic schedule.

Fall Term (October 2025 – November 2025):

Students are expected to work remotely and attend online meetings with WoodGreen and Lawyer Supervisors.

Winter Term (January – March 2026):

Students are expected to attend WoodGreen for their bi-weekly clinic shifts.

23. Is workspace provided for the student volunteer(s) at your organization?

There is a workspace provided by WoodGreen for Clinic days. Otherwise, students will work remotely.

24. Please list the devices and technologies the students will require to have at home in order to complete their volunteer work remotely (ex. Computer, Internet access, telephone, FaceTime, Zoom, etc.)

This project requires physical presence at WG sites, students will be provided with a laptop and if required, access to WoodGreen's client relationship management system (CRM).

Computer, telephone, internet, Zoom/Microsoft Teams

SECTION C – STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

25. Is there an expectation for the student(s) to be bilingual?

No but is considered an asset.

26. Can first year law students volunteer for this project? Yes ☒ No ☐

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Preferably, the Project Lead will be an upper year student.

27. Please list any law school prerequisites required for this project. (e.g., administrative law, family law, immigration and refugee law.)

None.

28. Please list any other requirements or expectations for this project. (e.g., professional or academic background, experience, etc.)

Experience in a non-profit or immigrant serving organization is an asset but not required.

Clinic work requires a high level of sensitivity, initiative, and problem-solving. We are looking for highly motivated students ready to work with vulnerable groups.

SECTION D – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

29. Which project model(s) most accurately describes this project? If the project has multiple activities, please choose a **maximum of 3** project models. In order to obtain the most accurate data, please only select the project models that describe the majority of the project's activities. If the relevant project model is not indicated below, please contact your Program Officer.

- ☒ Public Legal Education (presentations, workshops, podcasts, brochures, blogs, etc.)
- ☐ Research (memoranda used for internal purposes only)
- ☒ Client services (court forms, shadowing, mock hearings, intake, legal clinic, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

30. Which communities does this project serve? Please identify the top **3** communities that this project serves. Please choose the primary (1), secondary (2) and tertiary (3) communities served by selecting 1, 2 or 3 next to the community. This will help us understand gaps in our programming, resource allocation and provide us with information for funding proposals and reports. We understand that due to the intersectionality of identities, it is difficult to rank the top three communities served. Please note that by ranking, you are not prioritizing any issues, or communities. If you would like to add any comments, please use the comment box below.

1. Immigrants, refugees & newcomers
2. Self-represented litigants
3. Racialized communities

Comments:

Enter text

For internal Chapter use

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Project reviewed and approved by the PBSC Chapter On-site Supervisor

On-Site Supervisor Signature

Date

Note: A final/complete copy of this Project Description Form must be provided to the Organization Contact Person, Lawyer Supervisor(s), Student Volunteer(s) and Program Officer at National Office.