

Dan Ruben
Executive Director, Equal Justice America
Building II, Suite 204
13540 East Boundary Road
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben:

This summer I worked as an intern at the Legal Advocacy & Resource Center (LARC), a hotline providing low-income residence of the Greater Boston area with free legal advice and referrals. I was trained to conduct a thorough interview over the telephone and in person to low-income residents who call the hotline or seek legal assistance. I completed intake screenings for Greater Boston Legal Services and the Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Boston Bar Association, as well as, family law intake screenings for Community Legal Services and Counseling Center and limited intake screenings for MetroWest Legal Services.

Depending on their individual situation, callers will consult with me about their legal questions and rights; I consult with my supervisors before giving any advice or referrals, find out if they are eligible for free legal representation from a legal services agency in Massachusetts and, if so, be referred to these agencies; be sent written information about legal rights and common legal problems; be referred to private bar panels who may be able to handle the case for a fee; be directed to social services and government agencies, if appropriate.

I provided free legal information and/or referrals for possible representation on a wide range of legal issues. I was trained to provide services to callers about Housing, including Evictions, Landlord/Tenant Issues, Public Housing, Conditions Problems, Foreclosure; Family Law, including Divorce, Child Support, Custody, Guardianship, Visitation, Restraining Orders; Public Benefits, including SSI, Social Security, Food Stamps, TAFDC; Employment Issues, including Unemployment Benefits, Wage and Hour Claims, Family Medical Leave Act

questions; Consumer Issues, including Utilities, Bankruptcy and Debt Collection issues; Elder Law, such as Medicare and Nursing Home issues; and CORI issues.

You never know who is going to call the hotline and what issue/s they needed your assistance with. Somehow, it felt amazing knowing that I was able to impart on someone information they did not have access to. People call and they are facing evictions or dealing with a domestic violence matter that needs immediate attention. I handled about 10-15 calls pertaining to housing eviction cases per day. A lot of callers did not know their rights as renters. Most cases involved landlords entering callers' apartments without giving notice or landlords threatening to evict tenants without proper notice and withholding their security deposits. Now remember people calling the hotline or walking in for assistance are low-income residents with section 8 certificates or vouchers, receiving some form of public assistance or trying to gain access into a shelter with their children. Callers live in either public housing units or private housing using their tenant based subsidies. My job is to advise of the caller's legal rights and guide them through the legal process to enforce those rights against their landlords. This can take the form of a caller asserting their right to seek a restraining order and that the landlord may be interfering with their right to quiet enjoyment or breach of warranty of habitability. Callers are given information regarding where to file a lawsuit, how to present their case at the hearing, pro se.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to continue my work and dedication to public service this summer.

Sincerely,

Dionne Osei
Suffolk University Law School
Candidate for Juris Doctor, May 2017

Legal Advocacy & Resource Center, Inc.

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August 31, 2016

Dan Ruben
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SENT VIA E-MAIL

Dan@EqualJusticeAmerica.org
Katie@EqualJusticeAmerica.org

RE: Dione Osei EJA Summer 2016 Fellow Evaluation

Dear Mr. Ruben:

Dione Osei worked as a law clerk under the EJA fellowship in our legal services office from May 31 to July 1, 2016. Our office operates a legal advice and referral hotline for Massachusetts residents who need help with a wide variety of civil legal matters, including housing, family law, consumer law and bankruptcies. Ms. Osei conducted extensive and thorough interviews of almost two hundred clients, identified and analyzed the legal and factual issues presented by the clients' situations, and provided the clients with substantive legal information, advice and referral about the issues presented in their cases. The vast majority of our clients are low-income and many of them are calling at a time of great legal need and distress.

As the Executive Director and supervisor, I had the opportunity to work closely with Ms. Osei. I regularly reviewed her cases and observed her directly when he was working with clients. Her analytical abilities were superior. She had the ability to identify the significant legal issues that were presented by a client's factual situation and had a high aptitude for understanding and applying legal concepts to specific situations. She was an independent worker; although she appropriately sought for supervision when necessary. She also excelled at counseling clients about their legal options; she was able to explain complex legal concepts to clients in a way that enabled them to understand the legal advice that was being given and to act upon it.

I was also impressed by the respect and patience that Ms. Osei showed to all of our clients. Many of our clients have mental and/or physical disabilities as well as a multitude of pressing legal problems. Ms. Osei always treated all of our clients with care, compassion and respect. Many times, she would not finish the call until the client understood all the information and she was sure that the legal needs of the clients were addressed.

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In addition to her abilities and commitment, Ms. Osei was also well liked and respected by all our staff and volunteers. She continually displayed professionalism, a sense of judgment, and maturity. She always was punctual.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Rosa A. Previdi
Executive Director
617-603-1716